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Relevance and Development in Tanzania

I. — CRISIS OF RELEVANCE

This paper discusses Tanzania’s reaction to the crisis of relevance. While it would be inaccurate, to say the least, to view developments in Tanzania as solely the result of one man’s actions alone, it would equally be unrealistic to underestimate the unique role the President of Tanzania, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, plays and has played in the evolution of modern Tanzania. Nyerere in Tanzania is therefore our focus in this discussion.

First, what is the crisis of civilisation as seen by the Africans? It is the crisis of relevance. Relevance in the sense of the essential: what must be done, regardless of any other considerations. Given the circumstances—the objective conditions—and the ends that must be achieved, what steps must of necessity be taken? ‘Must’ here in the logical sense, of what logically interrelated actions—social, economic, political, etc.—must be taken in order to arrive at the stipulated objectives. Relevance also in the sense of the meaningful: that which is understood by those whom it is supposed to serve and help; meaningful in the sense of deep cultural contiguities with the past, though not wholly glorified and glorifying, yet whose denial would mean the negation of the very self and of any pretensions to identity.

Much of what is taking place in Africa today, indeed in the rest of the world, is not really relevant to the human predicament. To take but one example: one of the most striking developments in this century has been in the application of science to practical use, i.e. technology. Without technology, modern (particularly Western) civilisation is meaningless. Indeed the entire edifice of this civilisation, and the capabilities it has had and continues to have, is based on technology. And what have been the consequences of the impact of technology on society generally?
Despite the tremendous feats technology has achieved during the last half of this century, it cannot be emphatically asserted that these developments have been to the general betterment of humanity as a whole. At best, these technological leaps forward have simply enhanced the capabilities of the individual to be an individual as distinct from being a member of a community. In Western, particularly American, terms, this process is described as the “extension of the individual’s freedom” and it is lauded. Indeed, the more the individual is able to distinguish himself from the rest of the community, whether in terms of his life style or simply by being able to look after his own interests better as an individual—irrespective of whether or not such a style of life or the exercise of such abilities are detrimental to the community—, the more that society is considered to be ‘free’ and truly democratic. The potential and indeed the actual capacity of technology has been rarely used to enrich the community as a whole; instead it is used for the glorification of the individual’s (or national?) power and vanity. Thus we see so much investment in weaponry, unnecessary luxury gadgets and trips to the moon, while the man next door—or the peasant over the frontier—is deprived of the basic minimum necessities of life.

And when coupled with capitalism, technology has accelerated the alienation of man from his fellowmen. Man is uprooted from the collectivity and the sense of security derived from the fact of living with other men; he is now left on his own, perpetually relying on his own individual wits or cunning for his survival. It has reduced human relations to impersonal, utilitarian calculations based on the reciprocal benefits of two ‘agents’ in search of their individual interests, and not as those of two human beings bound by a common destiny. What is encouraged, and has been cultivated in the name of individual initiative and freedom of action and contract, is selfishness and greed. And since capitalism functions on the basis of profitability of economic ventures and personal acquisitiveness, this has tended to perpetuate artificially the scarcity of goods in order to sustain the system and those profitably involved in it.

Of how many rumours have we heard or read, that this or that technological innovation which could revolutionise the miseries of mankind, has either been ‘bought off’ or simply found ‘not commercially feasible’? Thus, instead of the potentialities and actual power of technology being placed at the disposal of humanity to solve the problems of life on this side of the grave—or this side of the moon—it has been nipped in the bud, as it were, because if fully utilised it is feared that it might upset the ‘system’. Instead, millions of dollars are spent in advertising and artificial competition between giant corporations merely to maintain the system and their own share of the loot.
From the African viewpoint, and for the purpose of this paper, the impact of technology has meant one important thing which has had profound consequences on the African people and the continent itself. It has meant the domination of Africa and Africans by alien forces in the form of colonialism, imperialism, and neocolonialism.

It must be noted here that we do not deny the tremendous material benefits the technological impact has had on Africa. For example, the improvement in land communications due to the steam and internal combustion engines cannot be overestimated. It connected Africa with the world economy and this has not been without its material economic advantages to Africa. These facts, and many others, cannot be denied. Our basic concern, however, is with the kind of crisis such an impact has had on African society.

The consequence of the impact of these alien forces was of course the destruction, or near-destruction, of the very principles upon which African society was based. Colonialism shifted the point of political, social and economic gravity from the African's own setting to the imperial capital. All his actions and aspirations had to be approved and guided by the metropolitan colonial power. The African was left with no judgement of his own save that permitted by his superiors—the colonial masters. This had a catastrophic impact on the African psyche: it engendered an acute inferiority complex and a sense of dependence.

So was the introduction of the capitalist system. Whereas the basic principle in the traditional African society was always to encourage men to think of themselves as members of a larger group, the community, the capitalist monetary economy encouraged individual greed and economic competition. By promoting acquisitiveness and individualism, capitalism transformed the essentially communitarian society into an acquisitive one. As Julius Nyerere put it:

"The economic inequalities between men become so great that man's basic equality is imperceptibly transformed into a merchant and client relationship. It is then impossible to discuss together as equals with a common interest in the maintenance and development of society. The common interest has been at least partially replaced by two interests, those of the 'haves' and those of the 'have nots'. The unity of society has been weakened because the equality of its members has been broken."

Moreover, the introduction of Western education further undermined the structure of the African traditional society. By removing the child from his own environment, as the missionary and secondary

1. Julius Nyerere, Freedom and Unity/Uhuru na Umoja, Dar es Salaam, 1966, p. 11 (Introduction). This collection of Nyerere's speeches and writings will henceforth be referred to as Freedom and Unity, the title of the particular article or speech being added in brackets.
boarding school education did, and by inculcating in him novel values and aspirations totally at variance with those of his forefathers, Western education transformed the traditionally egalitarian African into a class-conscious one.

In the traditional society, the child was socialised with the principle of sharing and obligation to that society. Now, as a result of the alien impact, he is educated how best to improve himself and how best to get the most from society for himself with the minimum of personal effort. In the traditional society, the individual was an integral part of the community. He emotionally, spiritually and materially belonged to it. As the Catholic Father, Bede Onuoha, laments: “Many educated Africans are definitely no longer spiritually African. Years of subjection to European education and culture has alienated them from genuinely African attitudes, responses and actions.”¹ The African was born socialised, but years of concerted European education corrupted him.

But these changes are inevitable. Societies of necessity must change. This is the essence of development. There cannot be development or progress without some changes. What ought to be the subject of worry is not the changes per se, but the type of changes and their effects on the given society. Can these changes be controlled for the benefit of Africa?

However, when we examine the African society more closely, we find that these changes did not in fact affect the entire society. The bulk of the population—peasants and in some cases even the workers—were not really affected by these changes. At best, they were ‘passive emulators’. They had to play their particular roles in order to survive; they were not actively attached to the new system. Those who were fully affected by the new changes and were indeed committed to the new system were the educated elites—the ‘fit to rule’. These were the people who, because of the kind of education or experience they had, were considered by the colonial authorities, and in fact regarded themselves, as the only native ‘fit to rule’. They considered themselves as the rightful heirs to the colonial regime.

Yet, and this is one of the crucial aspects of the crisis of relevance in Africa, those affected—the ‘fit to rule’—although numerically few are, because of the kind of system they are operating, precisely those who matter in society. For it is they who control and run the social, economic, political, and other institutions. Society cannot function without their participation. The ‘fit to rule’ are the ‘cognoscenti’ of their societies. Moreover, they are those who have the necessary

external linkages and have acquired international credibility and confidence which is essential in view of the African domination by outside alien forces. Indeed, the creation of this breed of 'fit to rule' was one of the first objectives of colonialism, of whatever variant. For this is the only effective—and cheap—method of not only sustaining and perpetuating the colonial situation, but also of entrenching the seeds of neocolonialism. The late Sir Philip Mitchell, the British colonial governor of considerable experience in East Africa, was frank about his government's policies when he wrote:

"What we do assert is something quite different; what we have set our hands to here is the establishment of a civilised state in which the values and standards are to be the values and standards of Britain in which everyone, whatever his origins, has an interest and a part."¹

The extent to which the colonial regimes succeeded in this particular venture is indicated by the number of ex-colonial territories and leaders who not only assiduously adhere to the formal constitutional and other social and economic structures of their former colonial masters, but also continue to look towards them for leadership and general assistance. Some of these leaders go as far as denying their very identities as Africans. A classic example of this is that of Diagne, the Senegalese leader. Protesting against Marcus Garvey's demands that Africa should be left to Africans, he wrote:

"We French natives wish to remain French, since France has given us every liberty and since she has unreservedly accepted us upon the same basis as her own European children. None of us aspires to see French Africa delivered exclusively to the Africans as is demanded [. . .]. The French native elite, who are responsible for the natives of our colonies, could not allow, without failing in their new duties, the revolutionary theories of separation and emancipation [. . .] to introduce trouble and disorder where calm and order are the indispensable factors of the security of all."²

The crisis of relevance in Africa is precisely this: because of their training and aspirations, the 'fit to rule' have acquired their own peculiar model of development, as well as the means of achieving it. And yet both of these (the concept of development and the method of achieving it, i.e. the institutions) are not at all relevant to the actual realities of the society in which the 'fit to rule' live.

What are the African relevances? At this stage of development in Africa, the most pressing problems facing Africa and the issues that are of relevance to African leaders are, in the first place, nation-building. The creation of a nation, of the sense of belonging and of

loyalty to a unit larger than the clan, the tribe or beyond the boundaries established by the imperialist powers: this is the most exacting and exciting task facing the contemporary African leadership. Hence, anything which is calculated or is conducive to the building of a nation is relevant to Africa. That which is not, or which hampers unity and nation-building efforts, is not relevant to Africa.

The second theme of relevance is that of economic development. It is not enough for Africans to found their own nations. The people who occupy these abstract geographical boundaries must be adequately and decently fed, housed and clothed. And the third important theme of relevance is that of the Africans’ ability to maintain their independence and identity.

These are the themes which are of general importance to Africa. But, in a real sense, what is important is the development of the African people themselves as Africans. For nations, economic development and independence are mere instruments at the disposal of the people themselves. It is the creation of a competent, confident and prosperous African people that is the real issue of relevance in Africa.

Yet both the inherited colonially-created institutions and the elites, the ‘fit to rule’, are alien to the society as a whole, and hence are not relevant. The aspirations and the style of life of the ‘fit to rule’ are strange to the rest of the population, and these elites do indeed consider themselves to be qualitatively different from the rest of the people. So too are the institutions which are supposed to serve the interests of the people. These have no relevance at all to the masses. They are useful and meaningful only to those who know how to operate them, and who can benefit from them; and these are very few indeed.

The crisis is thus both personal and institutional. Now that the colonial powers are no longer in control, the elites are left with the institutions which they must operate. They must do this in the first place because the country cannot stand still, work must be carried on; and secondly, for the elites’ own self-preservation. For the ‘fit to rule’ know of no better institutions than those left to them by the departing colonial regimes; and, at any rate, without those institutions the elites would be out of work.

Moreover, what makes the crisis more acute in this transitional stage of African development is that it is the elites—and not the masses—who have to solve the crisis. It is the elites who are intimately involved and who have the effective power to transform society. The masses do not as yet have any power to transform society.1 What the

1. It could be argued whether indeed the masses will ever have, or ever did have, the power.
masses can do at most is to support the right kind of leadership when this is available.

But is the ‘fit to rule’ willing, or capable, to be reclaimed by his people, and in so doing to assume the role of an effective leadership? Is he reclaimable at all? Or is he going to insist on clinging to his ‘foreign magic bags’? In a real sense, then, the elites are faced with two crucial alternatives. The first of these is to transform the entire society according to their own image. This entails the social engineering of the whole society in order to remodel it along a given pattern which may or may not be rooted in African traditions. What this in effect means is that the African society itself is manipulated in order to bring about a certain type of society desired by the elites. And this might involve the destruction of some of the basic fundamental social principles which make an African society what it is, and distinguishes it from other societies. This is what Kenya chose to do when she adopted the Sessional Paper No. 10 in 1965 as the guideline for national reconstruction.

The second alternative is the transformation or rehabilitation of the elites themselves to fit into the ‘new’ African society. What this alternative entails is the elites’ acceptance, essentially, of an African approach to African problems. That Africans as Africans can solve not only their own problems but can also contribute, as Africans, to the solution of world problems. In this alternative, both the elites and the society have to change, but changes towards the direction of being more and not less African, that is, away from the inherited colonial structures and style of life. The changes here are accommodative, i.e. those which are to ensure that the African society remains African and yet at the same time develops. In this case, the elites become the instrument of the people, and they have to conform to the realities that are the everyday realities of the people. The elites still have the power to effect transformation, but they do this as responsible and responsive agents of the people and in a manner congruent to the preservation of the basic principles of the African society.

What is Tanzania’s response to the African crisis of relevance? Many political leaders, particularly in the ‘Third World’, have too uncritically succumbed to the notion that only two models of development exist for others to emulate: the United States and either the USSR (when she was the ‘leading’ socialist example) or the People’s Republic of China, have often been given as the leading models for others to follow.

Implicit in this belief that there are only two models of development is the basic assumption, insofar as Africa is concerned, that Africa’s

cultural heritage is a liability rather than an asset when it comes to development. Thus, institutions like the extended family have always been regarded as an unnecessary anachronism and to be uprooted, and not as a viable and promising base for development when appropriately modified.

Tanzania rejects this school of thought. Nyerere asserts that the traditional African society, particularly the extended family, does provide a firm basis for modern development in Tanzania. What the African has to do is examine carefully his traditional heritage and see how best it can be adapted to modern conditions. This is how he put it: “We must take our system, correct its shortcomings and adapt to its service the things we can learn from the technologically developed societies of other countries.”

The problem, as Frantz Fanon once bluntly put it, is not that the European imperialists or neocolonialists are perpetually forcing the African to conform to Western bourgeois culture; it is rather that the contemporary African leader, the ‘fit to rule’, has lost the confidence in himself and in things African.

The modern educated African somehow feels that there is an awful incompatibility between ‘modernity’ or ‘being developed’ and being African. In other words, to be modern or developed is to accept in that very process foreign ways of life. And the more modern and developed an individual African or state is, the more perfect and advanced are the capacities to copy and emulate these foreign institutions and ways of life.

Nyerere’s case—and this is the essence of Tanzania’s response to the crisis of relevance—is that the African can, and must, devise his own model of development geared to his own needs and objective conditions. And the African can do this without necessarily having to abandon his identity as an African, and without totally rejecting all that which is obviously non-African.

II. — UJAMAA NA KUJITEGEMEA

Nyerere’s model of African development for Africans and by Africans is socialism and self-reliance—Ujamaa na Ku jitegema. The Arusha Declaration announced by Nyerere at Dar es Salaam on

1. Julius Nyerere, Freedom and Socialism/Uhuru na Ujamaa, Dar es Salaam, 1968, p. 340 (Socialism and Rural Development). This collection of Nyerere’s speeches and writings will henceforth be referred to as Freedom and Socialism, the title of the particular article or speech being added in brackets.
February 5, 1967, is the official formulation of this unique approach to the problems of African development.

_Ujamaa_—Nyerere's conception of an African socialist society—is both a response to the challenge of the alien impact on African society as well as a positive and concerted attempt to define and create a society fit for all people to live in. Not a society just for the survival of the fittest, the cunning and the strong; nor a society for just one race, whether black, brown or white; but a society for all human beings. Specifically, _Ujamaa_ is a response to a particular problem:

"...how to get the benefit of European society—benefits which have been brought about by an organisation of society based on an exaggerated idea of the rights or the individual—and yet retain the Africans' own structure of society in which the individual is a member of a kind of fellowship."\(^1\)

This is how Nyerere describes _Ujamaa_:

"A country in which all her citizens are equal; where there is no division into rulers and the ruled, rich and poor, educated and illiterate, those in distress and those in idle comfort [. . .]; in this country all would be equal in dignity; all would have an equal right to respect, to the opportunity of acquiring a good education and the necessities of life; and all her citizens should have an equal opportunity of serving their country to the limit of their ability."\(^2\)

But why socialism? Nyerere contends that "no under-developed country can afford to be anything but socialist."\(^3\) Socialism is the only relevant model of development for African countries. African life was traditionally socialist.\(^4\) Hence the transition from the essentially traditional setting to the modern nation-state would not require drastic change, certainly not for the masses. Moreover, because of its emphasis on collectivity, socialism is the most effective instrument not only for nation-building, in that it provides the rationalisation and justification for minimising tribal and ethnic diversities, but also as an assurance against external economic domination when combined with self-reliance, which will be discussed later. The nation is still embryonic; it cannot withstand the dual pressures of domestic tribal divisions and external manipulations working through these ethnic contradictions.

Nyerere is against capitalism not merely because the system is inherently exploitative and alien to the African way of life, but also because it encourages domestic divisions and strengthens foreign

domination. Capitalism functions on the basis of profit motive and individual assertiveness. Within the context of the objective conditions of contemporary Tanzania where economic status coincides with race, capitalism would be undesirable for an additional reason: it would tend to entrench and perpetuate racism and tribalism. Moreover, because of its emphasis on efficiency regardless of human cost, capitalism would be undesirable because it might destroy the best humanist elements in traditional African society.

Nyerere argues that a capitalist economy in any African state is a foreign dominated economy. No African state exists which has sufficient capital to establish its own indigenous capitalism. “Private investment in Africa—he asserts—means overwhelming foreign private investment, and the only way in which national control of the economy can be achieved is through the economic institutions of socialism.”

But in order to create Ujamaa in Tanzania, certain necessary steps must be taken. There must in the first place be a thorough understanding of the existing, postcolonial society, its basic structure and problems. In other words, the political leadership must have a sound knowledge of the objective conditions of its society. So that whatever measures are taken, these will be based on objective information rather than on the wishful thinking of the leaders. Secondly, there must be “an integrated programme of action based on linked principles,” whereby all the people are involved in national development. Thirdly, development policies must be national and intended in essence to benefit the majority of the people, and not just a few selected groups. Finally, the emphasis should be on the development of the people themselves, and not merely that of the country. In other words, it should be the development of the human factor—the people—rather than the material environment.

Indeed, what the Arusha Declaration stands for is a commitment to a particular way of life, but one to be determined by the Africans themselves. This is how Nyerere explains it:

“Inherent in the Arusha Declaration, therefore, is a rejection of the concept of national grandeur as distinct from the well-being of its citizens, and a rejection too of material wealth for its own sake. It is a commitment to the belief that there are more important things in life than the amassing of riches, and that if the pursuit of wealth clashes with things like human dignity and social equality, then the latter will be given priority.

For in Tanzania which is implementing the Arusha Declaration, the purpose of all social, economic and political activity must be Man—the citizens, and all the citizens, of this country.”

3. Ibid., p. 2.
If, then, the ultimate objective of development is man himself, and if the majority of the people in Tanzania is peasantry, and if, furthermore, African society is basically socialist, as Nyerere asserts, then it follows that development must be based on agriculture. For it is in the rural and not the urban sector that the “Tanzanian Man” lives.

Moreover, if socialism is the only relevant model of development for Tanzania, then *Ujamaa* must be based on rural life. It would be absurd to base it on towns, partly because these centres as they now stand are ‘artificial’ since they are colonial creations and hence based on alien values; and partly because the towns—and the people inhabiting them—are very few indeed and not therefore representative of the total population which is basically African in life outlook. Thus, contrasted with other countries—African and non-African—where industrialisation and urban development are considered necessary prerequisites for socialism, in Tanzania the priority is on rural development. Why? Nyerere explains:

“If our rural life is not based on the principles of socialism our country will not be socialist, regardless of how we organise our industrial sector, and regardless of our commercial and political arrangements. Tanzanian socialism must be firmly based on the land and its workers.”

Nyerere maintains that if Tanzania is serious in facing her problems of development as an African socialist state, then the Government should take all necessary measures to prevent the peasants from being converted into wage earners. Encouraging wage earning as the principal occupation of the peasantry is bound to result in a “rural proletariat,” and this will be one of the inevitable steps leading to capitalism and the exploitation of the peasants, and ultimately to the exploitation of the whole country by foreign capitalists. The aim of the Government should, on the contrary, be to adapt the traditional African family, which in rural areas is almost basically intact, to modern needs. “We must—he urges—aim at creating a nation in which *Ujamaa* farms and communities dominate the rural economy and set the social pattern for the country as a whole.”

Indeed, in an attempt to arrest the inherited capitalist tendencies and to ensure the implementation of socialism in Tanzania, the Arusha Declaration was immediately and dramatically followed by what

1. *Freedom and Socialism*, p. 346. Socialism and Rural Development is now Tanzania’s official policy on rural development.
Nyerere called "a little exercise in nationalisation." This involved the nationalisation of the foreign-owned banking system, import-export companies and other major sectors of the economy.

The basic unit of development in the rural sector must be what Nyerere calls the "Ujamaa village." It is in these villages that Ujamaa must be built and from there to overflow to the urban areas. Ninety-five percent of Tanzania’s population is peasantry and since all organised life in the Ujamaa villages is to be based on socialist principles, then Ujamaa-isation of the urban population would only be a matter of time. In the first place, since the towns are there to serve the needs of the total economy and as the latter is changing towards socialist patterns, then the town will have to respond to these changes. Secondly, the turnover of the urban proletariat too will change in character, as more of these will have to come from the villages or will have gone through Ujamaa schools. Thus, as already pointed out, the Tanzanian socialist strategy differs from other socialist countries in that it is the rural and not the industrialised urban sector which is going to be the socialist vanguard. And this approach is adopted not because Tanzania wants to be different for the sake of being different, but simply because it is the most relevant approach given the Tanzanian agrarian demography.

It would be absurd, Nyerere argues, for Tanzania to encourage capitalism and thus create the necessary Marxist proletariat—the vanguard of the socialist revolution—or engage in industrialisation. Tanzania has neither the capital nor the necessary technical personnel; and even if these could be obtained elsewhere, there is no guarantee that Tanzania’s independence would not be compromised. At any rate, Nyerere further asserts, those who argue that capitalism is the necessary step towards socialism seem to imply that it is only capitalism which can solve the problem of production. This is not correct. The Soviet Union and other socialist countries have clearly demonstrated that problems of production can be solved by means other than capitalism. What Tanzania has to do is to adopt that method which is relevant to her own stage of development and adequate to meet the problems as defined by Tanzanians themselves. Socialism and rural development is thus the relevant approach to Tanzania’s problems of development. And Ujamaa villages are the basic units of socialist reconstruction.

Nyerere explains how the Ujamaa villages are to be formed:

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1. This took place the following day, February 6, 1967. For the initial world reaction to the nationalisation measures, see Ahmed Mohiddin, "The Morning after: Implementation of the Arusha Declaration", Insight and Opinion, Cape Coast, Ghana, forthcoming.
2. Freedom and Socialism, p. 18 (Introduction).
"A group of families will live together in a village, and will work together on a common farm for their common benefit. Their houses will be the ones they build for themselves out of their own resources; their farm will be owned jointly, and its produce will be their joint property. The activities of the village, and the type of production they undertake as well as the distribution of crops and other goods they produce, will all be determined by the village members themselves. For the land will be 'our land' to all the members of the village; the crops will be 'our crops'; the common herd of animals will be 'our herd'. In other words, we shall have an up-to-date, and larger, version of the traditional African family, where the land was 'ours', crops were 'ours', and so on."

And what is to be the role of the Government in this venture? Simply to advise and encourage the peasants to constitute themselves into Ujamaa villages. There is to be no compulsion; only persuasion and material encouragement in the form of firm promises of social overheads—schools, waterpipes, hospitals, agricultural stations, etc.—should the peasants resolve to form an Ujamaa village. As already noted, the principle of organised work within the village is to be communal and this, Nyerere argues, it not alien to the peasant. What is now needed is persuasion and education in adapting to new methods of production in order to increase the level of productivity. "In the past—he says—we worked together because that was the custom; now we have to do it deliberately and to do it in such a manner that modern knowledge can be utilised for the common good."

**Self-Reliance.**

The Arusha Declaration also stipulated that self-reliance was to be chosen for Tanzanian strategy in the struggle for development. What does this mean? There has been a lot of confusion and deliberate misunderstanding on this aspect of the Declaration. In general, and for the purpose of this paper, self-reliance means two things.

First, in the words of Nyerere: "It means that for our development, we have to depend upon ourselves and our resources." This assertion follows logically from the basic postulation, which is the theme of this paper, that Tanzania is committed to the proposition that there is an African approach to African problems. The logical implication of this approach is surely that the African, or Tanzanian, must be prepared to meet the demands of such an approach. It would be silly, as Nyerere argues, to expect other people to build Tanzania in the manner desired by Tanzanians themselves. It implies, furthermore, that

1. *Freedom and Socialism*, pp. 405-406 (Socialism and Rural Development).
Tanzania must engage in those development projects that she herself can manage, i.e. those which are within the power of her citizens to do. Hence, then, the priority on rural development.

Secondly, self-reliance means in general that the instruments or tools of development must also be those which are in abundance in Tanzania and can be controlled by Tanzanians. And it is for this reason that the Declaration is very hard hitting on the importance attached to money and capital, particularly from outside, in the general development of the poor countries. The Declaration asserts that what is needed in a poor country like Tanzania is not money, which she does not have, but land, people, good policies, and good leadership. These latter factors are obtainable in abundance in Tanzania; and are therefore controllable locally by Tanzanians themselves.

But in opting for a policy of self-reliance, less dependence on money as a strategy of development and a shift of priority from urban and industrial development to agriculture, is Tanzania declaring her disinterest in foreign capital and aid? The Declaration is very clear on this point:

"What we are saying [...] is that from now on we shall know what is the foundation and what is the fruit of development. Between money and people it is obvious that the people and their hard work are the foundations for development and money is one of the fruits of that hard work."¹

This point was further clarified by Nyerere in a special article which appeared in the Sunday News, a week after the announcement of the Declaration and the subsequent nationalisation measures:

"We have firmly rejected the proposition that without foreign aid we cannot develop. We shall not depend upon overseas aid to the extent of bending our political, economic or social policies in the hope of getting it. But we shall try to get it in order to hasten our economic progress, and that it may act as a catalyst to our efforts."²

The policy of self-reliance is in fact based on bitter experience. In her first Five Year Development Plan, Tanzania was very disappointed by the response of foreign investors and aid generally, even when assurance to repatriate profits had been given by the Government. Investors seemed reluctant to invest in poor Tanzania where they had to establish the necessary economic infrastructure and train local African personnel before making profits. Moreover, Nyerere discovered that all types of aid—whether in loans, grants or private investment—were not politically neutral: that the donors favoured

particular countries and particular types of development plans and discriminated against others. "I know the conditions under which these developed rich countries offer loans to African states," Nyerere said. "A very considerable amount of the aid does not have too great a relationship to real developing priorities. Very often it goes to prop up shaky governments which the donor approves of—and sometimes the motives are even less respectable."¹ And for a developing country to succeed in attracting aid would entail taking into cognizance the political attitude and idiosyncrasies of the potential donor. As he put it: "The question then becomes whether our Government should determine its basic policies in relation to the wishes of legislators of other countries, or whether it should consider the needs, principles and opinions of the Tanzanian people."² The West Germans' decision to invoke the Hallstein doctrine in 1964, when Tanzania refused to comply with Bonn's insistence that Tanzania should withhold diplomatic recognition of East Germany, was, of course, the most crude manifestation of such a phenomenon. At that time West Germany's aid programme to Tanganyika (as it was when the programme began) was very substantial.

Thus, it gradually became apparent to Nyerere that development was impossible without abandoning or substantially modifying some, if not all, of Tanzania's ultimate objectives. But Tanzania is not interested in mere development, i.e. any type of development, but with a particular kind of development. It has thus been imperative for Tanzania to be concerned not only with a given development, but also with the effects or implications such a development, or the means used to bring about such a development, would have on the ultimate objectives of Tanzanian society. Hence Nyerere has often been forced to reject aid or investment primarily on the grounds that it would not be conducive to the kind of society Tanzania is aiming at.³ Consequently, in the face of such experiences, Nyerere was compelled to search for a new approach to build Ujamaa. "Whether or not we can pull ourselves up by our bootstraps—as he put it—it is clear there is no other way of getting up."⁴ Self-reliance seems to be the only answer.

Self-reliance therefore does not mean isolationism. What it means

¹. Interview with Nyerere in Newsweek Magazine, as reported in the Uganda Argus of February 28, 1967.
is that if Tanzania is to be developed in the manner desired by Tanzanians, then it will have to be by the efforts of Tanzanians themselves and not by those of other people. Nyerere argues that it is not only illusory for Tanzanians to expect and depend on the efforts or assistance of others, as post-independence experience has shown, but self-reliance is also the only dignified way of building a nation. That independence is not worthwhile if not worked for and sustained by the Africans themselves. As he put it: “The doctrine of self-reliance does not imply isolationism, either politically or economically. It means that we shall depend on ourselves, not on others.”

There is also a cultural dimension to the notion of self-reliance which is rooted in the traditional African society. We have already noted that the bulk of Tanzanians are peasants and are still bound to the predominantly subsistence rural economy. Hence if the reconstruction of Tanzania is to be characterised by the presence of things African, certainly in the cultural aspects, then the cultural and spiritual guidance is not the city but the village and the countryside. The city has never served the cultural or spiritual needs of the peasant; on the contrary, it has always been the centre of alien corrupting influences, in terms of goods and social behaviour, and the channel through which the external world—capitalist, imperialist and colonialist—manipulated the entire country. The unreformed colonially-created city cannot therefore be the model for development for Ujamaa.

Moreover, nation-building is in essence an exercise in the development of the people themselves. Hence, self-reliance would not only entail the involvement of people at all levels of national reconstruction but also—and perhaps more important—being compelled to rely on their own initiative and resources, such an exercise might result in releasing the inventive genius of the people, as has been the case with other peoples—the Chinese for example.

Self-reliance is also an important means of redeeming, as it were, the African’s lost dignity and self-confidence. As we have already noted, the consequence of the colonial regime on the African was of such a nature as to render him a mere imitator of the colonial masters. He had to do this in order to survive as well as to achieve his goals, which were themselves determined by the colonial situation. Hence, any development that took place in the colonial situation was not the development of an African as an African, but as an imitator or as an appendage of someone else. And the degree to which he was considered to be successful was the reflection of his capacity to approximate the postulated colonial model. The colonial situation never allowed the African to develop himself in the manner consistent with his inner

desires, but only along lines permitted by the colonial administration. Consequently, the colonised African, because he had to imitate in order to succeed, lost his own sense of dignity as an African, as well as confidence in himself as a human being.

Nyerere argues that the only way by which the African can regain his lost dignity and sense of self-confidence is for him to be actually involved in his own development. The African must ensure that he is free and in control of his own destiny. Yet the development Nyerere has in mind, as already noted, is that of the people themselves. Unless the development of the country is organised, controlled and undertaken by the indigenous people, then that country and people will not be free, however astronomically high the gross national product might be. This is how he puts it:

“Development brings freedom provided it is development of people. But people cannot be developed; they can only develop themselves. For while it is possible for an outsider to build a man’s house, an outsider cannot give the man pride and self-confidence in himself as a human being. Those things a man has to create in himself by his own actions. He develops himself by what he does [. . .], making his own decisions [. . .], increasing his understanding of what he is doing, and why; by increasing his own knowledge and ability, and by his own full participation—as an equal—in the life of the community he lives in.”1

Thus, only by developing himself can the Tanzanian really regain and maintain his dignity as well as his self-confidence as a human being. Nyerere believes that the erstwhile colonised African can do this with a degree of success only through self-reliance; doing things for and by himself. The level of material economic development might not be high or even not commensurate with the labour exerted when compared to other countries, but the results will be of the African’s own design and exertion. And what is even more important, the African learns something about himself in the process—a thing denied him in the colonial situation.

Yet these changes in emphasis (shift from importance of urbanisation and industrialisation to rural development) do not necessarily imply stagnation of the town nor indeed the arrest of industrialisation in absolute terms. The implications of these changes are, in the first place, that development must be of a general nature—it must benefit the entire nation. Hence industrialisation must be considered in terms of the needs of the people, the peasants, and not the urban dwellers. Secondly, the rural sector must not be regarded as a reservoir of labour and area of tourist attractions. The peasant too must be developed. This is the meaning of Ujamaa. All people—

and not only the educated and city-dweller alone—must be developed. Finally, disparity between the urban and the rural provides the basis for class and regional conflicts, an obviously undesirable situation.

Hence self-reliance in its ideological and economic dimensions is not a formula for a passionate and blind leap backwards to the romantic African past, nor is it a populist pandering to the peasantry and masses. Nor indeed is it a Burkean attempt to arrest radical social changes. It is rather a revolutionary formula for a new Africa primarily based on the old, yet radically tempered by the modern Western and other impacts.

Leadership Conditions.

But these proposals, however sound they may appear, will not be effective if the leadership—the ‘fit to rule’—is not committed to them. These elites can neither be ‘purged’ nor ‘liquidated’ for, apart from the fact that devoted socialists to replace the existing leadership are non-existent in contemporary Tanzania, such measures are obviously contrary to the basic ethos of Ujamaa. It is development, through persuasion and not coercion; the “opening up” of heads and not the “breaking up” of them, as Nyerere puts it.

Accordingly, the Arusha Declaration provides stiff conditions for leadership. In the first place, it stipulates that TANU leadership—and the definition of a leader is so liberal as to include effectively a wide range of civil servants and party functionaries—must not only subscribe to socialism but must also practise socialism. The Declaration affirms that socialism is an ideology and a faith. To believe in it implies assiduous practice particularly for leaders whose duty it is to set examples to others. Secondly, and perhaps the most crucial aspect of the Declaration insofar as the leadership is concerned, leaders are not allowed to have more than one source of income. A leader can have as many jobs as he wishes, but not more than one salary. Nor is a leader permitted to engage in personal business activities while still an active leader. He is not allowed to mix business with politics. He must make a choice: business or politics.

It is an observable fact, regrettable as it might be, that African political leaders have used their political offices to further their own or their family’s private ends. The leadership condition of the Declaration is intended to stop this practice.

Formal renunciation of business connections might be considered

1. Backing the efforts of his regional commissioner for Arusha to ‘persuade’ the Masai to wear trousers, certainly when they come to town, Nyerere argued that Ujamaa is for all people. Hence the Masai must be developed not because he is a Masai, but because he is a human being.
effective within the Anglo-Saxon political culture, but not so in contemporary Tanzania, or any other emerging country for that matter. In Tanzania, there must be a clear dichotomy between active political leadership and personal economic pursuits, otherwise *Ujamaa* would not work. The leadership condition is also designed to provide the necessary political link between what the leaders have always urged the masses to do, and what the leaders themselves are in fact doing. It forces the leaders to conform to their own precepts, if they wish to retain their leadership.

Elaborating on the significance of the leadership conditions to the success of *Ujamaa na Kujitegemea*, Nyerere told the general meeting of TANU convened specially to deliberate on the Declaration that it was very important for the leaders to have a clear understanding of what the new policy means, and what its implications were for the leaders and the masses. If the leader does not understand the policies, then he is bound to confuse himself and the masses. If he does understand them, but does not practise them, then he is likely to create cynicism among the masses with consequent loss of their confidence in the leaders, leading to the general degeneration of the country as a whole.1 And this was indeed one of Nkrumah’s weaknesses: he preached one thing, his ministers seemed to be doing another.

Leaders must therefore be the first to understand, accept and to be seen to practise the principles of socialism. Without these conditions, they cannot be leaders, let alone effective ones. They must know what to teach the masses and where (and why) to lead them. The leadership conditions are now part of the constitution of Tanzania, and it is therefore illegal for a person to be a leader if these conditions are not fulfilled.

Linked with the nationalisation of the major sectors of the economy, already noted in this paper, the leadership conditions constitute a crucial aspect of *Ujamaa na Kujitegemea* in Tanzania. Speaking to the special meeting of TANU, mentioned above, Nyerere said that in the past TANU leaders were “spectators in the exploitation of Tanzania,” but now some of them had become “participants.” The leadership conditions, he said, were to prevent TANU leaders from becoming capitalists. He warned: “If we had waited longer, a time would come when only the capitalists would sit in our National Assembly, in the National Executive meetings and in the Central Committee of TANU.”2

1. In his opening speech to the TANU Conference specially convened to ratify the Arusha Declaration late February 1967, Nyerere urged that the leaders must be the first to understand socialism and the principles involved in the Declaration, and to practise socialism. Otherwise, he said, there would be confusion.

Education for Ujamaa na Kujitegemea.

But can Ujamaa be built without the Wajamaa—the socialists? Nyerere once said that one of the reasons why Africa cannot afford to have capitalism is because she has no capitalists of her own, and one cannot have capitalism without capitalists. He has also admitted that Tanzania is not yet socialist. There might be some socialists in Tanzania, but the country itself is not yet socialist. The Arusha Declaration acknowledges this fact. Tanzania is a state of "Peasants and Workers;" it still has elements of capitalism and feudalism and their temptations. These elements could expand and become entrenched. How then can Tanzania build socialism without the socialists? The problem of socialism without the socialists, and vice versa, is one that has confronted all leaders desirous of building socialism in their countries. This was one of the greatest problems that Nkrumah faced, and one which contributed to his fall. And insofar as Tanzania is concerned, the problem is doubly difficult because she is committed to democracy; the transition to Ujamaa will have to be made through persuasion and education and not by force.

Education is obviously very important. As already noted, the colonial type of education was destructive to the very principles upon which traditional African society was based. There was a deliberate attempt to promote things European and to discourage—and disparage—things African. The only ambitions the educated African, the 'fit to rule,' had were to assume European positions and to act like him. Nyerere once observed: "Our young men's ambitions were not to become well-educated Africans, but to become Black Europeans! Indeed at one time, it was a compliment rather than an insult to call a man who imitated the Europeans a 'Black European!'"

Thus when independence came to Tanzania (or Tanganyika as it then was), both the African leaders and the political system they were about to inherit were colonial creations. Independence did not alter the underlying values of the political, economic and other social institutions; it merely formalised the Changing of the Guards. To quote Nyerere once again:

"We have got rid of the foreign government, but we have not yet rid ourselves of the individualistic social attitudes which they represented and taught. For it was from these overseas contacts that we developed the idea that the way to the comfort and prosperity which everyone wants is through selfishness

1. See The Arusha Declaration...
and individual advancement. And, of course, under a capitalist type of system it is quite true that for a few individuals great wealth and comfort is possible."1

Hence radical changes would involve not only the institutions and laws, but also their underlying values and personnel. If the system cannot afford to rid itself of the existing personnel entirely, then at least an atmosphere must be created which would compell the bureaucrat or leader to conform to the new order. And, in this regard, education reforms both in terms of basic policy and of personnel are extremely important. If Tanzania is to be a society of Ujamaa where there are no classes or privileges, it follows then that the young and old must be educated with the right kind of values, the values which are conducive to a socialist society. Instead of the individualistic competitive spirit which a child in a capitalist society gets as part of his general education, the socialist education should emphasise and encourage the values of cooperation and of living together. This is the only way to ensure that these values would persist.

As Nyerere put it while discussing the socialist principles found in the traditional African family, which must be extended to the modern African nation-state:

"If these principles are to be preserved and adapted to serve the larger societies which have now grown up, the whole of the new modern educational system must also be directed towards inculcating them. They must underlie all the things taught in schools, all the things broadcast on the radio, all the things written in the press. And if they are to form the basis on which society operates, then no advocacy of opposition to these principles can be allowed."2

Education for self-reliance, another policy measure to follow the Arusha Declaration, was intended to do precisely this. Education for self-reliance is both a formula for mental decolonisation as well as a realistic attempt to provide an educational framework for a socialist reconstruction of Tanzania. The new education policy emphasises the relevance of education to the needs of the country. Consequently, the preponderant bias is on agricultural and technical education. It is education for Ujamaa na Kujitengemea, the kind of education which, in the circumstances of Tanzania, would enable the people to come to terms with the realities of their situation and give them the skills and confidence to build the country. This is how Nyerere views the nature and the role of education in modern Tanzania:

"Our education must therefore inculcate a sense of commitment to the total community, and help our pupils to accept the values appropriate to our kind of future and not those appropriate to our colonial past."3

In particular our education must counteract the temptation to intellectual arrogance; for this leads to well-educated despising those whose abilities are non-academic or who have no special abilities, but are just human beings.”

“It must encourage the growth of the socialist values we aspire to [. . .] and to ensure that the educated know themselves to be an integral part of the nation and recognise the responsibility to give greater service the greater the opportunities they have had.”

Thus by altering the nature of education and its organisation, by de-emphasising industrialisation and allocating priority to agriculture, and by shifting the emphasis from the urban to the rural sector of the economy, by resolving to rely on the resources and genius of the people themselves, the majority of whom are peasant; in short, by making the people aware of the reality of their situation and the resources at their disposal and by giving them the confidence (a very important element, the lack of which was conducive to the subservient posture of the colonial situation), the people would become self-assured and cease to depend on others as the entire education system and general ethos in society would be against it.

Education for self-reliance is education for socialism and hence communally, rather than individually, oriented. Children are to be educated as members of a socialist community, and therefore the colonial practices whereby children used to be taken from their families and environment to be educated separately from their own people is to be either eliminated or severely discouraged. Above all it is to be education for vocation, for life, and not regarded as a mere hurdle to be cleared on one’s way up the ladder. The school is to be not just a place where one obtains certain skills, but a self-contained unit in which one learns how to be a useful and happy member of a society; it must be a training centre not for specialists or for a small group of people, but geared for the majority who are peasants and workers. This is how Nyerere puts it:

“We should not determine the type of things children are taught in primary schools by the things a doctor, engineer, teacher, economist or administrator needs to know. Most of our pupils will never be any of these things. We should determine the type of things taught in primary schools by things which the boy or girl ought to know—that is, the skill he ought to acquire and the values he ought to cherish if he, or she, is to live happily and well in a socialist and predominantly rural society, and contribute to the improvement of life there [. . .]. The purpose is to provide a different education—one realistically designed to fulfil the common purposes of education in the particular society of Tanzania.”

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., p. 28.
3. Ibid., p. 18.
For most developing countries, the problem of unemployment, and indeed of development itself, is basically that of the wrong type of education. The ethos and content of education in most independent African countries is very much at variance with the domestic economic realities. Emphasis of education in these countries is to produce wage earners, or at least those who wish to work in the cities. But it is not all who are educated this way, or who have these aspirations, who can be so employed. Hence, by taking into account the economic realities of Tanzanian society of the present and Ujamaa of the future, education for Kujitegemea attempts to avoid such problems.

Conclusions

The crisis of modern Western-dominated civilisation as seen by Africans is that of relevance to the human predicament: the incongruities of poverty in the midst of plenty; the glorification of the individual’s prowess and gratifications at the expense of humanity as a whole—all in the name of ‘individual freedom’; the ‘forced’ model of pace, of development on the rest of the people by an elite who have ceased, to all intents and purposes, to live in those very societies which they, as elites, are supposed to be developing.

The aim of this paper has been to present the Tanzanian response to the crisis of relevance; that there is an African approach to the problems of African development: Ujamaa na Kujitegemea. Nyerere’s basic argument is that the individual African and the African state can be modern, developed, progressive, and yet remain essentially African. The African has all the necessary prerequisites for development, and these are to be found in his own traditional society. What is to be done is to adapt the traditional society to modern technological age in order to solve modern problems of African development.

As a response to the crisis of relevance, Ujamaa na Kujitegemea aims at radically reorienting development towards the people themselves, the peasants; and that, to be relevant, development must be based on African realities as seen by Tanzanians in Tanzania. Economic, political and other social institutions must not only be effective in solving the problems seen by the people themselves, but they must also be meaningful to those who are using them and for those whom they are supposed to serve. Moreover, people must be educated to be members of their own society, and not of one which exists only in the colonially-created school syllabi and in the minds and aspirations of the ‘fit to rule’. Ujamaa na Kujitegemea is, in short, a model of development in which all the people—the ‘fit to rule’ and the peasants—are involved. It may not yield quick and phenomenal results in
the growth of the gross national product, for example, but given the
objective conditions of Tanzania and the desired goal, *Ujamaa na Kujitegemea* is the only effective means of resolving the contradictions
and incongruities between the ‘fit to rule’ and the peasants. In the
development of the people, *all the people* must be involved.

Elaborating on this point both as the ultimate objective and the
means of achieving it, Nyerere told the TANU special general meeting:

> "That is what we want to do; it is imperative that we engage [mobilise] the
entire country, not just engage only one section, we want the whole country
to be engaged, everything and every person to be engaged. Every person or
people in their villages to be involved in the raising of the living standards of
all our people. We in the Government and TANU provide the leadership and
explain what is meant by leadership, we must provide information."¹

As indicated in the paper, *Ujamaa na Kujitegemea* is a *deliberate*
response to *particular problems* and it is based on the experience of
Tanzanians in their attempts to solve these problems. Self-reliance
is therefore a more realistic response to the realities of genuine non-
alignment by a people determined to be in control of their own affairs.
As Nyerere warned the TANU special meeting:

> "When aids are given by the big powers [literally, the big countries], these
[aids] do not follow poverty; it is not the case that the big powers search around
and having found that there is poverty somewhere then send money there in
order to remove the poverty. Not at all. They examine a government in order
to find out if it deserves to be overthrown. Then they overthrow that govern-
ment. If it was poverty the big powers were really concerned with, you would
have seen a lot of money flowing into these poor countries. A lot of money
would have flowed into these countries if it was the removal of poverty they
were after. Money does not follow poverty; it follows politics."²

But Nyerere is saying much more than this. He is in fact asserting
that it is only by being and accepting themselves for what they are,
that they are Africans and nothing else, that Africans can effectively
contribute to universal civilisation. Imitation of others—whether
the erstwhile colonial rulers or the current neocolonial masters—will
not, however creatively that might be, help solve Africa’s problems
in Africa and indeed would definitely hinder the Africans’ own devel-
opment as a people.

There are of course many problems and grave risks involved in the
pursuit of *Ujamaa na Kujitegemea*. I have discussed some of these
problems elsewhere.³ But the crucial question which has been and

1. Majadiliana ya Mkutano Mkuu wa TANU, Taarifa Rasmi, Mkutano
2. Ibid., p. 17.
3. For further discussion on the problems of effecting social changes through
education and by utilising existing personnel, see Ahmed MOHIDDIN, "Revolution
continues to be asked by many people, particularly non-Africans, is: can the African, who has only recently emerged from slavery and colonial domination, really succeed in this venture? Nyerere’s answer is simple and to the point: “If other people have developed their countries and are human beings like us, we are going to develop Tanzania.”¹