

THE PRINCIPAL POLITICO-ECONOMIC CAUSES OF
ALIENATION IN KENYA BETWEEN 1945 AND 1970

BY

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

October, 1978

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A B S T R A C T

Although alienation is essentially psychological, its causes lie in the material and social infrastructure of our societies. But no serious attempt has been taken to analyse the material and social roots of alienation in Kenya.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the principal politico-economic causes of alienation in Kenya from 1945 to 1970, although these time-boundaries are not strictly adhered to.

The analysis starts with a re-definition of alienation to fit the Kenyan situation by first examining theories of earlier writers. Here alienation is defined as a condition of oppression, exploitation, powerlessness and, to some extent, uninvolvement.

The main findings are that, in Kenya, the principal politico-economic causes of alienation are colonial values, the removal of Africans from their lands, the existence of private capital, and post-independence contradictions.

The introduction of colonial values submerged African values. In this process, the church and the formal educational system were the main agents of alienation. By insisting on the total abandonment of traditional values, the church estranged Africans from their ancestral shrines. So did the schools by introducing totally new values.

The granting of African lands to white settlers made many Africans landless and served as an important cause of alienation. Those who were made landless were denied a vital factor of production, and the separation of man from the means of livelihood constitutes alienation. Even the way the independent Government handled the land question by giving land to those who had capital left many people alienated.

In a capitalist society, capital stands in an antagonistic position to labour and alienates the workers. In Kenya, the continued inflow of foreign capital alienates both the local petty-bourgeoisie and the workers. It is also due to the predominance of foreign capital over state machinery that workers' organisations are very strictly controlled and workers' strikes banned.

Alienation has been aggravated by post-independence contradictions between the international bourgeoisie and the local petty-bourgeoisie, between the African petty-bourgeoisie and the Asian petty-bourgeoisie, and between the whole bourgeoisie and workers.

Recommendations this thesis makes are that alienation can be minimised only when these conditions are met: There must be proper planning for the use and exploitation of available resources; major means of production must be nationalised and socialised; and a national culture has to be developed if Kenyans are to see each other as compatriots.

A B B R E V I A T I O N S

AWF	African Workers Federation
BP	British Petroleum
CDC	Commonwealth Development Corporation
COTU	Central Organisation of Trade Unions
CSM	Church of Scotland Mission
EALB	East African Literature Bureau
EAPH	East African Publishing House
EATUC	East African Trade Union Congress
FKE	Federation of Kenya Employers
HEB	Heinemann Educational Books
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development(World Bank)
ICDC	Industrial and Commercial Development Corporation
IDS	Institute for Development Studies
KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KNFU	Kenya National Farmers Union
KPU	Kenya People's Union
NKG	New Kenya Group
OUP	Oxford University Press
TPH	Tanzania Publishing House
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

INTRODUCTION

The Problem:

The phenomenon of alienation is one of the greatest problems confronting man in the modern world. It is a phenomenon which, on the other hand, has fascinated a good number of thinkers and philosophers from time immemorial. Even now many social scientists regard alienation with special significance. From thinkers like G.W.F. Hegel, through Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, to modern writers like Herbert Marcuse and Frantz Fanon, the concept and phenomenon of alienation have commanded a singularly significant fascination.

This phenomenon has sometimes been analysed in the socialisation literature as a problem of growing up, as an inevitable form of experience which one undergoes due to one's mental and intellectual development. It has also been treated in the critiques of work in modern industry, as a form of boredom which results from the repetitive nature of work made necessary by

the division of labour, and as a result of the reduction of man to a mere machine with little or no room for creativity. Here it is argued that man is prevented from realising and utilising his full potentials.'

The phenomenon of alienation has also featured prominently in the critiques of work in some bureaucratic organisations which tend to swallow up man and virtually negate his identity and also reduce his self-assertiveness which is a necessary quality for his own self-realisation. Alienation has also been widely analysed in the literature about the quality of life in bourgeois society where the majority of the people worship wealth and money, and as a result ignore the problems of human existence or undervalue human life itself. This eventually leads to the dehumanisation of man. Even as Kenya's second President remarked in his first address to Kenya's parliamentarians: "One can accumulate enough money to buy a golden bed. But one cannot buy sound sleep with money."¹

Alienation has also been treated in the literature about the conditions of the proletariat and peasants as a form of powerlessness on the part of the proletariat and peasants in relation to the wealthy and powerful members of their societies.

Indeed, the concept of alienation has been employed by many writers in a wide range of problems and issues either as a psychological or philosophical or sociological term. But alienation as a direct or even indirect result of major political and economic forces in society has not received much attention from these same writers.²

Some writers have retreated behind a veil of statistics in the hope that by measuring and correlating the effects of alienation they might get a clue to the principal causes, but they have often been amazed to discover that alienation is not so easy to quantify. Most other writers still think the road to understanding the causes of alienation lies in an understanding of the way an isolated individual is frustrated

and crushed by the system he lives in, and the people he interacts with.² But such studies have yielded results which are of little value to understanding the principal causes of alienation in a developing country like Kenya.³

Even on Kenya, the few works that there are on the problem of alienation, do not, in any way, place the problem in a concrete politico-economic context.³ Those who attempt to analyse it in politics do not even seem to appreciate that politico-economic phenomena in a developing capitalist state like Kenya, indeed in any country, need to be analysed in a context of international forces which have necessarily been behind the movement of that country's history since it came under colonial rule or since it came under the sway of finance capital.⁴ Colin Leys in his book UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN KENYA: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism⁴, comes nearest to analysing politics and economics in Kenya from the point of view of external forces, but then his focus is on underdevelopment not alienation.⁴ Thus, there is

no work on the causes of alienation in Kenya which takes into serious consideration the interplay of political and economic forces in their international context.

This thesis takes a different approach from that of the other works on alienation in Kenya. Its central premise is that a study of the causes of alienation in a capitalist state ought to be broader than what appears to be the immediate causes of the frustration of an individual. An analysis of these factors has, in fact, to take into account non-psychological factors and recognise their historical dimension. It has to look for the causes of those psychological factors, and those will naturally be the principal causes of the alienation of that particular individual.

In this thesis, we have tried to point out the principal causes of alienation from the wider nexus of political economy. We have

analysed the politico-economic causes of the problem of alienation from the last years of colonial rule to the first few years of independence, from around 1945 to 1970. But we did not rigidly adhere to these time-boundaries where they appeared likely to distort our analysis or even weaken it. Our primary aim, however, has been to analyse the principal politico-economic causes of alienation, but not to verify the existence of alienation within that period. In any case, the existence of alienation in Kenya has already been proved to a certain extent by various writers.⁵ Our analysis has further taken into account the marxist model of the interplay of political and economic factors in the alienation of man in the modern capitalist society, although the entire thesis is not by implication a marxist analysis.

Marx was one of the earliest writers to analyse the frustrations, exploitation and alienation of a worker in capitalist society. He employed the term in a fairly wide sense,

including the dehumanisation of man, the loss of satisfaction in one's work and life, and the powerlessness of the exploited and poor in society. Marx, in fact, gave the term so many applications and the things he termed alienated vary so considerably that the way in which the concept is to be understood depends very much on the context in which it appears. But the causes remained the same, namely, the system of social production and reproduction from nature of the material means of life. For instance, when addressing himself to the problem of a man who is alienated through the surrender of his labour, Marx argued:

The alienation of a worker in his product means not that his labour becomes an object, an external existence, but that it exists outside him, independently, as something alien to him, and that it becomes a power on its own confronting him. It means that the life which he has conferred on the object confronts him as something hostile and alien.⁶

Alienation is here seen partly as a separation of a man's product from him and partly as a confrontation of the product of labour to the producer, which, in a slightly different language, is a contradiction between labour and capital. That indeed is part of the essence of alienation; the contradiction between labour and capital. In common use, the term alienation usually suggests the existence of a separation and the loss of control over what is one's own, including loss of control over one's own labour and its products. The separation is often the result of loss of that control. Marx's argument suggests that the alienation of a worker in this particular sense revolves around the process of production and the appropriation of the products of labour. And all these are determined by the mode of production. The causes of this kind of alienation are, therefore, found in the society's mode of production.

The term mode of production in this context refers mainly to the way production is

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carried out, that is, by what means the people produce the material goods necessary for subsistence. Every mode of production has two aspects peculiar to it, namely, the productive forces of society and the relations of production in that society.

Productive forces normally refers to man's relation to nature, that is, the degree to which he controls it. Productive forces, thus, refers to man and the instruments of labour when associated in the production of material goods. Production relations, on the other hand, are economic relations of a people engaged in the production of material goods. Both aspects of the mode of production form an indissoluble unity and cannot exist separately since people in processing various objects interact with one another.⁷

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Basically, all production relations depend on who owns the means of production. In fact, the form of ownership of the means of production underlies all economic

activities and relations in society. In a capitalist society, all the major means of production are owned by a small class of capitalists while the largest class of the proletariat owns very little, if anything, and often has to surrender its labour to someone else in order to earn a living. This labour which is surrendered is technically alienated from the proletariat, and that is one way in which economic factors came to play a role in causing alienation to the largest class of a capitalist society.

According to Marx, the alienation of man from man is a direct consequence of the alienation which occurs at the level of production. In his own words:

In the relationship of alienated labour, every man regards other men according to the standards and relationships in which he finds himself placed as a worker.⁸

An analysis of the principal political and economic causes of such a form of

alienation has necessarily to take into account the pillars on which the whole politico-economic structure of society is based. It has to consider the lop-sided system of distribution of what is produced, point out the contradictions of that particular system, and examine the way international forces influence the entire system.

The ownership of the major means of production by a class of exploiters is often defended by the capitalist state, and this is quite natural since the capitalist state is itself an instrument of the economically dominant class. As Marx stated in the COMMUNIST MANIFESTO:

.... the bourgeoisie has at last, since the establishment of Modern Industry and of the world market, conquered for itself, in the modern representative state, exclusive political sway.

* The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.⁹ *A*

To this extent, those who are economically

powerful will be politically dominant, and likewise, those who are economically deprived will automatically be politically disadvantaged and hence relegated to the position of underdogs. And the underdogs of any system are inevitably the alienated group. That way, economic and political factors are seen to act together in bringing about the deprivation and alienation of the disadvantaged people in society. That is why this thesis examines the political and economic causes of alienation in Kenya within the same ray of light.

Methodology:

This thesis first works out a definition of the concept of alienation and then proceeds to analyse the principal causes of the problem of alienation in Kenya. These principal causes are here identified as colonialism, land, and capital. But there is also a discussion of the post-independence contradictions in the country and the way they have aggravated the problem of alienation.

On the definition of the concept of alienation, the discussion starts from certain presuppositions of philosophy accepted as authoritative. It attempts to work out a definition of the concept, and such a definition has entailed the examination of the concept in the earlier works of such writers as Hegel, Marx, Engels, and even later writers like David Crawford, H.F. Heinemann and Walter Kaufmann. However, to avoid servile dependence on these presuppositions, we attempted to redefine the concept of alienation to fit the situation in Kenya. It goes without saying, therefore, that our definition of alienation in this thesis slightly varies from the definitions of those earlier writers, and this was expected since their definitions of alienation are not necessarily the definition of alienation.

Under colonialism, Kenya began to play → its role in the international capitalist system through the exportation of primary commodities and the importation of manufactured goods. The

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incorporation of this country into the world capitalist system had special significance for the generation of the kind of alienation we have examined in this thesis.*

The first fundamental steps in this whole drama were made through the separation of some of the indigenous people from their values and belief-systems. Simultaneously with this was the introduction of new values to replace the destroyed or submerged African values and belief-systems. Our analysis of colonialism as a principal cause of alienation has taken into account this destruction of indigenous values and its replacement with foreign or alien ones.

Imperialism also alienated a section of the people of this country by detaching them from their soil in those areas which were to be settled by white farmers, particularly in the Kenya highlands. The alienation of the indigenous people by detaching them from their soil was soon followed by the establishment of a system of *

forced labour in which the colonial state played a very important role. We have analysed this question of land alienation to white farmers as one of the principal causes of the alienation of the indigenous people. We have also considered the patterns of land ownership in the post-independence era and pointed out to what extent the post-independence land resettlement programmes served as a cause of alienation.

Finance capital was also a very important agent of alienation in Kenya. This thesis examines the extent to which capital has been used to oppress and exploit, and eventually alienate, the people of Kenya during the colonial period and after the attainment of independence. Since capital is itself a form of property, in line with the ownership of capital in Kenya, the thesis also looks at the present system of property-ownership and points out its alienating effects to the poor, particularly the workers who are exploited by capital.

Treated also in connection with capital are the bans on the workers' strikes, since those bans tend to reveal the dominance of capital over the state apparatus, on the one hand, and the brutal alienation of the workers by both the state and capital - or capital working through the state - on the other. *

This thesis also examines the degree to which the nascent socio-economic classes in Kenya are a manifestation of the alienation generated and maintained by politico-economic factors. To the extent that classes based on socio-economic inequalities constitute antagonistic divisions in society, the phenomenon of class formation is a fundamental factor in alienating certain categories of people from each other. And in stratified society, the economically dominant class is necessarily the most powerful group politically. The thesis consequently examines the connection of the socio-economic structure with production, because the forms of production and the social relations

in a capitalist society produce alienation which is anti-thetical to the proper integration of an individual into society.

In the whole analysis, special attention has been paid to the historical factors which are necessary for the proper understanding of the present. Even as Ernest Mandel observed:

The present structure of the underdeveloped countries is the product of their past and of the particular way in which they have made contact with capitalism.¹⁰

This thesis is, however, not wholly based on an empirical examination of data obtained first-hand by the writer. It is a study in political theory and draws most of its conclusions from data obtained from secondary sources. And it is our view that the validity of an argument in philosophical analysis depends more on the relevance of the material assembled, the kind of questions that are asked, and the depth of analysis from that material, than on

whether the sources are secondary or primary. That naturally means that a big proportion of our conclusions are arrived at after extensive library research.

The Purpose:

The main purpose of this thesis is to widen our understanding of the concept of alienation and of the factors which are responsible for the problem of alienation in Kenya. But the thesis does not just diagnose the problem and abandon the patient. It also attempts to make some theoretical prescriptions for the minimisation of the problem. And it is at the level of these prescriptions that our analysis plays a vital societal role. It takes a considerable length of time to study a country and make recommendations which can be implemented without alterations, but what this thesis offers are useful as far as the minimisation of the problem is concerned. Our only handicap, perhaps, is the fact that our study does not come to the present, but nothing has changed really much since 1970.

F O O T N O T E S

1. See THE WEEKLY REVIEW(Nairobi), 15 September, 1978, p.12.
2. There are, of course, some exceptions to this. Karl Marx, for example, first studied alienation in Man's intellectual life, and then proceeded to the essence of alienation in politics(in his criticism of the bureaucratic state in the works of 1843) and in economics(in his Manuscripts of 1844). David Caute in his book The Illusion(London, Panther, 1972), slightly treats of the phenomenon in a political context.
3. We have in mind the works of CHRIS WANJALA: The Alienation of the writer in East Africa; M.C. ROSS: Grassroots in an African City; and also H.H. WERLIN: Governing an African City.
4. See C.LEYS: Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism (London, HEB, 1975).
5. See Wanjala, Ross, Werlin, op.cit. See also NGUGI wa THIONG'O: Homecoming(London, HEB,1972).

6. K. MARX: Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 (London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1970) p.108.
 7. B.M. BOGUSLAVSKY, et.al. ABC of Dialectical and Historical Materialism(Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1976) p. 275.
 8. Cited in R.SCHACHT Alienation(London, George Allen & Unwin, 1971) p. 94.
 9. K. MARX The Communist Manifesto(Middlesex, England, Penguin, 1967) p.82.
 10. Cited in I, SHIVJI The Silent Class Struggle (Dar es Salaam, TPH, 1973) p.4.
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CHAPTER ONE

ON THE CONCEPT OF ALIENATION

What is the actual meaning of the term alienation?

At the present time, it is a very difficult undertaking to study the concept of alienation. This by no means suggests that writings on the concept are hard to come by. On the contrary, there are hundreds of volumes on the concept and phenomenon of alienation, but the interpretations of the term are so varied that in spite of this big number of books on alienation, there is yet no single general definition of the concept which can be said to have emerged from the efforts of so many hands.

Indeed, one of the first problems a researcher confronts in an endeavour to unfold the meaning of alienation is the multiplicity of interpretations which the concept has acquired over many years in different disciplines. The various directions in which the concept of

alienation has been developed in sociology, philosophy and psychology have made the term a little bit of a problem to define.

The concept, as we have already pointed out, has often been analysed in the literature about the quality of life in capitalist societies, in the works about the general conditions of workers and peasants, in writings on the effects of colonialism on the psyche of the colonised peoples, and in critiques of the nature of work in modern industry.¹ But all these studies have not offered a single comprehensive meaning of the concept.

If it has been difficult to understand the meaning of alienation in various social science disciplines and sub-disciplines, it is even more difficult to interpret some of the views of modern scholars on this concept. Some scholars have utilised the concept of alienation to mean almost anything which they want to describe as alienated, thus stretching the term to have so many shades of meaning.²

It is precisely this multiplicity of interpretations that drove one American writer, Richard Schacht, to arrive at his own conclusion that employing the term alienation without any elaborate explanation of what one has in mind communicates very little these days.³ The same view was echoed by psychologist Kenneth Keniston in his book YOUTH AND DISSENT when he suggested that the term "alienation is today so ill-defined that anyone who sets out to study the psychology of alienated individuals must begin by defining carefully what he is studying".⁴

How, then, do we grapple with this problem of diversity in the interpretations of a concept which has been in use for about two centuries? From the pioneering efforts of George Hegel, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, through the efforts of modern writers like Erich Fromm, Walter Kaufmann, F.H. Heinemann, David Crawford, Herbert Marcuse and Frantz Fanon, the concept of alienation has received a lot of attention under numerous labels. But some of

these labels or interpretations might not be of immediate application in our thesis. Yet, to establish a theoretical framework in this chapter which will be utilised in subsequent chapters of the thesis, we have an obligation to review some of the postulations of those earlier writers.

Our ambition, therefore, in this chapter, is threefold. In the first place, we want to examine some of the different shades of meaning which the concept has been given by various writers in its history of development. The purpose of reviewing these interpretations is to find out what single general definition can be derived from these views and be incorporated in our analysis of the political and economic causes of alienation in Kenya.

Secondly, we shall look at the definition of the concept in the works of Marx and Engels and try to trace the roots of the phenomenon of alienation in history from their

accounts. To update the Marxist theory of alienation, we shall also look at subsequent publications on Marxist thought.⁵ And, finally, we shall attempt a new definition of the concept of alienation or lay down a theoretical framework to be used in this thesis by working out a generalised view of alienation from the literature we have reviewed.

The Review of Some Definitions:

The philosophical issues inherent in the concept of alienation were made explicit for the first time by Hegel, Marx and Engels. In his book THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF SPIRIT, Hegel attempted to trace the whole development of the human spirit. He presented certain human developments starting from Ancient Greece, through the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, and the period between that revolution and his own time of writing. In all that, he tried particularly to bring into focus

all of the great human achievements of the past up to his time and presented them as aspects of a single continuous development.

According to that philosophy of Hegel, to segment history is to alienate those particular portions segmented from the main tree of human development.

In general, Hegel held that the world in which men lived was basically a world which these men themselves had created. To him, all social, political, economic and cultural institutions constituted what he termed a Social Substance. This social substance came into existence through many years of human activity, and it is that same human activity that has sustained the social substance in its existence. Since this social substance is a product of the human mind or human spirit, argued Hegel, it is essentially spiritual in nature. *

And, indeed, Hegel considered that the real world in which man lived was only an

external, phenomenal form of the spirit or idea.

In one of his arguments he postulated:

This world is a spiritual entity,
it is essentially the fusion of
individuality with being; this
its existence is the work of
self-consciousness.....⁶

The distinctiveness of Hegel's
framework, therefore, lies in the fact that he
maintained that the whole was the absolute idea,
and he set about distinguishing its various
parts which were said to have been
alienated from the whole if they were separated
from it. He established the identity of each
thing in relation to the whole, and if anything
was treated alone, then it was only partial and
unfinished. It was thus in a state of alienation.
Its proper analysis required, therefore, that
it was to be conceived of as something including
far more, both in time and space.⁷

But one cannot meaningfully speak
merely of Hegel's concept of alienation since

he employed the term in two different ways. In one sense, he used it to refer to a separation or discordant relationship, such as might obtain between the individual and the social substance; as something portraying loss of unity between an individual and the social substance. This phenomenon particularly comes about when an individual gets disillusioned with the existing social, political and cultural institutions. Hegel elaborately argued that any individual's relation to the social substance was one of immediate and complete unity. He saw it as a natural identification of an individual with the institutions of his society. But an individual's intellectual development, he argued, could bring about a disharmony between him and the social substance.

When such a disharmony or discordant relationship or conflict arises, it inevitably drives the individual into himself and out of that social actuality, so that he ceases to identify himself with the social substance and

in due course comes to restrict his identification to his own person.

Once this original unity is lost, the relation of the individual to the social substance becomes discordant. The individual eventually comes to regard the social substance, with which he formerly was at one, as something completely other, and otherness is itself a form of alienation. The individual is thus alienated from society through his own self-consciousness. In Hegelian terms, alienation of that kind takes the appearance of the spirit's inability to re-internalise a world which it has created itself. To put it slightly differently, this first sense of alienation is understood as the inability of consciousness to come to terms with its own world; its unwillingness to fit into its own political, cultural and economic institutions.

This first sense of Hegel's definition of alienation has only a limited application in our thesis. Since, at the level

of politics, we are mainly concerned with the relationship between the rulers and the ruled in Kenya, Hegel's definition of alienation could successfully be applied in cases of the conflicts which arose in the post-colonial period, but not in the pre-independence era. Though under colonialism most Africans were alienated by the colonial structure, there is no way in which it can be argued that they had been at one time part of the colonial social substance before they turned against it. They did not take any part in the establishment of colonial rule, so the sense in which Hegel defined alienation to mean the inability of spirit to come to terms with its own social substance does not apply.

However, this particular sense of the definition could have a limited application in the post-colonial period when we bring in the principle of representative government and the collective responsibility of members of that government. Most of the politicians in Kenya who came into a discordant relationship with the

independent government in the mid-sixties had earlier played a recognisable role in building a base for that same government. Yet, still a good number got disenchanted with the way that government was being run and even formed an opposition party, the Kenya People's Union ^{LPU} (KPU), to challenge the ruling party, the Kenya African National Union (KANU). In that light, the formation of the KPU in April 1966 was itself a manifestation of the alienation of its ^X members from the government. But Hegel's sense of the concept in the light of that problem had only limited application, because, those schisms between politicians had their roots in the political economy, and were in fact, an expression of one of the contradictions of imperialism. These schisms were in part a manifestation of the contradiction between the politicians who stood for the masses and those who favoured private property and imperialist capital.

In the second sense, Hegel uses the term alienation to refer to a kind of

surrender or sacrifice of particularity and willfulness. This surrender is undertaken in connection with the overcoming of that syndrome of alienation which manifests itself in separation and brings about the re-attainment of unity and identification with the social substance. While Hegel regards that type of alienation which manifests itself in separations as something unfortunate, he regards alienation of this second order, that is, surrender or sacrifice, as something that should be encouraged, as a quality which is quite desirable in human society.

Unity between the social substance and the individual can be restored only if wilful self-assertion is given up. The individual for whom the social substance is alienated can overcome that first kind of alienation, that is, can overcome the discordant relationship between him and the social substance, only through the sacrifice of spiritual self-surrender, and that constitutes the second sense of alienation.

According to Hegel, then, the cure for the alienation which is generated by social structures is self-alienation. Alienation of one kind or another is thus, according to Hegel, a permanent condition of society.

When self-consciousness comes to the realisation that the alienated social substance is its own product, and if it comes to a better understanding of the nature of the social substance and of its own nature, it begins to identify with that social substance. This, in part, is the process through which an individual assimilates the content of his society and culture, simultaneously making it his own and making himself a part of it. Only then is his unity with the social substance properly established. He can thus achieve unity and identification with the social substance only by surrendering his particular self, by sacrificing his particular interests and desires to the extent necessary. This ultimately indicates that the process of socialisation is a manifestation of alienation

of this kind. In a nutshell, that is Hegel's second sense of alienation which depicts a situation wherever spirit finds its position in the social substance by denying itself what it knows to be its own.

This second sense of alienation in Hegel's philosophy has some applicability in our thesis both in the pre-independence and the post-colonial periods. The uprooting of the indigenous people of Kenya from their culture through the school system and through the church are examples of this kind of alienation during the colonial era. And the come-back of the former KPU leaders to KANU in the early seventies without any substantial alterations in KANU prior to their re-entry is evidence of surrender, which is a manifestation of this second sense of alienation.

Thus, politicians like Oginga Odinga, Bildad Kaggia, Mrs. Grace Onyango, and Achieng Oneko, to name just a few, had to sacrifice their radical views in an effort to have accommodation

in the dominant system. To some extent, this was an occasion of utilising self-alienation to regain unity with the social substance, of surrendering one's own views or policy stance in a bid to be at home with the existing socio-economic structure.

There is, however, another elucidation of self-alienation which is slightly different from Hegel's viewpoint. David Crawford defines self-alienation as an individual's incapacity to feel and experience himself or to experience his feelings, and his lack of involvement and intimate relationships.

Crawford's claim is that the alienated individual is separated from that part of himself which is most real and important, and as a result, he is alienated from others.⁸ According to that view, self-alienation is just a step leading to a general condition of alienation, which in turn manifests itself by discordant relationships between an individual and his own society. It is not, in fact, a cure for that general condition of alienation, but a kind of primary

stage in the same direction of development.

Crawford further explains:

The alienation of self is from itself and through its own activity. The process of self-alienation, then, might be abstractly characterised as non-unifying activity issuing from itself, hindering involvement, manifesting itself in conflicting divisions, resulting in dominating and compelling forces, nonetheless, presupposing some unity.⁹

His explanation suggests some kind of apathy and that is why there may be no involvement. It suggests also some kind of separations and powerlessness. Indeed, in another context, he clearly suggests a certain syndrome of separations and points out some disunities inherent in the phenomenon. To quote him again:

The idea of 'separation' is common to all characteristics of alienation. An alienated world exhibits some fragmentation and conflicting polarities,

and in such a world, the disunion or separated parts cannot be put together. It is the experience of being inwardly separated from something to which one really belongs. An alienated world is one in which reality is taken to be contradictory and impervious to the unifying efforts of thought and valuation.¹⁰

Crawford has taken pains to point out the major manifestations of alienation. He does not buy Hegel's idea that self-alienation and that general condition of "other" alienation constitute two types of alienation. To him, they are merely different stages of the same process. The important thing is that he recognises alienation as a problem which manifests itself in separations and contradictions. And, of course, contradictions are at the base of virtually all forms of alienation.

Another writer, Karen Horney, in

NEUROSIS AND HUMAN GROWTH, emphasises the alienated individual's experience of his own activity as being under the compulsion of an ^{*} external force. The demands of the external force drives the individual to be something other, to be something different from what he is or could be, resulting in a:

.... shift of energies,
from developing the given
potentials of the real self
to developing the fictitious
potentials of the idealised
self..... the more energies
absorbed in the service of
the pride system, the
fewer are those available
for the constructive drive
towards self-realisation.¹¹

Horney's view suggests some kind of social dislocation as a manifestation of ^{*} alienation. It is the kind of alienation which was experienced by most Africans through the schools system and missionary activity during the colonial period. The values taught by the intruding colonialists were foreign to the indigenous people, and the compulsion that the

indigenous people were subjected to caused a "shift of energies" from developing their own potentials within their own value-systems.

The result of this kind of alienation is that the alienated individual feels that a part of his own self is either missing or strange to him, and he relates to himself in a detached, impersonal way. He feels removed from himself and experiences a remoteness from his own feelings so that his own feelings are not genuinely experienced. In a significant way, the self-alienated individual can function with the core of himself not really participating.

By stressing detachment, powerlessness, * dislocation and disunities, these two views have helped to clarify what constitutes a situation of alienation. Even Charles Andrain suggests in his thesis on the political concepts of African leaders, alienation is synonymous with separation, apathy, powerlessness, social isolation, meaninglessness, normlessness, * and estrangement.¹¹ Andrain defines social

isolation to mean the estrangement from one's culture; the experience which is felt mostly by intellectuals, and it was also at one time felt by christians. Normlessness in his thesis refers to an absence of internalised values or rules to regulate behaviour. It is generally thought that this is the kind of alienation found among thieves, robbers and various classes of criminals. And powerlessness is employed to refer to exclusion from decision-making process in one's society.

Another American psychologist, F.H. Heinemann, also regards alienation as a problem of modern society. In his article on "Existentialism and the Human predicament", Heinemann perceives alienation as a syndrome which manifests itself in separations. He argues:

The facts to which the term alienation refers are objectively, different kinds of dissociation, breaks or rupture between human beings and their objects, whether the latter be other persons, or their natural world, or

their own creations of art, science, and society; and subjectively, the corresponding states of disequilibrium, disturbance, strangeness and anxiety.¹³

Heinemann's definition has added another dimension to the phenomenon of alienation. He suggests that alienation means not only a frustration in one's aspirations, but also an anxious mind, a state of being restless and in disturbance. Any rupture between an individual and what he aspires to get is termed alienation.* But Heinemann does not explain how this rupture or dissociation comes about. Is it internally or externally generated?

Kenneth Keniston warns that any proper analysis of the problem of alienation must take into account all factors responsible for the condition. He argues that such an analysis has to consider the causes, the manifestation, and the agents of alienation. In his own words:

While the concept of alienation in every variation suggests the loss or absence of a desirable or previous relationship, it requires further specification in at least four respects:

1. Focus- alienation from what?
2. Placement- what replaces the old relationship?
3. Mode- how is alienation manifest?
4. Agent- what is the agent of alienation?

The four questions provide a basis for a virtually limitless number of varieties of alienation.¹⁴

Generally, utilising Keniston's scheme one can arrive at a more or less appropriate explanation of what alienation really constitutes or what one really means by alienation. Since alienation is a relative term, we have to specify the focus and point out what replaces that which is desirable. We could even add that in any analysis of alienation, the cause is the principal factor.

But what kind of societies mostly exhibit symptoms of alienation?

Some writers have been tempted to argue that alienation is necessarily a problem of capitalism, but that is far from being true. Alienation exists in both Marxist and Capitalist states.¹⁵ There are, of course, differences in the degrees to which different types of classes in the two systems feel the problem of alienation as much as there are differences in the types of classes alienated. This difference is a necessary one since the two types of systems are committed to the defense of different types of order and to the cultivation of different types of values.

To defend order in a capitalist state would, for instance, invoke laws which call for the protection of private property, and any efforts made to even disseminate ideas that the institution of private property oppresses and alienates some of the citizens of the particular society would be conceived as a threat to law

and order. The people who are most alienated by such a law are obviously the poor and the exploited.

In a Marxist state, on the other hand, the defence of order would invariably invoke laws that call for the prevention of the acquisition of private property for commercial purposes, and equally any efforts made at amassing wealth beyond specified limits become a threat to law and order. Those who are most alienated by such a legal constraint are the relatively well-to-do who obviously stand in a position to amass wealth and exploit the poor if it were not for the law.

Thus, from the point of view of the institution of private property alone, we can reasonably argue that alienation exists in both systems, though the types of classes most alienated by the law governing private property are different.

Indeed, in his book THE ILLUSION,

David Caute argues that modern man in both capitalist and communist systems faces an acute problem of alienation because he lives in a manipulative society. He attributes the causes of alienation to the tips which modern man is given through the mass media in order to change his style of living. He elaborates:

The commercial advertisement as a total, cumulative phenomenon projects an utterly cynical view of human relationships. All it can see or feel about man is the money in his pocket. It represents a violent form of reification. The ruling elements in both the capitalist and communist states generate their own aims and then mobilise vast communicative resources to make those aims not only accepted but actively desired by the population. False needs are stimulated while politically harmless outlets for frustration and surplus energy are proposed. Social domination is tirelessly justified in terms of rapid

cycle of production and
consumption..... Where
manipulated consent fails,
naked coercion intervenes.¹⁶

This persuasion, argues Caute, has
often the effect of getting men to surrender
what they have in order to go for something else.
And surrender, as we pointed out earlier, is *
a form of alienation. When this: surrender is
not voluntarily undertaken, force is employed
to effect change in attitude. This use of force *
is in a sense a cause of alienation. Both
capitalist and marxist states widely use ideology
to obtain consent, and where that ideology fails,
force is resorted to in order to achieve the
same end.

➤ Under colonialism, naked force and
the powers-that-were were almost synonymous. The
use of force was so common that in some cases
Africans, who were the subjects of that force,
often submitted in an effort to pre-empt the *
use of that force. And Frantz Fanon has argued

in his works that colonialism with its use of violence represented the most brutal form of alienation. All his writings are a scathing indictment of colonialism and imperialism. In uncompromising terms, he spoke of the burden both spiritual and physical that imperialism imposed on the dominated people and made a biting denunciation of its dehumanising effect on those whose identity it tried to negate.

For Fanon, it was the rationale of the colonial system, with its Manichean racial divisions, that nearly destroyed the identity, and ipso facto the human quality, of the black man, and in part rendered the black man's identity meaningless. It dispossessed them, subordinating them to economic, political and cultural domination, and introduced a system of values that construed blackness in negative terms. He explained:

The colonial world is a Manichean world. It is not enough for the settler to delimit physically, that is to say, with the help of the

army and the police force,
the place of the native. As
if to show the totalitarian
character of colonial exploitation,
the settler paints the native
as a sort of quintessence of evil.¹⁷

The dialectical relationship that
existed between the settler or the coloniser
and the black man was itself evidence of
alienation that was generated by colonialism.
Fanon rightly attributes this kind of
alienation to the economic profitability of the
colonial system, and the blind racial prejudice
of the coloniser. That racial prejudice was at
times stretched to incredible proportions. Fanon
adds:

At times this Manicheanism
goes to its logical conclusion
and dehumanises the native,
or to speak plainly, it turns
him into an animal. In fact,
the terms the settler uses
when he mentions the native
are zoological terms.¹⁸

Under imperialism, the alienation of the black man was, thus, a creation of the colonial system. It smacked of oppression and exploitation under foreign rule. Fanon pointed out also the double edge of alienation. Thus, under a situation of domination and oppression, both the oppressors and the oppressed lose their humanity and become alienated.

But Fanon was also quick to warn that this problem of oppression, with the attendant exploitation, does not necessarily end with the change in the colour of the personnel when black replaces white after the attainment of constitutional independence. After the attainment of that independence, there may emerge a class of blacks who tend to wear the shoes of their former masters, oppressing and even aggravating the problem of alienation. Though Fanon does not employ the terms class and class struggles quite much, he points out that soon after the overthrow of colonialism, some African leaders appropriate to themselves the wealth of the society leaving the majority

of the people poor, so that alienation manifests itself along class lines among the people of the same race.

The above discussion of alienation from the various interpretations of different writers reveals a wide spectrum of what the concept refers to. It has been suggested that alienation is a problem which often manifests itself in separations and detachment, in apathy, surrender, isolation, powerlessness, * meaninglessness, social dislocation and normlessness. But at another level of analysis, some of these definitions do not, in fact, mean much.

f Although normlessness is often used to refer to alienation, it cannot be a very meaningful term in the practical sense. Every society, at all times, is governed by some norms. So are individuals. What people mean, therefore, when they speak of normlessness, is the possession by an individual of a norm which they do not * approve of; just as the white colonialist argued

about the absence of any form of civilisation in pre-colonial Africa.

Apathy, powerlessness, and uninvolvedness are probably more to the point. But even these have their limitations also. Apathy is said to be a characteristic of powerlessness. But it is possible to have no power or involvement and yet not be necessarily apathetic. What is probably true is that it is not possible to exercise power and be involved while one is still apathetic.

Apathy, then, is characteristic of people who are somehow outside society in the sense that their outsider situation is a function of having been defeated by society.

There may be many, however, who are outside society, that is, those who are powerless and uninvolved, but who are not at all apathetic. And this kind of condition may produce two quite different kinds of alienation. The first is the outsider who does not reject but is all the same crushed by society.

or the system; this is the condition of those who feel or are actually oppressed by the system in which they live. The second is the outsider who himself rejects the system without being crushed by it; this is invariably the situation of a rebel who attacks the system.

And this suggests further that ~~x~~uninvolvement is a very ~~x~~ poor indicator of ~~x~~ alienation. For instance, estranged individuals are very likely to be very active in politics if they have enough social support and if they can easily spot participation opportunities. Furthermore, an individual's sense of participation may emerge from his political calculation of what he is likely to get out of that political activity, regardless of whether he approves of the political system or not. But variations in the interpretations of alienation still persist.

Frantz Fanon, for instance, saw alienation in pre-independence Africa as a

consequence of the violence, oppression and exploitation inherent in the colonial system. To him, the principal causes of alienation were exploitation, oppression and domination. With a neo-Marxist bias, Fanon also saw the problem persisting in the post-colonial period along class lines. Alienation as a problem of class society is a marxist thesis, and in the next section, we want to look at the Marxist theory of alienation.

The Marxist view of Alienation:

The views of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels on the concept of alienation developed and matured as their dialectical-materialist world outlook took shape. They first studied alienation in man's intellectual life and then proceeded to the essence of alienation in politics and in economics. They gave the term numerous applications and some of the things they termed alienated differ so considerably that the exact

way in which their views on alienation have to be understood depends very much on the contexts in which they appear. But two things are quite clear about them. In most of their writings, their theory of alienation is seen to focus, in part, on the social production and reproduction from nature of the material means of life, and in part, on the oppression and domination of the bureaucratic state. In this section, we want first to look at the Marxist theory of alienation from an economic point of view, and then move on to look at the theory from a socio-political point of view.

One American writer, Bertell Ollman, has given four conditions of alienation which he attributes to the Marxist thought. Under a situation of alienation, argues Ollman, man is spoken of as being separated from his product or from the product of his labour. Under this kind of situation, an individual has no control over what he makes or what becomes of it thereafter. This separation suggests a break between the individual and the material world, for what he

produces is taken away from him and appropriated by someone else. In that sense, the man is alienated from the products of his own labour.

In second place, the alienated man is spoken of as being separated from his work. He thus plays no decisive role in deciding what to do or in deciding how to do what he has been compelled to do. This implies a break between man and his life activity, or to be more exact, it suggests a break between man and his labour. And in that sense, the man is said to be alienated from his own labour or from his own life activity.

Thirdly, man is said to be separated from his fellow men. This separation comes about as a result of competition and class antagonisms, inherent in capitalist societies, which render cooperation between individuals at times very difficult. This implies a break between man and man. "In each instance", argues Ollman, "a relation that distinguishes the human species has disappeared and its constituent elements have been reorganised to

to appear as something else".¹⁹ And the fourth category of alienation, according to Ollman, is the separation between man and his species. Species, in this context, denotes those particular potentialities which mark man off from other living creatures.²⁰

✓ Although Ollman suggests that that is all there is to the Marxist theory of alienation, he has only partially covered the economic aspects of the theory. The problem with him is that he does not care to analyse that Marxist theory of alienation within the context of dialectical materialism. Dialectical materialism is a science of studying and apprehending nature and society whose method is dialectical, that is, the law of contradictions; and whose theory is materialist, that is, the primacy of matter over mind. Karl Marx's theory of alienation is based on his understanding of the contradictions of society and his understanding of how the material conditions of society lead to those contradictions.

In his ECONOMIC AND PHILOSOPHIC
MANUSCRIPTS OF 1844, Marx wrote:

....The object which labour produces - labour's product - confronts it as something alien, as a power independent of the producer. The product of labour is labour which has been embodied in an object, which has become material: it is the objectification of labour. Labour's realisation is its objectification. Under these conditions, this realisation of labour appears as loss of realisation for the workers; objectification as loss of the object and bondage to it; appropriation as estrangement, as alienation. So much does labour's realisation appear as loss of realisation that the worker loses realisation to the point of starving to death. So much does objectification appear as loss of the object that the worker is robbed of the objects most necessary not only for his life but for his work.... So much does the appropriation

of the object appear as estrangement that the more objects the worker produces, the less he can possess and the more he falls under the sway of his product, capital.²¹

There is, of course, no doubt that contradictions in the mode of production are at the base of the alienation of such a worker. They are manifested in the capitalist's appropriation of the worker's products while the worker goes starving; and in due course, the worker is oppressed and dominated by the product of his own labour, that is capital.

This is essentially a case of the alienation of the worker through the surrender of his product to the capitalist. Marx specifically argues that for a man who has no means of life other than his limbs, the production of material means of life using another man's capital means more deprivation for him. In Marx's view, therefore, the alienation of a worker partly results from the appropriation of

his labour by someone else. Thus, the cause of the alienation of the worker in this particular case appears to be the exploitation of the worker's labour by the man of means, and this exploitation occurs at every level whenever a capitalist employs a poor man to raise profit * for him. That is just one view of the alienation of man through his own product.

But alienation through a man's product sometimes comes about when the product of labour is used to oppress the producer himself. And this constitutes another contradiction between the worker and his labour which is under the control of someone else. In elaborating on this phenomenon, Marx argued:

The alienation of a worker in his product means not only that his labour becomes an object, an external existence, but that it exists outside him, independently, as something alien to him, and that it becomes a power on its own confronting him. It means that the life which he has

conferred on the object
confronts him as something
hostile and alien.²²

Apart from being a separation of the object from the producer, as when the capitalist appropriates that object to himself, alienation of the worker through his product thus also suggests that the product faces the producer as an enemy. That is what Rozenthal had in mind when he wrote that alienation generally means that "man is dominated by the products of his own activity, i.e., the conversion of his energies and abilities into some alien, external and materialised essence which suppresses him".²³ Alienation of man through his product thus implies domination and exploitation. But how does this exploitation come about?

In modern society, argue many Marxists, every worker receives his wages in monetary form after his labour has been performed, but in a capitalist society which is founded on the profit motive, capitalists pay workers a wage which is far below the value

of their products.

A worker normally expends the socially necessary labour which produces commodities or labour value necessary for his livelihood and that of his family. Any labour time expended beyond that necessary or subsistence limit is known as surplus labour time, and what that surplus labour time produces is called surplus labour value. It is this surplus labour value which the capitalist appropriates * to himself, alienating it from the producer. Marx argued that in a capitalist society, surplus labour value is simply the monetary form of the social surplus product. It is the monetary form of that part of the worker's product which he surrenders to the owner of the means of production without necessarily receiving anything in return..

If, for instance, the price of a worker's labouring power is five shillings in which six hours of work are realised, and if he

works twelve hours, he loses five shillings for the other six hours to the capitalist. The rate of surplus value, therefore, depends on the proportion between that part of the working day necessary to reproduce the value of the labouring power and the surplus produced for the capitalist: According to Marx:

It will, therefore, depend on the ratio in which the working day is prolonged over and above that extent, by working which the working man would only reproduce the value of his labouring power or replace his wages. 24

Marx concluded that this was characteristic of all systems based on the profit motive. But as we pointed out earlier, Marx suggested also that alienation occurs through the worker's activity. A worker is thus alienated through the act of producing itself. To quote him again:

The product is after all the summary of the activity of production. If then the product of labour is alienation,

production itself must be active alienation, the alienation of activity, the activity of alienation. In the estrangement of the object of labour is merely summarised the estrangement, the alienation, in the activity of labour itself.²⁵

This alienation of the activity of production results from the fact that labour is * external to the worker. This external character of labour expresses the fact that in his work, the worker merely denies himself instead of affirming and asserting himself; that in his work, the worker does not feel contented but unhappy. Marx further says:

The worker only feels himself outside of his work, and in his work, he feels outside himself. He feels at home when he is not working, and when he is working, he does not feel at home. His labour is, therefore, not voluntary but coerced; it is forced labour. It is therefore

not the satisfaction of a need; it is only a means to satisfy needs external to it. Its alien character emerges clearly in the fact as soon as no physical or other compulsion exists, labour is shunned like a plague. External labour, labour in which man alienates himself, is a labour of self-sacrifice, of mortification. Lastly, the external character of labour for the worker appears in the fact that it is not his own, but someone else's, that it does not belong to him, that in it he belongs, not to himself, but to another.²⁶

Such is the nature of alienation which comes through the process of production itself. But Marx further reveals the force behind this hostility which comes with the external character of labour.

..... If the product of his labour, his labour objectified, is for him an alien, hostile, powerful object independent of him, then his position

towards it is such that someone else is master of this object, someone who is hostile, alien, powerful and independent of him. If he treats his own activity as an unfree activity, then he treats it as an activity performed in the service, under the domination, the coercion, and the yoke of another man.²⁷

What all this suggests is that if there is a contradiction between man and his product, and another contradiction between man and his labour, these two contradictions are only secondary. The main contradiction, therefore, lies between the worker and the owner of his labour and product, that is, the capitalist. X
It would appear then that the principal contradiction is that one between the worker and the capitalist, which is necessarily a contradiction between labour and capital. Stretched a little further, this argument would suggest that the principal cause of the alienation of the worker is, not just exploitation or oppression, but the existence of the capitalist.

Indeed, in that passage, Marx meticulously brought in the relationship between the worker and the capitalist as a hostile, antagonistic relationship. And this falls in with his view of a class society. Since different classes are always locked in a bitter struggle, the relationship between the producer and the man who appropriates the products to himself has necessarily to be a hostile one.

The very fact that different classes in society are antagonistic clearly suggests the presence of alienation among these antagonistic groups. In fact, the very definition of classes suggests a lop-sided system of distribution of what is produced. In his work THE GREAT BEGINNING, Lenin defined classes as:

..... large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organisation

of labour, and consequently,
by the dimensions of the
share of social wealth
of which they dispose and
the mode of acquiring it.²⁸

In this definition, Lenin points out
four major characteristics of classes, namely:

1. Their place in a historically
determined system of social production.
2. Their relation to the means of
production.
3. Their role in the social organisation
of labour; and
4. The share of social wealth they possess
and the methods by which they get it.

The basic distinction in Lenin's view was the
relation of a class to the means of production.

It is the ownership of the means of production
that establishes a social group as a ruling class
enjoying every privilege, he argues. And
estrangement or separation from the means of
production turns a social group into an
oppressed class whose lot is destitution and *
and deprivation of rights.

Lenin's argument that the relation of the classes to the means of production is formulated in law brings us to the role the state plays in oppressing and therefore alienating the lower classes of society. Most Marxists argue that the state in a capitalist society is a political instrument of the economically dominant class. In the COMMUNIST MANIFESTO, Marx postulated:

.... the bourgeoisie has at last, since the establishment of Modern Industry and of the world market, conquered for itself, in the modern representative state, exclusive political sway. The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.²⁹

Marx further pointed out that the predominant relations of production in a socio-economic formation³⁰ determine the economic tendencies and the character of classes common to a particular formation, determining in the long run its social system, ideas and institutions. He also explained that the economic basis of any

socio-economic formation, that is the relations of production predominant in it, and the superstructure, that is, the predominant ideas and institutions, functionally depend on each other.³¹ According to this Marxist theory of the state, the economic basis produces the superstructure, and the superstructure in turn ministers to the basis. That is why the state in a capitalist society, observed Marx, is a political instrument of the economically dominant class.

Frederick Engels also subscribed to this view when in his thesis, the ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY, PRIVATE PROPERTY AND THE STATE, he stated:

Because the state arose from the need to hold class antagonism in check, but because it arose at the same time, in the midst of the conflict of these classes, it is as a rule, the state of the most powerful, economically dominant class, which, through the medium of the state, becomes also the politically dominant class, and thus acquires new means of holding down and exploiting the oppressed class.³²

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X To the extent that the state exploits and oppresses the lower classes of a capitalist society, it is in a way an agent of alienation working in the service of the "economically dominant class". And the aim of the economically powerful class is to appropriate to themselves the wealth of society.

5

Engels further elaborated that the state is able to oppress some classes in society because it possesses the coercive instruments like the police, the courts, and the army. He attached particular significance to the fact that the state was only a new means of holding down the oppressed class, because, he explained, the poorest class is already held down by exploiters from the time the latter dispossess the former of the means of production, and by controlling the major means of production, exchange and distribution. Engels's argument was, thus, that the state is an oppressive machinery and an agent of alienation. But how did the state come to perform this function of oppressing the exploited class? The answer to this question lies in the

evolution of the state.

To discuss the evolution of the state, we have to assume that the state has not always existed. Engels, and invariably all Marxists thereafter, saw the state as a power which arose out of society but later placed itself above that society and consequently alienated itself from that society more and more in the course of history. In Engels's own words:

The state is by no means a power forced on society from without; Rather, it is a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is an admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it has split into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests, might not consume themselves and society in fruitless struggle, it became necessary to have a power seemingly standing above

society that would alleviate the conflict and keep it within the bounds of order; and this power, arisen out of society but placing itself above it, and alienating itself more and more from it, is the state.³³

An examination of the history of the state from accounts of most Marxist writers suggests certain facts about the state from the slave-owning system to the capitalist society.³⁴ In the first place, they see the state as a societal institution that arose with the emergence of antagonistic classes. Secondly, they argue that the state has always expressed and continues to express the will and interests of the ruling class. It is seen as a machine for the oppression and exploitation of one class by another.

And finally, they argue that every form of state must be judged, above all, in a class context. What that scheme of thought suggests is that a proper analysis of state power must find out which class uses the state

to ensure its domination and which classes the state oppresses. But no Marxist analyses state power beyond the capitalist stage although it is unquestionably true that Marxist societies have been in existence for more than sixty years, from the time of the Soviet revolution of 1917.

A close examination of the Soviet state by some western political scientists indicates that the Soviet state is as oppressive as any capitalist state.³⁵ And, as we have already observed, oppression, exploitation and domination are all causes of alienation. Thus, a close examination of any state in the modern world reveals it as an oppressive machinery in the hands of a certain ruling class. Though the study of alienation in Marxist states would make very interesting reading, such an adventure is beyond the scope of this chapter since all we want here is to establish a good theoretical framework for identifying causes of alienation in Kenya, which is a capitalist state.

But what were the roots of alienation

in society, anyway?

According to Karl Marx, the origin of the politico-economic causes of alienation in human society have to be looked for in that "twilight" of history between the death of communalism and the age of primitive accumulation. He has pointed out that in the slave-owning system, the poor were not as alienated, in terms of material possessions, as they were in that stage of pre-capitalist development called primitive accumulation. Slaves, under the slave-owning society, were tied to the soil in a fundamental way.

In his "legend" of economic development, Marx stated that primitive accumulation plays, in political economy, the part which original sin plays in christian religion. The history of the original economic sin tells how it came to be that one class of people could live on the sweat of others, while the poor have to sell their labour in order to live. According to that theory, primitive accumulation was that stage that

witnessed the complete separation of the means of production from the workers and that was the beginning of alienation. In his thesis on CAPITAL Marx wrote:

The capitalist system pre-supposes the complete separation of the labourers from all property in the means by which they realise their labour.

As soon as capitalist production is once on its legs, it not only maintains the separation, but reproduces it on a continually extending scale. The process, therefore, that clears the way for the capitalist system, can be none other than the process which takes away from the labourer the possession of his means of production; a process that transforms, on the one hand, the social means of subsistence and of production into capital, on the other, the immediate producers into wage-labourers.

The so-called primitive accumulation, therefore, is nothing than the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production.³⁶

This passage conclusively points out that the worker could only dispose of his labour in the market after he had ceased to be a slave, a serf, or bondsman of another. Since alienation or estrangement, in the final analysis, just means separation, the separation of the producer from the soil was the first form of alienation at the substructural level, at the level of production. Separation

of man from the soil, in a way, means his separation or alienation from nature, from the most important means of production. Land everywhere is at the base of every useful economic activity, that is why those who were separated from the soil at the stage of primitive accumulation remained poor all their lives and even their offspring inherited their poverty.

Even in Kenya during the colonial period, those who were separated from their lands were the most alienated and many of them are still squatting to this day. From one angle, the alienated workers at the time of primitive accumulation became nominally free sellers of their labour-

power who carried their commodity wherever they found market. But they did not escape the contradictions of a lop-sided system of production. In actual fact, there was no freedom for them since they had been separated from any guarantees of existence. That freedom, according to Marx, was just another form of servitude which came as change:

The starting-point of the development that gave rise to the wage-labourer as well as to the capitalist, was the servitude of the labourer. The advance consisted in the change of form of this servitude, in the transformation of feudal exploitation into capitalist exploitation.³⁷

According to Marx, then, the roots of alienation lie in class society, in a capitalist set-up. Indeed, the Marxist theory of alienation is based on certain fundamental observations:

1. The worker is said to be alienated from his own labour or labour-power by being

coerced into selling it on the market.

Consequently, he is alienated from his own activity, from his product, and from himself. *

He therefore constantly produces material or objective wealth, which is in the form of capital, of an alien power that dominates and exploits him.

2. There is an acute form of alienation in the relationship between members of different socio-economic classes. These people are bound to regard each other with hostility. They, in fact, see each other either as sources of exploitation or as a material for exploitation. Thus the dehumanisation of human relations becomes generalised. *

3. People begin to worship wealth and money, and both these forms of wealth assume an alien and oppressive character. ✓

4. And finally, an alienated superstructure arises, in the form of state machinery. The state power, that is, legal, political and military power, representing the rule of the dominant economic class, the class which owns the means of production, presents itself to the populace as the director of public morality. ³⁸

Marx goes on to state that the ideology and institutions of society are used for the exploitation and oppression of the majority of the citizens. The ruling classes use those organisations to make the individual powerless and lead the working people away from the solution of their vital problems.

All the interpretations of alienation which we have reviewed in the two sections above tell a great deal about what the concept of alienation generally means. And quite a good number of them have furnished us with useful analytical tool. But since our thesis is not strictly on the nature of alienation, but on the principal politico-economic causes of the phenomenon of alienation in Kenya, these interpretations may not feature much in the remainder of this thesis. What we are going to examine are the principal politico-economic causes of alienation, and we hope to tackle these principal causes bearing in mind some of these views on alienation. But, again, these causes

will not be discussed in such a way that they fit all these varied definitions of the concept.

Towards an appropriate Working Framework:

Healthy political and economic systems provide many of their citizens with the basic human needs, that is, the basic human rights, a stable personal environment, and societal institutions which aim at the equitable distribution of social wealth. Developing countries at one time had socio-political and economic systems which emerged from the societies in which the indigenous people lived, and in most cases, these systems were quite responsive to the needs of the people.

But in the present epoch, many of the socio-political and economic systems of these developing countries are at variance with the needs of the majority of the citizens of these

countries. The social substance of these countries, to borrow Hegel's term, in fact tends to dominate and oppress the people.

This domination and oppression, as we pointed out, bring about alienation. In Kenya, as elsewhere in Africa, the force behind this domination and oppression is imperialism, which was the main historical movement that brought the country under foreign control. Indeed, it was imperialism that led to the change in people's values, introduced the present lop-sided system of production and distribution, drove Africans away from their lands to make way for settlers, brought international finance capital to the country, and consequently exploited and oppressed the indigenous people.

The change of a people's values from the turn of this century in this country was mainly championed by the christian church and the western-oriented system of education, and these two institutions had strong imperial connections. To the extent that the change in values meant the

removal of the indigenous people from their ancestral roots, the separation of the christians and the educated from the rest of society, both the christian church and the western-oriented system of education served as causes of the alienation of the indigenous people. And since the two institutions came with, and were an integral part of, imperialism, we can reasonably argue that it was imperialism, partly through those two institutions, that removed the indigenous people from their ancestral shrines.

But imperialism removed the indigenous people from their lands as well, which constituted another form of alienation. This was alienation from nature and from the major means of production. Those who were made landless by these moves were thus alienated in the sense that they were separated from their means of life and made homeless. Although just a small fraction of the indigenous people, mainly a section of the Gikuyu, the Maasai, the Gusii, the Nandi, the Kamba, Luhya, Giriama, Kipsigis, Digo, and the Keiyo were affected, we consider the alienation of lands to the white settlers a vital



cause of alienation because of the importance of land as a factor of production to an indigenous man. Another significance of the land alienation problem arises from the fact that land was at the heart of Kenya's politics, and it was, in fact, the settler element in Kenya as part of the total imperial strategy that partly determined the kind of alienating legislations that the colonial government used. And even after the attainment of independence, the land question assumed extra importance, and the handling of the land resettlement programme was alienating to many Kenyans.

Much as the land question served as a cause of alienation, imperialist capital was equally important in alienating the people's labour and oppressing the entire nation. Imperialism, in fact, owned and controlled, and still owns and controls, most of the capital in Kenya. But capital always takes an antagonistic position to, and alienates labour; it thus alienates the workers who provide the labour.

To the extent that that foreign-owned and foreign-controlled capital belongs to the international bourgeoisie, labour is oppressed and alienated, therefore, by the international bourgeoisie working through their local agents. (compradors). This international bourgeoisie at one time channelled their capital through the colonial state, as their agent, but now they channel it through a petty-bourgeoisie in the independent state.

The possession of capital by the petty-bourgeoisie makes them stand in an antagonistic position to the workers and creates antagonistic class relations between the petty-bourgeoisie and the workers. But the petty-bourgeoisie in Kenya are not the effective owners of the property which they call their own. Of course, some of them acquired capital during the colonial period without taking bank loans and now possess small property which is their own, but the majority of the petty-bourgeoisie in Kenya just have mortgaged property. Even the ruling class in Kenya consists not only of the bureaucracy but the international

bourgeoisie as well. In fact, in terms of the power which the international bourgeoisie wields, the Kenyan petty-bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy are almost powerless.

The powerlessness of the Kenyan petty-bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy was revealed early 1978 over a Nairobi City Council appointment. After negotiating for a multi-million shillings loan, the City Council of Nairobi was forced to create a new Department of Housing Development. And when it came to appointing the head of that department, it was the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank), which had donated money for the new housing project, that pushed through its own candidate who is a foreigner.

The position of that head of department had been advertised in the press, and two Kenyan senior officers of the council had applied and had been interviewed by the council's appointments committee consisting of, among others, the Nairobi Provincial Commissioner (representing

the Office of the President), and representatives from the ministries of Housing and Social Services, Local Government, and Finance and Economic Planning. But the choice of most of those who were on the appointments committee, including the Town Clerk, was discarded and a foreigner, who had been picked by the World Bank, was appointed to head that department although he declined the offer a few weeks later.³⁹ That, in part, was proof that the petty-bourgeoisie in Kenya does not control what is formally its own.

Our exposition of the principal politico-economic causes of alienation in Kenya takes the position that the principal cause is imperialism which works through various agencies, namely, colonialism, land and capital. And our definition of alienation refers to conditions of oppression, exploitation, uninvolvedness and powerlessness. In the next chapter, we are going to discuss colonialism and its values.

F O O T N O T E S

1. FRANTZ FANON in Black Skins, White Masks and The Wretched of the Earth, utilises the concept of alienation from a Marxist angle to demonstrate that under oppression and exploitation of colonialism, the black man lost his identity. Colonialism attacked the black man not only psychologically by equating him with evil, but the inherent use of violence completely dehumanised him. And HERBERT MARCUSE in One Dimensional Man and Eros and Civilisation put forward a thesis which suggests that science and technology carry with them a rationale of their own which can be as oppressive as the rationale of colonial society.
2. In some of my discussions with a lecturer at the University of Nairobi, also working on alienation, he argued that alienation for him means almost every aspect of life.
3. See R.SCHACHT Alienation (London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1971) p.237.

4. K. KENISTON Youth and Dissent (New York, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971) p.174.
5. Though the Marxist theory of alienation may feature in this thesis more frequently than other views on alienation, it is not our concern to analyse Marxism in general. Our thesis is on the causes of alienation in Kenya, not on Marxism, but where the Marxist theory appears more applicable to our situation we cannot do anything but use it.
6. This quotation is cited in R.SCHACHT Alienation op. cit. p.31.
7. See B. OLLMAN Alienation: Marx's Conception of man in Capitalist Society (London, Cambridge University Press, 1971) p.33.
8. See D. CRAWFORD "Interpretations of Self-Alienation" in the INTERNATIONAL PHILOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, Vol. 14, NO. 4, December 1976; p.325.

9. Ibid. p. 329.
10. Ibid. p. 324.
11. K. HORNEY Neurosis and Human Growth (New York, Norton, 1950) p.166.
12. See C.F. ANDRAIN Political Concepts of African Leaders (University of California, 1967) a Ph.d thesis in microfilm, p. 184.
Andrain's definition is derived from that of NORMAN F. WASHBURNE's Decisions, Values and Groups.
13. See F.H. HEINEMANN Existentialism and the Human Predicament (New York, Harper Torchbook, 1958) p.9.
14. K. KENISTON The Uncommitted: Alienated Youth in American Society (New York, Dell, 1960) p. 454.
15. This argument and what follows in the next two paragraphs are derived from our earlier arguments in a seminar at the University of

Nairobi. See S.. MAKINDA "State Power and the Alienation of Man" (Department of Government, University of Nairobi) mimeo.

16. D.CAUTE The Illusion (London, Panther, 1972) p. 175.

17. F. FANON The Wretched of the Earth (London, Penguin, 1967) pp. 31-32.

18. Ibid. pp. 32-33.

19. All these categories are analysed in B. OLLMAN Alienation op. cit. pp.131-153.

20. Man's relation to his species differs qualitatively from the other relations. Whereas his relations to his work, product and other men are tangible, the relation to his species refers to a given standard which man attains in order to be man. When, therefore, Marx argued that "estranged human labour estranges the species from man", he meant that the proper relations which mark out : an

individual as a human being have been transformed through the performance of capitalist labour. See K. MARX "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844" in K. MARX and F. ENGELS Collected Works Vol.3 (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1975) p. 276.

21. Ibid. p. 272. (Emphasis in original).

22. Ibid. (Emphasis in original).

23. See M.M. ROZENTAL The Dialectics of K. Marx's Capital (Moscow, Progress, 1967) p. 285.

24. K. MARX & F. ENGELS Selected Works Vol. 2 (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1976) pp.58-59.

25. K. MARX & F. ENGELS Collected Works Vol. 3, op. cit. p. 274.

26. Ibid. (Emphasis original).

27. Ibid. pp. 278-279.

28. V.I. LENIN Collected Works, Vol. 29 (Moscow Progress Publishers) p. 421.

29. K. MARX The Communist Manifesto (Middlesex, England, Penguin, 1967) p. 82.

30. The concept of the socio-economic formation was introduced by Karl Marx and was widely employed by Frederick Engels and V.I. Lenin. According to Lenin's definition, a socio-economic formation is an integral social organism with its own skeleton, flesh and body. The skeleton is the economic basis of each formation and it consists of the relations of production predominant in it. The flesh, on the other hand, consists of the socio-economic classes existing within it, and the institutions they set up to protect their own vital interests. See for instance B.M. BOGUSLAVSKY, et. al. ABC of Dialectical and Historical Materialism (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1976) p. 293.

31. Ibid. p. 294.

32. K. MARX & F. ENGELS Selected Works, Vol. 3,
op. cit. p. 329.
33. Ibid. pp. 326-327.
34. See B.M. BOGUSLAVSKY ABC of Dialectical
op. cit. pp.327-330.
35. See, for instance, J. HAZARD The Soviet System
of Government (London, The University of
Chicago Press, 1970) pp. 66-81.
36. K. MARX & F. ENGELS Selected Works, Vol. 2.
op. cit. p.101. (Emphasis added).
37. Ibid. p. 102.
38. D. CAUTE The Illusion, op. cit.
39. See part of the story in THE WEEKLY REVIEW
(Nairobi), 30 June, 1978; p. 4.
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CHAPTER TWO

COLONIALISM AND THE CHANGE IN PEOPLE'S VALUES

Imperialism, intrinsically, is a system of depersonalisation; it denatures the national personality of the people on whom it exerts its rule, and leads to economic and social alienation of the masses, and, to their cultural and human disqualification.

AHMED SEKOU TOURE

The coming of Christianity ... set in motion a process of social change, involving rapid disintegration of the tribal set-up and the framework of social norms and values by which people had formerly ordered their relationship to others.

NGUGI WA THIONG'O

One of the reasons why Africa was poor was because the whiteman used the Bible to soften our hearts, telling Africans not to worry about earthly worth as there would be plenty in Heaven.

OGINGA ODINGA

The way in which colonialism's cultural values alienated people is born out by the work of the Christian Church and the school system. Both the Christian Church and the formal school system have a long history in this country. Therefore, although this thesis is mainly concerned with the period after the second World War, this chapter is going to consider some factors of historical significance of an earlier

period in order to highlight some contradictions between imperialism and the people of Kenya.

It is by pointing out some of these contradictions that we can argue that imperialism (or colonialism) was a principal cause of alienation in Kenya. But in the majority of cases, talk of alienation makes meaning only when one points out the object from which one is alienated, which is technically termed the focus of alienation. In such a case, we would have had to give details of what the African society was like before the intrusion of colonial rule. And then we would have had to go further and distinguished between the different life styles of various African communities in the polity that we now call Kenya. But that is hardly necessary in a study of this kind.

On the contrary we are going to generalize and argue that most of the African communities in Pre-colonial Kenya had similar characteristics and were organised on more or less similar lines. For instance, most of these traditional communities were structurally bidirectional and participatory.¹ The education that was provided in these communities was largely vocational and that meant that every able-bodied person stood a chance to find employment with ease. In most cases, the African indigenous education emphasised economic participation through job-orientation and the whole system was generally meant for an immediate induction into society.² Such participation obviously ensured mass involvement and, to a certain degree, equitable

distribution of the society's total annual income. In such a society, it was impossible to find the class antagonisms of the present epoch. Of course, this is not to deny that there were people with more wealth than others. The point we are making here is that there were no recognisable struggles between socio-economic classes, and therefore, there was no reason for the type of alienation that is presently caused by the institution of private property and its accompanying greed.

There was no pronounced individualism in traditional African communities; and most members of the community often defined their rights and duties as a collectivity. Absent also in some traditional communities was the idea of personal accountability the way it is practised in Christian religion.

There were, to some extent, differences in the way different denominations interpreted the idea of personal accountability. For instance, in the Roman Catholic Church there were periodical confessions, often weekly, and there was the usual intercession by the Virgin Mary which tended to blunt the idea of personal accountability.

But the protestant denominations, on the other hand, sharply emphasised the idea of personal accountability by putting a special premium on the value of the individual. This protestant individualism, as Max Weber postulated,³ had a historical link with the rise of capitalism. And it was

partly, therefore, the protestant church with its emphasis on an individual's responsibility that laid the ground-work for modern capitalism in Kenya, and that in turn aggravated, the phenomenon of alienation.

Most traditional communities, on the other hand, operated on the principle of communalism which was both an ideology of development and a system of distributive justice. Under that system, the major means of production, particularly land, were communally-owned. Labour was also in many cases, performed communally on a reciprocal basis,⁴ and that minimised chances of putting some people in a position in which they could exploit the labour of others.

Generally, people were not allowed to individually own land which they could dispose of any time. But a hard working man could own a piece of land only in a functional sense. Since there was no money or its equivalent in some traditional communities, there was no question of any man working for wages through which he could be exploited. Such was part of the picture of traditional African communities, but, of course, we would be naive to suggest that all was so glorious in traditional communities that there was not alienation of any kind.

Alienation generally appears to be a problem of all time, and to the extent that all human systems always crush some individuals, it looks reasonable to suppose that alienation

of some kind existed in traditional communities. There might have been heretics and radicals in traditional Africa who were crushed by the system. There might have been thinkers like Socrates who died for their ideas, but oral tradition does not say much about the heresy of traditional communities. And since oral tradition tended to act as an ideology of the ruling elites, it could not have been expected to give much that threatened the status quo. As Professor Ali Mazrui has observed:

"... oral tradition tends, overwhelmingly, to be the transmission of consensus rather than heresy, of accepted ideas rather than innovative intellectual heresies."⁵

And through that strict selectivity of oral tradition, we have been denied historical evidence with which we can adequately argue that certain forms of alienation might have existed in the traditional communities. But even that handicap does not hinder us from pointing out that imperialism was a principal politico-economic cause of alienation in Kenya since the country came under colonial rule.

In this section, we are above all concerned with that form of imperialism that came with a monopolistic system of values and brought changes even in people's economic habits. Indeed, to the extent that imperialism introduced new cultural and politico-economic values and sought the annihilation of the existing value-system, it can reasonably be argued that it was imperialism, through its

agencies that alienated some people from their traditional values. The major vehicles of these values as we have already indicated, were the church and the educational system. So were money and the taxation system.

On the significance of the christian church in this process of change, G.C.M. Mutiso points out:

Missionary activity must be seen in the context of the imposition of foreign power. It made the penetration of African society more efficient and is responsible for the basic cleavage operative in society to date. ⁶

That "basic cleavage" earlier manifested itself in divisions between what he calls the ASOMI and the NON-ASOMI. And it was even carried through to the Post-colonial period when most bureaucrats were at first recruited from the sons and daughters of the ASOMI class.

In order to analyse the colonial factor in the alienation of the people of Kenya, we shall divide this chapter into three main parts.

The first part looks at how colonialism, utilising the christian church and the formal school system, sought the domination and ~~domination~~ damnation of African values. The second part looks at the way colonialism caused the inversion of structures in some African communities. And the third part points out how the sons of the first beneficiaries of the colonial system occupied influential positions and mortgaged

the country to imperialist powers.

DOMINATION AND DAMNATION

One of the major premises of the Church and educational system in Kenya, as they were in many other parts of Africa, were the domination and damnation of African values. They, indeed, played a significant role in uprooting people from their ancestral roots and in conditioning them to accept the Western ways of life. Even as Ngugi wa Thiong'o has further indicated, the evidence that one was saved and "a believer in and follower of Christ, and accepted all men as equal" was acknowledged when one maintained "the outer signs and symbols of a European way of life"⁷. And this conditioning eventually established a contradiction between the educated and Christians, and their ancestral roots. It was a contradiction that led to the alienation of the few educated Africans and Christians from their own people and their own societies.

With the preaching that all Christians were merely pilgrims on earth and that their place was in heaven, they even lost touch with the soil and their total environment. They were taught even to hate and despise themselves in an effort to start a new life. Zwanenberg has argued, among other things, that the European "colonialist attempted to deny Africans a substantial past" and that "desecration of African history was just one aspect of the attempt to castrate

African culture and society."⁸ And indeed, the colonial situation in Africa determined, to a large degree, the specific character of the experience of black peoples. In general terms, it uprooted people from their values and culture, from their land, and oddly enough from their own self-image. And that was fundamentally because in almost every way, imperialism imposed itself as a monopolistic system.

In particular, the original approach of European Christian missionaries was based on a wrong assumption that Africans were heathens, and that it was the christian duty to rescue all Africans from their sins and the evils of their cultures. Under this divine urge, there was an explicit lack of tolerance of indigenous rituals and beliefs among European christian missionaries, and the majority of them were invariably bent on annihilating all that was not imported from their own societies. To put it slightly differently, European christian missionaries were determined to see the damnation of what was not alien in an effort to make room for alien values. From that viewpoint alone, European christianity can be seen to have assumed the character of a monopolistic system of values, preaching that true christianity demanded the giving up of all values external to it. The giving up of all unchristian values constituted a surrender of African values by Africans. And any form of surrender as we have already observed from the Hegelian point of view, is itself a manifestation of alienation. In that case, alienation of the

African converts was inevitable since the missionaries demanded that one could be either all christian or not christian at all. With this consistent monopolistic approach, some aspects of African culture succumbed and were either destroyed or transformed. But other aspects of the African heritage put a gallant fight against the encroaching monopoly of European christian values and resisted for a few more years. For instance, female circumcision among the Agikuyu stood as an indigenous institution which fought hard to resist and defy the practical consequences of European and missionary hostility although later it had to give way. The circumcission of women, or clitoridectomy as it is sometimes called, among the Agikuyu, was regarded as an essential institution which had various educational, social, moral and religious implications.⁹ It was fundamentally looked upon as a deciding factor in giving any girl the status of womanhood in the Gikuyu community. By demanding that the customs be ended, the missionaries were technically setting new standards of values for the Agikuyu and that meant alienating them from their ancestral roots and shrines.

Jomo Kenyatta saw the termination of that practice as a threat not only to the unity of the Agikuyu but also to the social system and ideology of the people. In his book; FACING MOUNT KENYA, Kenyatta wrote;

The abolition of IRUA (circumcision)
will destroy the tribal symbol which

identifies the age-groups, and prevent the Gikuyu from perpetuating that **spirit of collectivism and national solidarity** which they have been able to maintain from time immemorial.¹⁰

It was the church of Scotland Mission that was most bitter about the practice and at one time it took the unprecedented step of throwing out of its schools the teachers who did not denounce the practice. And those children whose parents appeared reluctant to denounce the practice were similarly debarred from attending the missionary schools. It was this kind of screening geared towards identifying those who conformed to the Gikuyu traditional practice that drove many Gikuyus to set up what they called independent schools. Thus the creation of these schools was part of indigenous resistance to European alienation. In other areas of the country, independent religious movements were set up to protest against the alienating values of European christian teaching. For instance, in Bungoma, Elijah Masinde founded an extreme form of religious movement the DINI YA MUSAMBWA, as an alternative to christianity.¹¹ But this was immediately proscribed by the colonial government and even under the independent government, it has remained an illegal religious movement because of its anti-establishment and anti-development overtones.

But the very act of accepting some people into the church and schools while shutting out the rest as the CSM did in

Gikuyu country had the effect of creating schisms in previously integrated communities. It had a further effect of dividing the society into two groups, the believers and the non-believers.

And since alienation is about separation the dividing of the indigenous people into two antagonistic groups was one of the ways in which European Christianity caused alienation among the indigenous people of Kenya. In Gikuyu country, for instance, there was a sharp division over the issue of the circumcision of women, between the KIRORE and the Gikuyu Karinga.¹² The KIRORE were those who signed a church petition expressing their full allegiance with the missionaries and denounced cliteridectomy but the Karinga were those who upheld clitoridectomy. The significance of this division is that it even influenced the pattern of oath-taking among the Agikuyu prior to the Emergency. The Karinga were on the side of freedom fighters while the Kirore formed the bulk of home guards, and some of the descendants of the Kirore were the people who were absorbed into the bureaucracy of independent Kenya.¹³

Those who condemned their cultures were mainly those who had been removed from their cultural roots. Colonial alienation was almost complete when the colonized accepted the values of the white man and simultaneously condemned those of their own people. In Ngugi wa Thiong'o's THE RIVER BETWEEN, Joshua stands as a perfect example of those who were

completely alienated from their people and their own ancestral shrines. With regard to circumcision ceremonies, Ngugi says:

To Joshua indulging in this ceremony (circumcision) was the unforgivable sin. Had he not been told to take up everything and leave Egypt? He would journey courageously, a christian soldier, going on to the promised land. Nobody would deflect him from his set purpose. He wanted to enter the new Jerusalem a whole man.¹⁴

The irony in this passage is that Joshua thought he would become a whole man by denying himself. Several forms of alienation are highlighted by that passage. First, there was the alienation which manifested itself in some kind of **uninvolvement**. Joshua, who is a convert, could not allow himself to be involved in the social affairs of his own community. Of course he was a member of the christian community which in itself was a world from the Gikuyu community, but as a Gikuyu, Joshua overlooked his obligations in the Gikuyu community and was, therefore, alienated from it. And the **uninvolvement** merged imperceptibly with isolation, detachment and self-denial, which are other forms of alienation.

Joshua was isolated because he was virtually alone among his people. He found everything around detestable except his bible. And he was at home with his own self only when he was either physically alone reading the bible or he was in the pulpit propagating the biblical message, which of course was alien in the land. And through that loneliness, Joshua was

detached from the actual life of the Gikuyu community. Thus, European christianity, as an integral part of the imperial force, was responsible for the alienation of the indigeneous people which manifested itself in surrender, uninvovement, isolation, self-denial and detachment. - There was however, an additional way in which European christianity alienated people of this country making them powerless and submissive. Missionaries were very successful in promoting deference towards authority and towards the white man. Indeed, some converted Africans became so deferential to the white missionary that it was difficult to say whether the deference was to the white man or to the missionary. And this deference, very often, had the effect of reducing the spirit of initiative on the part of the converts and promoting, on the other hand, some form of submissive dependency.

Ali Mazrui has defined submissive dependency as a mental state which signifies "excessive deference towards Metropolitan standards, keenness to imitate the dominant culture, a compulsive subservience to the inner commandments of the conquering civilisation." ¹⁵ This kind of submissive dependency was also visible in the character of Joshua in THE RIVER BETWEEN. And nothing brings out that more clearly than Joshua's refusal to concern himself with the interference of the tax system when it was eventually introduced in the country:

Joshua did not mind this (introduction of tax). He himself knew what a government was, having learnt this from Livingstone. He knew it was his duty as a christian to obey the government, giving unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's. That was what he wanted every Christian to do... He prayed that the people should leave their ways and follow the ways of the white man. 16

That was the picture of an indigenous Kenyan during the colonial period who was totally alienated from his indigenous values by European christianity. In Gikuyu country, the work of J.W. Arthur of the Church of Scotland Mission is remembered to this day. It is clear from the account of A.J.Temu in his book: BRITISH PROTESTANT MISSIONS that Arthur wanted:

a rejection of those things that bound the tribe together from kings and chiefs down to the lowest and most insignificant individual (to form) one organic whole controlled by an iron-bound code of regulations. 17

Arthur even got the colonial government to ban Gikuyu songs and dances because he saw them as not only unchristian but immoral. But those kinds of church activities were not limited to Gikuyu country alone. In other parts of the country, European christian missionaries uprooted some indigenous people from their social milieu leaving them

baseless and making them enemies of those who refused to denounce their culture. In Nyanza, the activities of Archdeacon Owen of the Church Missionary Society are well-known, though he was at the same time outstanding as a critic of the colonial system of forced labour.¹⁸ Because of his liberal middle class European views, Owen was quite opposed to the system of forced labour, but as a missionary, he was equally affronted by what he saw as evil practices of the Kavirondo people. He was, therefore part of that force that was determined to see the annihilation of some aspects of African culture.

In Bungoma district, works of Ford of Friends African Mission and that of Pilate of the Roman Catholic Mission are still remembered.²⁰ What was most pronounced about their activities is that they divided people setting protestants against Catholics. The divisions exist to this day and it is only recently that people from the different religious groups started intermarrying. The alienating aspects of European Christianity were just a part of European racism which formed the bedrock of all imperial policies in colonial Kenya. The racial policies of the colonial administration were particularly reflected in the educational system. With regard to the content and structure of African education, the colonial administrators were influenced by a racial debate which was going on at the time in Britain

concerning the educatability of the Africans. One Kenyan writer, Daniel Sifuma, has observed that this debate focused on the study of the cranial capacity, phrenology and comparative head shapes, all of which were taken as practical guides to the determination of human intelligence.²¹

According to that classification the cranial cavity was greatest in the Caucasian and smallest in the Polynesian with the black African coming as the sixth in order.²²

These debates had an enormous impact on the formulation of colonial policies. The colonial educational system which was designed to present "our civilisation, our culture, our sociological, and our philosophical conceptions... as the expression of a savage"²³ was used as a very effective system of driving imperial claws deep into the psycho-social value system of the colonised Africans.²⁴ It was through this same system that the European coloniser impressed upon the colonised that the latter were "always to be regarded psychologically as inferior beings, savages ... liars, lazy, unproductive, and above all as children who will always require paternal care and guidance from the people by whom they are being subjected or colonised".²⁵ The colonial education system, that way, came to play a significant role in eroding away the personality of the black man.²⁶

With that kind of teaching, the indigeneous people eventually came to hate and despise themselves because they

were made to believe that they were essentially wicked and sadistic. Even as Frantz Fanon has pointed out, the black man condemned his own lot because he believed he was not only uncivilized, but an enemy of civilised values. The African was thus a quintessence of evil.²⁷ Indeed, Africans as a race were regarded as "savages, brutes, illiterates"²⁸, and as a people who were not capable of understanding life. Thus, confused by the white man's "superior" self-assurance and cultural arrogance, the indigeneous man constantly saw himself as a morally, technically and culturally, "inferior" type of human species. Consequently, he began to lose his own self-esteem and self-confidence, and he was eventually alienated in his own society. This was all achieved through the colonial efforts to dominate and annihilate what was indigenous.

STATUS INVERSION

The impact of new values was also largely reflected in the restructuring of the African communities. G.C.M. Mutiso points out in his book KENYA POLITICS, POLICY AND SOCIETY, that the structure of authority in most Kenyan societies prior to the intrusion of colonialism were basically bidirectional and participatory.²⁹

But the effects of missionary activity, indirect rule, and the subsequent differentiation in society eventually

led to the creation of centralised and non-participatory authority.³⁰

If the destruction of the participatory principle was alienating, the inversion of statuses in the African societies was even more alienating. This change of status had a kind of biblical effect of making the first last, and the last first.

The inversion of statuses meant that the people who did not have power in traditional societies were given new powers by the missionaries and colonial administrators. Basically, the majority of colonial chiefs were recruited from among those who were on the margins of their societies. According to Roland Oliver, most of those people were fugitive slaves, societal misfits and political exiles.³¹ Mutiso calls them "the pariah of society - ex-slaves, efulefu, empty worthless people."³²

What all this suggests is that the majority of those who found security in the company of the white men and were later made rulers, were the fellows who had previously been in a minority status. They were, in fact, marginal men.

The term marginal in this sense means those who were not fully integrated into their communities. Even as Mazrui points out:

The marginal man is he who hovers on the borderline between those who are in and

those who are out, and his behaviour is sometimes motivated by a desire for greater absorption into the dominant community, or at least for greater grudging respect from the community.³³

And because of their former marginal positions in society, these marginal men found tremendous security from the colonial administrator and the missionary. At the same time, they hated to be associated with the African communities, because such an association would only serve to remind them of their previous positions.

These were people who were invariably used as colonial agents for raising the required labour by force, and for collecting poll and ^uhat tax. They were thus the people who were used by colonisers to force the indigenous people into the money-economy. *

One natural consequence of this form of recruitment is that those who associated with the white man came to assume greater and greater power in the colonial economy, they accumulated more wealth, and sent their sons and daughters to school. It is those sons and daughters, who in most cases received their education in western countries, that came to control the bureaucratic machinery of the country on the attainment of independence. *

Because of their attitude to western values, these same people have tied the country to western imperialist

nations and they continue to keep the wheel of neo-colonialism turning.

What was equally significant with regard to these new values was the introduction of the money economy where none existed, and the monetisation of the people's economic habits.

This monetisation of the economy was very significant in bringing about the alienation of the indigenous people from each other. Karl Marx consistently argued that money is one of the greatest alienating factors in society. That the monetisation of human activities turns them into their opposites. In his own words:

Since money, as the existing and active concept of value, confounds and confuses all things, it is the general confounding and confusing of all things - the world upside down - the confounding and confusing of all natural and human qualities. ³⁴

X He argued that money is, essentially, the distorting of individualities which turns them into their opposite and confers contradictory attributes upon their attributes. He saw money, then, as the distorting power not only against the individual but also against the bonds of society. "It transforms fidelity into infidelity", argues Marx, "love into hate, hate into love, virtue into vice, vice into

virtue, servant into master, master into servant, **idiocy** into intelligence and intelligence into **idiocy**." ³⁵

As a corollary to the above observation, he suggested:

The distorting and
confounding of all human
and natural qualities,
the fraternisation of
impossibilities - the divine
power of money - lies in its
character as men's estranged,
alienating and self-
disposing species--nature.
Money is the alienated
ability of mankind. That
which I am unable to do as
a man, and of which there-
fore all my individual
essential powers are
incapable, I am able to do
by means of money. Money
thus turns each of these
powers into something which
in itself it is not - turns
it, that is into its contrary. ³⁶

That indeed, was part of the alienating nature of some of the values introduced into the African societies by colonialism. And one of the major attributes of the money economy is the exchange of goods between peoples. In fact, money can be useless if it is not based on the principle of exchange.

But the consolidation of the principle of exchange and the money economy had its own significance for the beginning of capitalism in Kenya. Many traditional communities prior to the arrival of the white man engaged mostly in

barter, and the idea of money as a medium of exchange was quite unknown in many of these societies. However, when white men began to settle in Kenya's highlands, one of their early problems was how to get Africans to work for them for wages. They wanted cheap labour both for domestic use and plantation use, but they could not easily get such labour where money was alien to the indigenous populations. Imperial authorities therefore devised ways of forcing Africans to work. In some cases, it was literally forced labour ranging from the use of convicts to direct economic conscription from the villages.³⁷

In other cases, taxation was devised as a way of forcing Africans to work for money. Since Africans had to pay tax annually in the form of money, and since they could obtain this money only by working for it, a process of monetising indigenous economic habits had already got under way and this monetisation of African economic habits went with commodity production which inevitably brings about the alienation of the producers.

The appearance of commodity production on a commercial scale and its subsequent regularisation and generalisation radically transformed the way people performed their labour and the way they organised society in general. Even as Ernest Mandel has observed, the emergence, regularisation and generalisation of commodity production are directly

related to the expanding character of the phenomenon of alienation. In his article AN INTRODUCTION TO THE MARXIST POLITICAL ECONOMY he writes:

Obviously, this phenomenon of alienation does not exist - at least in the same form - in a society where commodity production is unknown and where the life of one individual and his social activity are united in the most elementary way. Man works, but not generally by himself; most often he is part of a collective group having a more or less organic structure. His labour is a direct transformation of material things. All of this means that labour activity, the act of production, the act of consumption, and the relations between the individual and his society are ruled by a condition of equilibrium which has relative stability and permanence. 38

But the colonial capitalist economy changed this whole structure of society in Kenya. The foundation stone had thus been laid for engendering "the spirit of capitalism", to use Max Weber's term. 39

According to Max ^eWber, the tonic that gave the western man acquisitive instincts at the beginning of modern capitalism was a new conception of religion that taught him to regard the pursuit of wealth as, not merely an advantage, but, a duty. 40 But what gave the African man

acquisitive tendencies was the introduction of the money economy and the demand by the coloniser that the African man be civilized along western lines. The result of this was that the African man was also "dominated by the making of money, (and) by acquisition as the ultimate purpose of his life."⁴¹ And:

Thus, the capitalism of today, which has come to dominate economic life, educates and selects the economic subjects which it needs through a process of economic survival for the fittest. ⁴²

Under the new structure of society, the fittest appeared to be those who had been in a marginal position in the traditional society. These fellows assumed a higher social status in the colonial society, they accumulated wealth, and sent their children to school. And it was their children that became the educated elite at the end of the colonial era and occupied senior positions in the independent state. Our next section looks at the responsibility of this educated in mortgaging the country to imperialist states:

THE EDUCATED ELITE AND NEO-COLONIALISM

In his book, NEW DIRECTION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA, Emanuel Okwuosa argues that one reason why Africa is oppressed and dominated by western countries is "that most of

the Africans in high positions today had their education in the countries of Europe and North America." ⁴³ And as a result, "African governments obtain most of their technical assistance from these countries." ⁴⁴

It is through this so-called assistance and foreign investments that African countries have found themselves controlled by the donors. This form of dependence, and submission has subsequently created a neo-colonial society in Kenya.

Kwame Nkrumah, who popularised the term neo-colonialism argues that:

The essence of neo-colonialism is that the state which is subjected to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality, its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside. ⁴⁵

This kind of situation is achieved through the efforts of both the educated elite, who dominate the bureaucracy, and neo-colonialist powers of the west. Though the country may be constitutionally independent, its economic and political policies are just imposed onto it by the imperialist nations. It is this kind of situation that Fanon defined as "false decolonisation".

According to Ann Seidman and Reginald Green:

The essential characteristic

of this...false decolonisation - which has occurred, in one form or another in many African states - is the preservation, with minimum modification, of the basic structures and institutions inherited from the colonial period: the colonial administrative legal and educational system, the colonial pattern of class relationships and antagonisms, the whole network of dependent relations - political, cultural, economic, military - upon the former colonial power, or upon some successor power or consortium of powers.⁴⁶

To the extent that under neo-colonialism the peripheral state is controlled and dominated by the rich, neo-colonialism thus establishes a situation in which the entire subject nation is dominated by imperialism. And through this domination and oppression, it brings about alienation.

In Kenya, neo-colonialism was established through the joint efforts of the former colonial power, Britain, and the local intelligentsia.⁴⁷ It was the educated elite that took part in the formulation of a constitution which had already been drafted by the British. It is the same educated elite that agreed with the British government that the former settler farms were not to be given out free. And the same educated elite laid down an open-door policy for foreign investments.⁴⁸ The alienating effects of foreign

investments come out through the exploitation of African labour and their efforts to hold the entire country at ransom.

The educated indeed played a significant role in maintaining the colonial economy and thus leaving those who had been alienated under colonialism still alienated in the independent state. Though the struggle for independence revolved around the question of land, land resettlement schemes did not go quite far in alleviating the problem of landlessness. Because of the vital role land has played in the politics of Kenya, we want to look at the land question in the next chapter.

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FOOTNOTES

1. Bidirectional societies are those in which authority is not centralised. They provide a wide latitude within which the ruled can also influence decision-making. See, for instance, G.C.M.Mutiso Kenya Politics, Policy and Society (Nairobi, EALB, 1975).
2. We cannot repeat much of it here since it has received enormous attention from students of education. See, for example, D.N.SIFUNA: Vocational Education in Schools (Nairobi; EALB, 1976) pp. 18-35.
3. Max Weber: The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (London, Unwin University Books, 1968) p.2.
4. What usually happened was that members of a particular community formed a team which worked for each of the members on different days, according to the needs of a particular member.
5. A.A. MAZRUI: "The Written Word and Collective Identity" in E.A.Journal, Vol.9, No.5 (May 1972) p.3
6. Mutiso: Kenya Politics...op.cit.
7. NGUGI wa THIONG'O: Homecoming (London, H.E.B., 1972) pp.31-32.
8. R.M.A. van ZWANENBERG: Colonial Capitalism and Labour in Kenya (Nairobi, EALB, 1975) p.xv.
9. J.KENYATTA: Facing Mount Kenya (London, Secker & Warburg, 1938) p.133.
10. Ibid. p. 135
11. This is what I gathered when I spoke to Elijah Masinde in January, 1977.

12. P.MAINA: Six Mau Mau Generals (Nairobi, Gazelle Books Co. Ltd., 1977) p.10.
13. See MUTISO: Kenya Politics... op.cit. Though he does not talk about the Gikuyu in particular, his argument on the "New Associative Asomi and Insecurity" (pp.31-5) implies that it was the sons of the Karinga - type who were absorbed into the bureaucracy. See also his chapter on "The Political Sociology of the Kenyan Bureaucracy" (pp.60-74).
14. NGUGI wa THIONG'O: The River Between (London, HEB, 1971) p.35.
15. A.A.MAZRUI: "Creative Electicism as an Ideological Alternative" (mimeo) p.9.
16. The River Between, op. cit. p.36
17. This is Lewis Leakey's letter which was cited by A.J. TEMU: British Protestant Missions, p.107
18. For Archdeacon Owen's criticism of the colonial administration's labour laws, see R.M.A.van ZWANENBERG "The Missionary Conscience and Colonial Injustices: The Life and Times of W.E.Owen of Nyanza" in A.OJUKA and W.OCHIENG (eds.) Politics and Leadership in Africa (EALB, 1975) pp.63-84
19. Ibid. p.63
20. This is a story all the elderly people in Bungoma district still tell. Pilate opened up a mission centre at Kibabii and Ford put up his at Lagulu.
21. See Sifu^{na}, op.cit. p.63.
22. Ibid. p.64

23. A.S.TOURE: "African Emancipation" in G.C.M.Mutiso & S.W.ROHIO (eds.) Readings in African Political Thought (London, HEB, 1975) p.313.
24. This argument is partly derived from my B.A. thesis on Kwame Nkrumah's Theory of the African Personality, p.28.
25. A.JEROME: Africa in Search of an Ideology (Nairobi, EALB, 1973) p.49.
26. This is also derived from B.A. thesis, op. cit.
27. F.FANON: The Wretched of the Earth (Penguin, 1970).
28. F.FANON: Black Skins, White Masks (Paladin, 1970) p.83.
29. See Note I.
30. Ibid. p.4.
31. R.OLIVER: The Missionary Factor in East Africa (London, Longman, 1952) pp.50-60.
32. MUTISO: Kenya Politics... op. cit. p.9.
33. A.A.MAZRUI: Thought and Violence (London; Longman, 1969) p.164.
34. K.MARX & F.ENGELS: Collected Works Vol.3 (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1975) p.326
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid. p.325
37. MAZRUI: "Creative Eclecticism ..." op. cit. p.15
38. See E.MANDEL: "An Introduction to the Marxist Political Economy" (mimeo) p.7.

39. WEBER, op. cit. pp.47-78.
40. Ibid. p.2
41. Ibid. p.53.
42. Ibid. p.55.
43. E.OUWUOSA: New Direction for Economic Development in Africa (London, Africa Books, 1976) p.XIV.
44. Ibid.
45. KWAME NKRUMAH: Revolutionary Path (London, Panaf Books Ltd., 1973) p.314.
46. R.H.GREEN & A. SEIDMAN: Unity or Poverty - The Economics of Pan-Africanism (Baltimore, Maryland, Penguin Books, 1968) p.13.
47. Though the British government invited Africans to take part in the constitutional conference, much of the work was done by Europeans as far as drafting the constitution was concerned.
48. The Foreign Investments Act of 1964 went a long in protecting the investors who had come to exploit the masses.

CHAPTER THREE

LAND PROBLEMS AND ALIENATION

Our greatest asset in Kenya is our land. This is the heritage we received from our forefathers. In land lies our salvation and survival.

JOMO KENYATTA, 1964.

The nature and magnitude of landlessness at the Coast (of Kenya) are such that solutions can only be found in the overall context of Kenya's national land, agricultural and urban development policy.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE, 1978.

Land is a very important commodity in the life of any person, and in Kenya, land can be, and has been, used as a cause of alienation or as a very important factor in the process of nation-building. In this chapter, we are, above all, concerned with the issue of land and landlessness as a principal cause of alienation, and we propose to examine it at three levels of analysis.

At the first level, we are going to treat the lack of land or landlessness in the context of alienation, and try to point out to what extent, the problem of landlessness causes alienation in human society. At the second level of analysis, we shall examine the dichotomy between the life of the settler and the life of the squatter during the colonial

period in Kenya. We shall point out also the degree to which land attracted the settler and the way in which the existence of the settler necessitated the existence of the African squatters, and, in fact, meant the alienation of those squatters.

Thirdly, we shall look at the post-independence land resettlement schemes and point out also their alienating effects. This section will also point out the grabbing of land by the rich which has been going on after independence while leaving some people in the cold both upcountry and at the coast.

Landlessness and Alienation:

Karl Marx argued, in the last century, that the first form of human alienation, in material terms, emerged from the patterns of land tenure that came with the dislocation of feudal arrangements and the setting up of primitive capitalistic structures.

In fact, the so-called freeing of serfs technically detached them from the soil and made them sellers of their own labour. And that labour could only be sold if they were lucky to get a market for it. In a sense, that form of alienation, according to the Marxist theory, resulted from the separation of the serfs from the soil, that is, the detachment of producers from the means of production.

This detachment had an additional consequence of compelling the landless or dispossessed people to sell their labour in the market in order to earn a living. The selling of labour in return for a wage in a situation where wage-labour was never before heard of was itself a form of alienation. It was equivalent to selling oneself in a market in order to earn a living. That was the beginning of the commercialisation of labour and the turning of man into a commodity for sale sell. It was a big step forward in the dehumanisation and alienation of man.

What is more, the lack of land leads to a situation in which the landless man, who has been turned into a commodity, begins to under-value himself. It has connections with loss of identity and lack of a sense of belonging. Once it has given a man the sense of rootlessness, he begins to think of himself as a valueless commodity. And without land, one cannot have capital, and without capital, he cannot produce anything unless he is hired by the man of capital, by the man who is going to exploit his labour by underpaying him.

In Kenya, land has curiously been regarded as the basis of life. It has deep roots into the cultures of the different peoples of Kenya and has connections with the present people's communications with their forebears.

Even as one writer pointed out in his study of land as a nation-building factor:

The African people of Kenya have maintained a great emotional and psychological investment in land because land represents their principal link with revered ancestors as well as being the most important and tangible raison d'etre of numerous African ethnic communities.¹

The writer goes further and points out that indeed the depth of this attachment caused the possession of land in Kenya to rival political independence as the prime focus of African nationalism.

Since land could be used as a link between man and his ancestors, the lack of it would definitely mean lack of that link. And without such a link, the people affected will be filled with a sense of rootlessness, of lack of identity, and of belonging nowhere.² The uprooting of man from his ancestral land would, thus, separate him and alienate him from his forefathers. And that is why landlessness will always inevitably lead to some alienation. Landlessness does not only deny man a necessary economic asset, but it also cuts his links with ancestors.

But how did the issue of land bring about alienation to the people of Kenya. In this country, the alienation of people through land came with the coming of settlers to the then White Highlands, and the coming of Arabs to the coastal areas of Kenya.³ The alienation of Kenyans through landlessness during the colonial period has to be seen in the

settlement policies of the time and the dichotomy between the life of settlers and the life of squatters.

The Settler and the Squatter:

The issue of land in Kenya has always been at the centre of national politics ever since the country came under colonial rule. Even at the time of writing this thesis, the Kenya parliament was debating, in a highly emotional atmosphere, the report of a Parliamentary Select Committee which had been charged with looking afresh into the problems of land ownership at the Coast.⁴

But the problems of land ownership and landlessness have a significant historical dimension which cannot be ignored at any rate. The alienation of African lands to the settlers in Kenya was closely linked with the story of the then Uganda Railways. Of course, the story of the railroad was, in turn, linked to the entire British global strategy of protecting their capital in India. But we are not going to repeat the history of the Uganda Railway in this section.⁵

What is of particular relevance to this discussion is the fact that White Settlers were in many respects part of the British imperial investment in East Africa.

After building the railway, Britain wanted the region to be self-sustaining instead of drawing from her treasury.

At the same time, its racial prejudice could not allow it to consider that Africans living in the region would develop the land sufficiently to provide Britain with the necessary resources incurred on building that railroad. Accordingly, the colonial administration in conjunction with the British government decided that only European settlement could develop the area to a level necessary to provide a prompt return on the investment. In addition, the presence of the railway and a community of European settlers also served to demonstrate their presence in the region better than a few Missionaries would. Hence the decision to alienate the best quality land to the immigrant community.

If we were to consider the size of the land alienated to settlers in proportion to what was left to the indigenous people, or if we were to consider the number of people who were made landless and homeless by this alienation of land, the issue of land as a cause of alienation at a national level, would not be worth discussing. The acreage alienated to white settlers was very small compared to the whole size of utilisable land in the entire country. And the number of people made homeless was quite small compared to those who were left on their land. Only sections of the Kipsigis, Gikuyu, Keio, Kamba, Nandi, Maasai, Gusii, Luhya, Giriama and Digo were ★ made landless and by that alienated directly by the alienation of land to the settlers.

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But the significance of the land question is partly derivative. Indeed, the land issue has, in all respects, to be seen as an integral part of imperialist capital in this country. Land was initially responsible for the coming of so many settlers to the country and for the subsequent evolution of the kind of politics there is in Kenya at the moment. It had also to play a significant role in the alienation of the labour of the people of this country.

In the majority of cases, the alienation of land was accomplished by legal means which Africans did not in any way understand. For instance, the British government assumed full control of what it called "unoccupied" land and presented it to European settlers in some cases as 999-year leaseholds.⁷ The Africans were merely tenants at the will of the crown. But in actual fact, there had been no unoccupied lands as such. Most of the indigenous people either practised shifting cultivation or kept moving their cattle to different pastures on a rotational basis. All the land, therefore, belonged to the Africans, but the colonial administration had not studied the habits of the people long enough to understand their practices. So it went ahead and took control of all the land that was not in effective use at a particular time because to them it was "unoccupied".

Most of the dispossessed Africans resented the crown lands ordinances of 1915 which gave security to the white settlers

leaving the original owners of the land landless. In particular, a great deal of controversy surrounded white settlement in areas bordering on Gikuyu country. The Gikuyu constantly denied that the lands were vacant when settlers arrived. They further argued that Europeans took advantage of the traditional Gikuyu practice of making temporary allocations to strangers by assuming permanent possession, and that the Gikuyu were unjustly deprived of their ownership of land. This deprivation ultimately meant the alienation of the people from the land. Sources, of course, differ on the size of land that was alienated to the settlers. But under white highlands policy, whites owned large tracts of land. Indeed, within a space of a few years after their arrival, about 1,000 settlers had exclusive rights to nearly 4.5 million acres of fertile lands, while a large number of indigenous people were landless. Some settlers had even as much as 2,4000 acres of land each, on average. And by 1953, the total acreage of alienated land was more than 10 million.⁷ The table below shows the pattern of white settlement in the Kenyan highlands.⁸

	1903	1915	1920	1934	1942	1953
Settlers Approx.	100	1000	1200	2000	3000	4000
Occupied acreage	?	4.5M	3.1M	5.1M	6.3M	7.3M

Whereas it has been indicated that only 4000 settlers had more than 7.3 million acres of land in 1953, there were about 202,944 squatters at about the same time.⁹ Squatting has been defined as a "spontaneous movement of potential farmers and unemployed persons to occupy land for which they have no legal title for purposes of establishing residence."¹⁰ That definition, though sociologically operational, does not say anything about the historical forces that led to squatting in the first place. Colin Leys has, on the other hand, argued that squatters were by and large those Africans who were living on, cultivating and generally also grazing, land that did not belong to them. He goes on:

In the early years of European settlement they were sometimes the original inhabitants of the land which had been appropriated by the colonial administration and alienated to a European settler. More often, they were landless people or owners of very small plots, who would have moved on to some unused and unowned land but who now found that the

only available unused land was in European ownership. The settlers found that they had far more land than they could use and that they could get cheap, and above all, resident and therefore fairly reliable supplies of labour in return for allowing people¹¹ to cultivate on their land.

The problem with Leys is that he, like most European writers, still thinks there was some unowned land somewhere when in fact there was nothing like that. But he rightly points out that squatting was essentially accentuated by the appropriation of African lands to the white settlers. Indeed, it was the sequence of land alienation, leading to a shortage of grazing pastures that gave birth to squatting. The Gikuyu, for instance, who had been dispossessed turned into AHOI and the Nandi, whose hundred square miles of land were alienated after the first world war, wanted pasture. Squatting was practiced also by the Akamba, Luhya, Kipsigis, Suk, and Keio. According to Furedi, the dominant motive for squatting was to obtain land which the squatter could not get among his own people because of overcrowding.¹² Indeed, by the 1930's, the squatters were such an insecure and uprooted category of people that although a few found prosperity, the majority remained poor and exploited. And it is this insecurity and this exploitation that explains the alienation of the landless and stands as evidence of the fact that imperialism

was the cause of the alienation of the squatters. It was squatting that precisely expressed the contradiction between the world of the settlers and that of the indigenous Africans. While settlers had more land to themselves than they needed, the squatters had nothing they could call their own and they had to give their labour before they could be allowed the use of what once belonged to them. Zwanenberg has also subscribed to this view that the squatter system depended on the fact that many Europeans owned large areas of surplus unused land and they wanted cheap easily available labour which the squatter provided. x The whole relationship was based on the land needs of the squatter, the land surplus of the settler and the labour needs of the settler.¹³

And the alienation of the squatter under those relationships was consolidated not only by the conditions of work which progressively worsened every year, but also by the uncertainty surrounding the squatters' stay on the settler's farm. The 1918 Resident Labourers Ordinance, for instance, almost reduced the squatter to something like a serf, by forbidding squatting except on the basis of an agreement by the squatter to work for at least 180 days a year for the settler.¹⁴ The squatter thus automatically became a tied labourer, although he had to be paid for his labour at a very low rate.

HERE 11 But the uncertainty of the squatter indicated that the

squatter was not living in some kind of feudal protective relationship. Unlike the old feudal arrangements which offered some protection to the serfs, the embryonic capitalistic set-up in colonial Kenya did not offer any protection to squatters. Their stay was determined by the economic fortunes of the settlers. For instance, when the settlers' economic fortunes took a bad turn in the 1930's, many settlers started to move into mixed farming and the squatters were cleared out to make room for the settler's cattle. As Zwanenberg has put it:

To the estate owner the availability and cheapness of the squatters' labour was the significant factor in the relationship and when these factors became unprofitable to the farmer, he was able to alter the character of the contract. The surplus land on the estates became of greater exchange value than the cheapness of the labour.¹⁵

Of course the crudity of the system which led to the alienation of the squatter are quite clear from the above discussion. The colonial situation had reduced him to a kind of commodity which would be valued in terms of the cheapness of land use and the profitability of cattle rearing. The reduction of the squatter to that level was in itself an indication of his dehumanisation and dehumanisation is itself evidence of alienation. The movement of the squatters back to the already over-populated "reserves" increased the

frustrations of the indigenous people because some of them had no where to go. In fact, the back-to-the-reserve movement produced a situation fraught with tension, and it was some of ~~the~~ evicted squatters that formed the backbone of the nationalist movements. As Colin Leys has observed:

Once this had happened, it was not surprising that a large number came to play leading parts in the forest fighting, and those who survived the fighting and the detention and moved back to the Rift Valley afterwards provided much of the support for the Land Freedom Army, formed in 1960, which posed the threat of forcible land seizure in the highlands... The "landless in the Rift Valley" thus came to be seen as epitomising the reasons why a major programme of land transfer from the European mixed farms to African peasants must be the key to any strategy for a transition to independence which would preserve the rest of the colonial economic structure fundamentally intact.¹⁶

It all ties up with the fact that some of the nationalist fighters were among the most alienated Kenyans during the colonial period. But many more problems confronted these people during the emergency. By this time, most of the squatters had joined the Mau Mau and Forty Group nationalist movements. And during the emergency, most of

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them were either killed, imprisoned or

huddled up during the villagisation programme and forced to work on trenches without pay.¹⁷

But the colonial government was very quick to realise that reforms in land, in the immediate post-emergency period, were very essential if the political economy of imperialism within Kenya was to be preserved. And soon they started making reforms in land use and in the land tenure system, with a view to containing the political insurgency and later creating an African landed gentry. The creation of classes was to have the problem of alienation perpetuated, but to slightly shift the balance by moving some Africans to the side of imperialism. The idea of creating classes among the Africans was explicitly expressed by R.J.M. Swynnerton who drew up a plan, the Swynnerton Plan of 1954 that said, among other things,

In the past, Government policy has been to maintain the tribal system of tenure so that all the people have had bits of land and to prevent the African from borrowing money against the security of his land. The result is that there is no agricultural indebtedness by Africans to other races. In the future, if these recommendations are accepted, former Government policy will be reversed and able and good Africans will be able to acquire more land and bad or poor farmers less, creating a landed and landless society. This is a normal step in the evolution of a country. 18

What is clear from this report is that the colonial government saw it to its advantage to create antagonistic classes in the African society and build up a class of rich Africans indebted to British financial institutions.

The creation of an indebted class of Africans was one way through which land was used for the establishment of conditions whereby the petty-bourgeoisie would be controlled and manipulated by the owners of capital. That indebtedness was, in fact, a trap through which both the rich and poor in Kenya would be oppressed, and therefore alienated by the international bourgeoisie. At the same time, a class of rich Africans would stand in an antagonistic position to the poor Africans, and that way, land was used by the imperial power to alienate Africans from each other. Land, therefore, served as a cause of alienation not only to the poor and landless, but also as an important link through which the so-called rich Africans could be manipulated.

But what was of long-term benefit to the imperial system was that the creation of a class of Africans with land and property would have a vested interest in the institution of private property and would subsequently defend the colonial economic system on the departure of the whites. By the end of the 1950's the Swynnerton Scheme had been implemented in much of Gikuyu country. And the result of this manoeuvre was to buy-off people who would preserve

the agricultural system of the settler economy; it was a way of rewarding the loyalty of those Gikuyu who had allied themselves with the colonial administration while at the same time creating a class of Africans (with land) who would become a counterpoise against the future re-emergence of militant nationalism in the country.¹⁹ Imperialism had, thus, found traitors to the nationalist movement through the manipulation of the land question, and betrayal is also a form of alienation. On these reforms, Colin Leys has observed:

The bulk of this change occurred in central province, the Kikuyu (sic) homeland. Undoubtedly, most Kikuyu benefited to some extent from it, but those with the larger holdings or salaries which enabled them to buy large holdings emerged as the leading beneficiaries, with a substantial stake in the system which made this possible.²⁰

The reforms were inevitably to start among the Agikuyu because they were the most embittered group about the stolen lands. But soon, the reforms spread to other areas requiring people to consolidate their land holdings and obtain title deeds as security for commercial credit.

The immediate beneficiaries of these reforms in other areas were mainly the colonial chiefs who had defrauded some of their subjects of land through the tax-system, and some African court-elders who sometimes forcefully acquired landholdings using their positions.

It was these colonial chiefs, court-elders, agriculturists and other colonial bureaucrats that developed a vested interest in the institution of private property long before independence and were subsequently quite opposed to a socialist system.

At the Kenya coast, where there are presently more than 130,000 squatters,²¹ the evolution of the land tenure system was slightly different from that which obtained in other parts of the country.

The original landowners were displaced and made landless long before colonialism, and when the entire country came under colonial rule, most of the owners of land at the coast were absentee Arabs who lived quite far away from their lands.²² But when a cashew nut campaign at the coast started in the 1930's most landowners felt quite unsure of certain measures which were negotiated under customary and muslim law in 1937 between the colonial administration, the landowners, and the squatters to the effect that squatters of that time and their heirs would be in effective occupation of the land so long as they paid their rent.

This legal arrangement operated up to the time of independence, but thereafter, many people from upcountry moved to the coast to buy up land from the absentee Arab landlords, and since then, most people at the coast have

been thrown out without any good arrangements to settle them anywhere. It would appear that although landlessness has existed at the coast for many centuries, this problem was aggravated after independence when rich Africans from upcountry moved there and started throwing out of the farms all the squatters.

Post-Independence Landlessness.

If anything has disillusioned and alienated many Kenyans since 1963, it is the post-independence land deals. The acquiring and grabbing of land in Kenya from the time we attained independence has made many people rich, but it has also made very many people suffer. It is in this area that most Kenyans feel they were quite betrayed by the government of the late Mzee Jomo Kenyatta. And no wonder that when new President, Daniel Arap Moi, took over the presidency, one of his first executive decisions was to suspend all land deals in the country.

During the nationalistic struggle it was thought land would be given out free to the landless, but the situation changed radically when in 1959 the colonial government converted settler land from leasehold to freehold so that the settlers became the actual owners of the land.²³ That meant, then, that after the attainment of independence, the new African government had to buy land from the settlers

first and then give it out to the Africans. But even the Africans were not to get it free. They had to get loans from certain prescribed financial institutions to buy back their own land, and through those they were indebted to, and dependent on, the financial institutions that provided the loans.

The negotiations, through which a million-acre scheme was established to accommodate about 100,000 Africans in order to remove land hunger and defuse rural unrest, involved a lot of tough bargaining. And it was by this bargaining over the land issue that imperialism established more subtle channels and chains of oppressing and therefore, alienating the entire country.

The results of the negotiations for independence are to be found in the 1960 and 1962 Lancaster House Conferences, and they are said to have incorporated the views of the four main parties to the conference table, namely; the nationalist group, the imperial government, and two factions of Kenya Europeans. The nationalist group comprised the two African political parties, the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) and the Kenya African National Union (KANU); and the European parties were Michael Blundell's New Kenya Group (NGK) and the farmer dominated Kenya National Farmers Union (KNFU).

An analysis of the resolutions of the two conferences is beyond the scope of this chapter. But on land, the British government and a group of Kenya Europeans worked out

an international financial scheme for enabling the new African government to buy out white farmers. That international financial scheme had its alienating effects in several ways. In one way, it had the effect of evading the problem of landlessness by putting more emphasis on the question of economic development. Under this scheme, land was given to those who had the capital and experience to till it profitably, not to those who had no land, thus leaving the landless frustrated and more alienated. In another way, the international financial component of the schemes had the effect of tying the new government to the international financial institutions that provided the loans, mainly, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) and the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC) both of which "emphasized a network of contacts, experiences and inclination".²⁴ That international financing of land transfer schemes, in fact, opened the way for more capital from foreigners, which later played its own role in oppressing and alienating the people of Kenya.

The land transfer programmes, as we have pointed out, aimed **not at** alleviating the problem of landlessness by giving land to the landless and poor people, but at preserving the colonial economic system. The qualification for the acquiring of land was not lack of land, but rather, possession of large capital, even land itself, and the ability to farm profitably and keep the wheels of capitalism

turning.

In that manner, the land transfer programmes, though they served a useful purpose by opening up the former settler areas to the Africans, left a good number of people landless, imposed landlessness on a few others, left some people unemployed and alienated instead of being implemented to curb some of these problems. It also filled many more people with anguish and a sense of betrayal and frustration.

Those transfer programmes, in fact, nurtured feelings of animosity between the poor who were landless and the rich, between those who could acquire land using their capital and the landless who had no form of security. Land, thus, played a significant role in laying the foundation for post-independence class struggles between the landed petty-bourgeoisie and the landless, and ultimately a struggle between property-owners and the poor workers. That was part of the root of the post-independence contradictions.

According to Wasserman, the major considerations in the transfer schemes were the value of the colonial economy, the need to stabilise the post-independent regime, and the goal of minimising the alterations in the inherited politico-economic system.²⁵ The contradiction in this was the fact that the land transfer schemes aimed at solving European problems and not at meeting the initial goals of independence, which goes to support the fact that they frustrated and alienated those who expected to get land

after independence. He says:

The major economic goal of the schemes was a curious dialectic. Briefly stated, it was the desire to preserve the large farm capital-agriculture system by removing most of the large (European) farmers....The contradiction was only an apparent one. The need was to integrate and stabilise a European-established farming system-in-to an-African-dominated polity.²⁶

What this ultimately meant was a continuation of some of the problems like unemployment, landlessness and exploitation of the **workers** inherited from colonialism. And since imperialism owned the capital with which the "qualified" Africans were buying land, it meant that it was still this imperialist capital that was going to rule Kenya through some sections of the local petty-bourgeoisie.

What was actually reduced, then, was the visibility of the farming European community, though still many owned farms in the country upto the late sixties.²⁷ The Africans with land were eventually socialised towards preserving the capitalist political economy. The new African government undertook this socialisation process by transferring large-scale farms particularly what were known as "Z" plots to the moderates in the new government as a form of reward for their

loyalty. The awarding of those "Z" plots to ministers, provincial commissioners, ambassadors and permanent secretaries was part of the effort to reward politically important elements with a view to maintaining a capitalist system.²⁸ On this, one writer has noted:

Perhaps two of the best examples of the schemes' tendency to promote an African landed class could be seen in the "Z" plots and the activities of the Land Bank... Both in fact created conditions for the movement of middle-class Africans on to large farms. This was the long-term social side of the political-economic coin the planners were examining. Cementing a social class into the agricultural system with an interest in its stability and enhancement was ... much a requisite for the survival of the community.²⁹

That way, land was utilised as raw material from which Africans could begin to build their own small assets, but assets which were substantially mortgaged to international capital.

Those Africans with little capital would not be likely soon to demand for the abolition of the institution of private property. Creating an indigeneous class of Africans with investment in land was further seen by planners as a means of consolidating the rural populace around a moderate government and stabilising the society by giving important

elements in it a vested interest in property rights. The director of settlement in 1966 emphasised this idea when he said:

We should aim at a land reform programme whose main ingredients are divorced from temporary political expedients and should endeavour to create a landowning, stable rural society with enhanced social status, rights and privileges. In the long run, this has the most important stabilising force upon which the rest of our Nation can be build. 30

The "temporary political expedients" the Director of Settlement referred to were the solution of landlessness and the alleviation of unemployment. And what he meant was that foreign capital was to be used to create a land-based class, which would alienate the landless and unemployed, and not for the meeting of the acute problems of the day. This definitely suggests one of the ways in which land (and foreign capital) were involved in creating the contradictions of neo-colonialism and were made to serve as a tool of oppression and exploitation. Instead of seeing imperialism as a problem for the entire country, planners saw the landless and unemployed as the enemy of progress. And that shows why there was a contradiction and antagonism between the petty-bourgeoisie and the poor. However, the Director of Settlement was merely endorsing a cabinet viewpoint which had been expressed a little earlier. In an annual report for the 1963/64 year, the Department of Settlement reported:

By direction of the cabinet, a new policy was started towards the end of the (financial) year whereby the better class houses on large-scale farms had a 100 acre holding planned around them, regardless of the size of the plots in the remainder of the scheme. This was done so that the house and 100 acre holdings could be sold to a leader of the community such as a member of the Central Assembly or a Senator etc. ³¹

The 118 "Z" plots, which were given to prominent people in the country incorporated slightly more than 505 normal settlement size farms keeping large numbers of landless families out.³² And those who acquired them were absentee landlords who exploited cheap labour from the landless to earn profits. Yet any profit cannot come about without a surplus from labour, which is necessarily alienated from the labourer. Thus, although the number of people who received large plots was small and though they exploited just a small fraction of the people, the land transfer schemes played a substantial part in consolidating a lop-sided system of production and distribution that was, in turn, responsible for the alienation of many people in the country.

We have been emphasising the plight of the landless because they are, in our view, the most brutally alienated since they do not have the basic factor of production, land. Next to the landless are the unemployed who, like the landless, may not have means of livelihood. And because

settlement was undertaken on an economic basis, it did not go far in alleviating unemployment. In some cases, land transfers even gave rise to unemployment. For instance, in Nyandarua district in 1963, after settling 12,000 landless persons 6,000 labourers were thrown out as unemployed, and there still remained an extra 40,000 people in the district without land.³³ The alienation of the unemployed and landless was immediately demonstrated by a sudden rise in crime, squatting and oathing directed against the new African government.³⁴

But the loan schemes had more to them than just the perpetuation of the alienation which came with landlessness and unemployment in the country. They had the more serious effect of preventing the new government from looking for alternatives to an external oriented strategy.³⁵ The loan repayments to the British government, the C.D.C., and World Bank implied a conditioning process in the lending procedures. It also meant accepting World Bank advice and advisors, and through that advice, foreign capital, both public and private, came to be looked upon by the Kenya government as the most immediate source of revenue for the maintenance of those capitalist international links.

Not only was international finance considered an important taskmaster in educating the new Kenya Government in capitalist development behaviour, but demanded that its future relations with the capitalist world depended on its

willingness to keep the promises under which aid was provided. In her analysis of World Bank financial schemes in Latin America, Teresa Hayter argued that aid was given to only those states which strictly kept the code of ethics of capitalist aid and did not nationalise foreign-owned capital **without** due compensation. In her own words:

Aid is in general available to countries whose internal political arrangements, foreign policy alignments, treatment of foreign private investment, debt-servicing record, - export policies and so on are considered desirable, or at least acceptable by countries or institutions providing aid, and which do not appear to threaten their interests.³⁶

What Hayter indicates goes a long way in reflecting what the Kenya government pledged itself to do before getting the loans for land transfers. On his return from detention President Jomo Kenyatta gave an assurance to capitalist financial institutions when he said:

The Government of an independent Kenya will not be a gangster government. Those who have been panicky about their property - whether land or buildings or houses - can now rest assured that the future African Government, the Kenya Government, will not deprive them of their property or rights of ownership. We will encourage investors in various projects to come to Kenya and carry on their business peacefully in order to bring prosperity to this country.³⁷

Despite this pledge, the World Bank characteristically imposed its own conditions on the use of its aid to Kenya. It rejected, for instance, co-operative farming on the grounds that it was uneconomical, and insisted that the land to be transferred was to be the high-potential under-developed land and that settlement would result in substantial increase of production. It also insisted that settlers were to be agriculturally qualified and chosen, on non-racial basis with some working capital.³⁸ Together with the CDC, the World Bank further insisted that some European farmers were to be retained to make settlement supportive. And in line with that the Ministry of Lands and Settlement, on the eve of Independence, noted:

One of the understandings reached with the IBRD and CDC was that settlement schemes should not be a device to encourage European farmers to leave since the continuance of large numbers of them was considered essential to the economy.³⁹

What all this suggests is that loans for the land transfers were part of the instruments by which the country could be controlled, manipulated and dominated by foreign capital. Thus, not only did land in Kenya serve as a cause of alienation to the landless and poor, but it served also as a cause of alienation to the entire country. It established links through which both the poor and the petty-bourgeoisie of Kenya could be oppressed and alienated by international capital. In the next chapter, we want to see how that capital has caused alienation in Kenya.

FOOTNOTES.

1. See J.W. HARBESON: Nation-Building in Kenya: The Role of Land Reform (Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1973) "Introduction" p. xvii.
2. This view refers mainly to that piece of land on which the ancestors of a particular people were buried, not just any piece of land.
3. The report of Parliamentary Select Committee recently forcefully argued that the original owners of land in the then ten-mile coastal strip were Africans who were displaced by Arabs in the 7th century, reducing them to mere tenants. The British colonial government later confirmed the positions of those Arabs in their settlements, leaving Africans landless. (See REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE ISSUE OF LAND OWNERSHIP ALONG THE TEN-MILE COASTAL STRIP OF KENYA (1978) (mimeo)).
4. See THE WEEKLY REVIEW, May 5, 1978; p.4.
5. For a brief history of the Uganda Railway, see J.W. HARBESON: Nation-Building in Kenya: The Role of Land Reform (Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1973); C.LEYS, Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism (London, HEB, 1975); and R.M.A. van Zwanenberg: Colonial Capitalism and Labour in Kenya 1919-1939 (EALB, 1975).
6. HARBESON, op. cit. p.9.
7. LEYS, op. cit. p.29.
8. This table is extracted from Leys, p. 29.
9. P.M. MBITHI & C. BARNES: The Spontaneous Settlement Problem in Kenya (EALB, 1975) p.1
10. Ibid.
11. Leys, op. cit. p.46
12. F.FUREDI: "The Kikuyu Squatter in the Rift Valley 1918-1929".

13. ZWANENBERG, op. cit. p. 211
14. LEYS, op. cit. p.47
15. ZWANENBERG, op. cit. p.211
16. LEYS, op. cit. p.48
17. P. MAINA, Six Mau Mau Generals (Gazelle Books Company, Nairobi, 1977) pp. 28-30.
18. R.J.M. SWINNERTON: A Plan to Intensify the Development of African Agriculture (Government Printer, 1955) p. 10 (Emphasis added).
19. HARBERSON, op. cit. p.33
20. LEYS, p. 53
21. See REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE ISSUE OF LANDOWNERSHIP...(1978), op. cit., p. 12. See also THE WEEKLY REVIEW (Nairobi), May 5, 1978, p.5.
22. See REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE...(1978), op. cit. p.3
23. It was the Sessional Paper No.6 of 1959/60 that removed a Land Trust Corporation and some government control over inter-racial transfers, restricting the Governor's powers to appropriate land for public use and also making the conversion from leasehold to freehold very easy for the settlers. See also G. WASSERMAN: Politics of Decolonisation: Kenya Europeans and the Land Issue 1960-1965 (London, Cambridge University Press, 1976) p. 139.
24. WASSERMAN, op. cit. 174.
25. Ibid. p.
26. Ibid. p. 135 (Emphasis added).
27. Banned It is said that by 1968, three quarters of the former scheduled areas were still unaffected by either settlement schemes or private transfers to Africans. See WHO CONTROLS INDUSTRY IN KENYA (1968) p. 212.
28. WASSERMAN, op. cit. pp. 154-156.
29. WASSERMAN, p. 155

30. J.W. MAINA, Director of Settlement: "Settlement Patterns and Prospects" (Ministry of Lands and Settlement, April 4, 1966).
31. Department of Settlement: "Annual Report", 1963/64, p.5.
32. WASSERMAN, op. cit. pp. 148-156.
33. See WASSERMAN, p. 148.
34. Ibid.
35. On this particular point we differ with Wasserman who argues that the country developed an external-oriented strategy through the land-transfer loans. If anything, they merely consolidated that strategy which had been there since the country came under colonial rule.
36. TERESA HAYTER: Aid As Imperialism (London, Penguin, 1971) pp. 15-16 (Emphasis added)
37. J. KENYATTA: Suffering Without Bitterness (EAPH, Nairobi, 1978) p. 147.
38. See WASSERMAN pp.158.
39. Ministry of Settlement: "Memo: Assisted Owner Schemes (IBRD/CDC) July 1962.

CHAPTER FOUR

CAPITAL AND OPPRESSION

In a commodity-producing society, no independent development, or development of any sort whatsoever, is possible without capital. In Europe, the dependent nations have both their own capital and easy access to it on a wide range of terms. The colonies have no capital of their own, or none to speak of, and under finance capital, no colony can obtain any except on terms of political submission.

V.I. LENIN

...If nationalisation is to be pursued at all costs, then it must also be agreed that participation of foreign private capital will not be expected to play a part in the development of poor countries...We feel that foreign private capital can be used to promote other developments in Kenya. Obviously, there is a price to pay for the use of private capital and this price is the profits earned by foreign firms. (Emphasis added.)

TOM MBOYA

The intention of this chapter is not to point out how much capital, both foreign and local, there was in Kenya during the period under study. Instead, we suggest in this chapter that capital can, and does, bring about alienation,

and then use a portion of whatever capital there was in Kenya during that period to demonstrate its alienating effects.

There are two forms of capital in Kenya. There is agricultural or farm capital which was the first form of capital to change the people's economic habits and alienate them from their former ways of ordering life. But since we have already treated land as a cause of alienation in the previous chapter, we are not going to pay much attention to farm-capital in this chapter.

On the other hand, it is non-farm capital, that is, the commercial and industrial capital, that we are going to discuss and analyse in this chapter.

We are going to look at the alienating effects of this form of capital at three levels. First, we shall look at the broad relationship between capital and the workers and point out the concomitant results of this form of relationship. Second, we shall look at the relationship between foreign capital and the petty-bourgeoisie and also point out the symbiotic nature and alienating effects of that relationship. And thirdly, we shall point out the state's role in defending the owners of capital.

Foreign Capital and Labour.

In Marxist theory, the biggest enemy of labour is capital.

It always, and invariably, stands in an antagonistic position to labour, and oppresses it and eventually alienates it. In the words of Karl Marx himself:

Capital is...the governing power over labour and its products. The capitalist possesses this power, not ~~an~~ account of his personal or human qualities, but inasmuch ¹ as he is an owner of capital.

The alienating, and to some extent oppressive, nature of capital in relation to labour is brought out clearly in the passage above.

Since it is capital that rules over labour, the oppression of the workers must first be seen in terms of the dominating nature of capital and secondly in terms of who really owns that capital. Capital itself is just a thing. It cannot on its own volition decide to oppress and consequently alienate labour unless it is manipulated by the capitalist, that is, the owner of that capital.

It is, indeed, the owners of capital that actually oppress and alienate the workers. One writer, Dan Nabudere, has, in fact, argued that the oppression of labour by capital constitutes the fundamental contradiction in any capitalist society. In his own words, Nabudere postulates:

The fundamental contradiction that runs throughout the whole world under the rule of finance capital is the one between labour and capital; between the bourgeoisie

and the working class.²

And, contradictions, as we have observed already, often lead to alienation. So Nabudere was merely confirming the long-cherished view that capital oppresses and alienates labour, which is another way of arguing that the real owners of capital, that is, the bourgeoisie, always stand in a position in which they can, and do, alienate the workers in an effort to make profits.

But profits cannot be realised unless some fruits of labour are taken away from, or alienated from, the labourer or producer. In this sense, it would even appear that the late Tom Mboya, in his reply³ to Ahmed Mohiddin, acknowledged the fact that foreign private capital exploits and alienates labour before it makes profit.

Even at this theoretical level, we can see that capital is antagonistic to, and alienates, labour. And it is through this capital-labour relationship that the owners of capital, the bourgeoisie, exploit and alienate the working class.

In the early colonial period in Kenya, most business enterprises, together with the settlers, made very good use of the KIPANDE system and the nation-wide low wages to extract large profits from the African workers.

The KIPANDE system which was introduced in 1920 was carried into the 1950's. Its main purpose was "to ensure

that Africans under compulsion to labour for the government in fact did so for a given number of days each year."⁴ That system also helped in the efforts to locate the deserted labour of settlers, and breach of contract was punishable by imprisonment. The KIPANDE system was, in fact, an embodiment of exploitation of the African workers and racism at work. As Amsden puts it, all the whites were exempt from its provisions and pitted their political power against that of blacks.⁵ It enabled employers to give workers any salary because they knew the African workers were not going to desert their jobs and get away with it.

In particular, the general reduction of wages in Kenya on the eve of the Second World War clearly demonstrated a determination on the part of the employers to steal a people's labour. And the workers' frustrations and alienation was characteristically expressed by the general strike of 1939.⁶

Since strikes were mainly organised in an effort to resist exploitation and the alienation of the workers, all those strikes of the 1930's and 1940's have to be seen against the background of low wages given to the workers and large profits made by the employers.

As working conditions worsened, and as foreign companies continued to make large profits out of the

people's labour, workers repeatedly expressed their dissatisfaction in sporadic strikes by downing their tools and in 1947, the workers of Mombasa staged the biggest strike ever, during which time the African Workers Federation (AWF) was formed.⁷ And as was expected, the colonial state intervened and provided the K.A.R. troops and armoured cars and machine guns to put down the Mombasa strike. Shortly later, the state arrested the AWF leader, Chege Kibachia, and proscribed the AWF.

But two years later in 1949, a radical Indian, Makhan Singh, and Fred Kubai formed a successor organisation, the East African Trade Union Congress (EATUC) to protest against the exploitation and alienation of the workers. When this union became the focus of mass discontent in Nairobi, the colonial government arrested Singh and Kubai. Singh was deported to Lokitaung where he remained until 1961 and Kubai was jailed for 12 months and the EATUC was subsequently banned. That brought about general unrest that culminated in a general strike in Nairobi shortly afterwards but the colonial government again used large numbers of troops to put down the strike.⁸ The colonial state was thus living up to its reputation as "the state of the most powerful, economically dominant class."⁹

It was against the background of such strikes and protests by workers that the employers in the 1950's sought to establish

an organization which would ensure against future resistance from the exploited and alienated workers. The formation of the Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE) was spearheaded by the then boss of the East African Tobacco Company, Philip Rogers. The original name of the FKE was the Association of Commercial and Industrial Employers, and Rogers was its first president: Explaining the aim of the Association in 1957, Rogers stated:

Membership of the Association can, I suggest, perhaps be looked upon as an Insurance Policy and, furthermore, not an insurance policy to prevent strikes, for strikes are the extremes, an indication of dismal failure by both employers and employees. Our aim must be to build up the whole broad future of Industrial Relations in East Africa.¹⁰

Thus, the owners of capital, the bourgeoisie, had seen the inevitability of trade unionism and wanted to set the limits within which trade unionism would operate in Kenya.

The aim of the FKE was twofold: First, it was concerned with maximising political stability in the country by controlling trade unions. And secondly, they wanted to minimise the labour costs by making sure that the workers are not highly paid and yet do not go on strike to disrupt industrial peace. In fact, built into the bargaining procedures of the FKE design were elaborate mechanisms to hold the line on wage increases.

Much of what the FKE did was to make sure that trade unionism would not operate on the same lines in Kenya as it operated in Britain. They sought various ways and means of limiting trade union activities within one industry so that those trade unions which were actually established became totally toothless.

Colin Leys has, indeed, pointed out:

With the formation of the FKE, the government's own efforts to foster such unions began to have some success, as employers increasingly learned to do business with them. The FKE worked hard on its own account to avoid the formation of what it called "omnibus" unions and to induce the workers to form one union for each industry, which would then deal with the purely industrial questions of that industry. 11

The formation of the FKE was a clear example of how capital, using institutionalised means, can suppress, exploit, and alienate labour or the workers. It is a living symbol of the concerted efforts of capital to put labour forever under foot.

The role of the FKE in the country increased after Independence when it came to play a vital role in shaping industrial relations. Infact, after independence, the FKE came to represent both the bureaucracy of the larger foreign companies and the state-owned commercial corporations. Its close relationship with the government was underlined by

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the fact that its president "had free access to the minister for labour and any other minister concerned with economic problems".¹² Furthermore, a regular monthly meeting was held between the FKE president and the permanent secretary in the ministry of labour.

This relationship was very crucial not only in ensuring that industrial relations developed in accordance with the needs of foreign capital, but also in enlisting government support in the exploitation of African workers by foreign companies. Government support was particularly required in order to avoid concerted action between unions in different sectors of the economy and to prevent trade union militancy in the lowest-paid sectors. To do so with legislative backing the government passed the Trade Union (Amendment) Act of 1964 which gave it extensive powers to regulate the internal affairs of unions. The following year, 1965, it passed another Bill, the Trade Disputes Act of 1965, which also gave the state power to arbitrate in industrial disputes. And the following year also, the government again sought what looked like a very tough measure of controlling the trade union movement. The government-controlled Central Organisation of Trade Union (COTU) was set up in 1966, with stipulations that its chief officers had to be confirmed and could be dismissed by the president of the country.

Armed with these legislative measures, the government managed to prohibit strikes in "essential" services, and closely controlled the machinery through which any strike could be made legal, empowering the Minister of Labour to declare any strike illegal, if in his opinion, the machinery for negotiation had not been exhausted. The natural effect of this was that employers could prolong their consideration of wage claims even for years, confident that the government could not legalise a strike merely on the grounds that the machinery for negotiation was working slowly.

As a result of these arrangements, many disputes came to be referred to the Industrial Court, either by agreement between unions and employers, or at the discretion of the government. What followed was that strike action fell dramatically and large scale strikes were, infact, virtually eliminated by the government's willingness to declare them illegal whenever they appeared imminent. This was a clear demonstration of how international capital could use the political machinery, namely, the state, to oppress and alienate the workers.

The significance of this kind of relationship is that it shows that the state belongs to both the international bourgeoisie and the local petty-bourgeoisie. And in this particular case, the cause of alienation was the international bourgeoisie, but the state served as an

important vehicle through which pressure from international capital could be exerted on the workers. The state was, thus, just a tool of capital.

All these measures indicated that as the antagonism between labour and capital came to the surface, it necessitated state intervention. State intervention, of course, just led to an intensification of the exploitation of labour by capital. They manifested the principal contradiction between international capital and local labour, and the relationship between the international bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie of Kenya.

Foreign Capital and Petty-Bourgeoisie

The relationship between the petty-bourgeoisie of Kenya and the owners of foreign capital is not a new phenomenon. It started with the establishment of colonialism, and during the colonial period, the petty-bourgeoisie of Kenya consisted of the white settlers and the commercial entrepreneurs. Thus, initially, it was a relationship between white and white, and at times between white and Asian.

But with the attainment of independence, the equation shifted slightly, and the relationship became dominantly that of black and white. The international bourgeoisie is white while the petty-bourgeoisie is black. The difference

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is only a matter of degree, for, there are still whites on the periphery in Kenya who are indebted to the international bourgeoisie just as there are Asians in Kenya who are also indebted to the international bourgeoisie.

There are two main characteristics of this relationship. In one, the international bourgeoisie oppresses and dominates the petty-bourgeoisie, and the petty-bourgeoisie in turn oppresses and dominates the workers and the masses. In this particular relationship, the petty-bourgeoisie is alienated by the international bourgeoisie. The alienation of the workers and masses by the petty-bourgeoisie is only a consequence of the first phase of alienation.

In the second form of relationship, the petty-bourgeoisie comes into some form of partnership with the international bourgeoisie and both of them alienate the workers. This is the relationship where the big bourgeoisie buy out the representatives of the people so that they can use the state to oppress the masses and workers. The state then becomes a machinery for the oppression of the workers and masses by the international bourgeoisie, through the medium of the petty-bourgeoisie.

This is the way in which foreign capital dominates the entire nation and controls both the petty-bourgeoisie and the workers. It sometimes dominates and oppresses through subsidiaries of multinational companies operating in the

dominated country, and sometimes it dominates and controls the entire nation through aid and grants. This domination and control is possible only because the petty-bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation do not have capital of their own. They have capital, but it is capital which is mortgaged to foreign financial institutions. That capital is, therefore, only formally theirs. The fact that the capital the petty-bourgeoisie of East Africa, for instance, have is only formally theirs was brought home in February 1977 when the East African Airways collapsed.

The people of East Africa had, for about three decades, been advertising their own national airline. But when that airline collapsed, British financial interests moved in and sealed the V.C. 10's announcing that those planes were their own property. The airline, understandably, had nothing of its own except property mortgaged to British banks. And when the Kenya-based United Touring Company made efforts to recover the vans which had taken European and American tourists to Tanzania, the British High Commission in Dar-es-Salaam is reported to have moved in with orders: "Don't touch these vehicles. These are British property."¹³ What this suggests is that the petty-bourgeoisie of a dependent country have only mortgaged property and there is nothing really theirs. It is through these mortgages that they are controlled and oppressed.

In line with this view, we disagree with Colin Leys who thinks there is a strong class of African capitalists and the Asian commercial bourgeoisie in Kenya. He argues that towards independence in Kenya, Asians "had produced a merchant capitalist class which was poised to become indigenous industrial bourgeoisie of the classical type".¹⁴ But the situation of the so-called Asian commercial bourgeoisie in Uganda is a reminder to us that they are not in fact a bourgeoisie. In his book on class formation in Uganda, Mahmood Mamdani writes:

In October 1972, when Asian businesses started closing down en masse, the main streets of Kampala were lined with signs saying: "Property of Barclays Bank D.C.O." or "Property of Standard Bank." Financial connections usually hidden in small print in the text of a contract or an agreement were now advertised for all to see. The fact was that the Indian commercial bourgeoisie (sic) was still a dependent class. Functionally, it lubricated the export-import economy; financially, it was heavily reliant on and subordinate to British banking capital.¹⁵

So is the entire petty-bourgeoisie in Kenya. But this bourgeoisie class goes further and oppresses also the petty-bourgeoisie of a dependent country. The petty-bourgeoisie does not have capital of its own. So it is controlled and dominated by the real owners of capital, the international oligarchy and the monopoly corporations which

control, directly or indirectly, virtually all production in the world capitalist economy.

But this does not mean that there is no room for small property and small production in the dependent country. There is small capital in the exploited country, small capital that does not effectively belong to the petty-bourgeoisie. But because it plays a significant role in servicing the wheels of the monopolies, it is formally made under contract and mortgage to belong to the petty-bourgeoisie. And it is that kind of property that has been operating, and continues to operate, in Kenya. In the context of international forces, therefore, the property and capital that oppresses the workers in Kenya effectively belongs to the international bourgeoisie and international lending institutions. Even in the early period of colonial rule in Kenya, both the settlers and the colonial administration were dependent on external financial institutions.

According to Zwanenberg, the "settlers were dominated by the credit structure of banks" ¹⁶ and the settlers in turn became "dominant and dependent over the African population; they required the use of the labour of the Africans and to obtain it, were willing to use most means except the provision of wage increases and improved conditions of work."¹⁷ It was thus the credit structure of the banks that dominated the Africans through the settler community.

The exploitation of cheap labour from the Africans was

first meant to keep the pockets of the settlers buoyant so that they could in turn meet the demands of their creditors. There was, thus, some antagonism between the African labourer and the settler, and between the settler and the financial institutions. But the main contradiction was between the labourers and the bourgeoisie (who were, of course, not the settlers). And since credit was mainly provided by British commercial banks like Barclays Bank D.C.O., the Standard Bank of South Africa, and the National Bank of India,¹⁸ the oppression of the country certainly came from those institutions.

So long as the petty-bourgeoisie did not have capital of their own, dependence on and oppression by foreign capital would still remain a principal cause of alienation. The poverty of the petty-bourgeoisie as a national class was clearly revealed in Karl Marx's THE CLASS STRUGGLES IN FRANCE. Marx writes how the JUNE 1848 insurrection by the workers was crushed by the Parisian-petty-bourgeoisie and the Mobile Guard:

No one had fought more fanatically in the June days for the salvation of property and the restoration of credit than Parisian petty-bourgeoisie - keepers of cafes and restaurants - merchants al vins, small traders, shop-keepers handicraftsmen, etc. The shopkeeper had pulled himself together and marched against the barricades in order to restore the traffic which leads from the street into the shops. 19

However, as soon as the "barricades were down", the owners of the property stepped in and chased away the petty-bourgeoisie. In fact, after the workers had been defeated by the petty-bourgeoisie, the latter discovered to their dismay that the property was to be saved from them. Marx adds further:

Salvation of property! But the house in which they lived was not their property; the shop which they kept was not their property; the commodities in which they dealt were not their property. Neither their business, nor the plate from which they ate, nor the bed on which they slept belonged to them any longer. It was precisely from them that this property had to be saved - for the 'house owner who let the house, for the banker who discounted the promissory note, for the capitalist who made advances in cash, for the manufacturer who entrusted the sale of his commodities to these retailers. 20

Marx was, of course, writing at a different time when bankocracy, as the big bourgeoisie, were battling with the landed gentry of the post-feudal era over control of the market. Things have since then changed and a section of the big bourgeoisie have gone international even beyond the limits of some of Marx's dreams. But the pertinent fact is that capital and production have also become internationalised such that the petty-bourgeoisie of a developing capitalist country cannot control what is within its own territory. And it is this lack of control, this powerlessness that, in part, demonstrates the alienation of the petty-bourgeoisie under the domination of international capital.

Confronted by their own powerlessness the petty-bourgeoisie in Kenya attempted a certain measure of control ostensibly by undertaking to Africanise some of the top management posts in foreign firms. But it was those Africans who had been socialised into accepting the policies of the multinationals that were promoted to senior management posts. They also went for further training in parent countries and came back very much foreign.

The result was that African managers were given senior appointments as a public relations effort and they were not in effective control of the enterprise. In any case, it is not even possible to control a multinational corporation from one quarter. Giovanni Arrighi defines a multinational corporation as: "an organised 'ensemble' of means of production subject to a single policy-making centre which controls establishments situated in several different national territories."²¹ And such organisations cannot be effectively controlled by a policy of Africanising parts of their management.

Another method of control the Kenya government tried was to tax the profits; but the numerous loopholes in the tax system made such a measure quite ineffective.²² And as a result, the dominance and exploitation of the country by foreign capital continued. Summing up the futility of the government attempts at control, particularly the Africanisation of equity Leys states:

"What all this boils down to is that even a majority shareholding obtained on the basis of - in effect - a take-over bid, conferred, in practice, only a very marginal power to influence events, because it implicitly accepted and in many ways reinforced the private enterprise system, which remained overwhelmingly foreign-owned..."²³

This lack of effective control meant the companies, in effect, controlled the country. And as we have seen, they even sought the collaboration of the state in the exploitation of cheap labour in the country. And the exploitation of labour is often reflected in the level of profits which capital makes.

When the Kenya government found it could not effectively control the foreign financial interests within the country, it decided to go into partnerships with those interests.

There was, in fact, established a policy of joint ventures between foreign companies and the government-controlled corporations. In particular, the Industrial and Commercial Development Corporation (ICDC) tried to secure participation in the equity of a number of foreign firms.

But even this measure did not in any way change the position of African dependency on foreign interests. In the first place, those Africans who bought shares in foreign companies, in the majority of cases, took loans from, and were consequently controlled by, foreign financial institutions. Second, the government-owned ICDC was also dependent on loans and grants provided by foreign financial institutions or from

locally-incorporated foreign companies.

In that light, Kenyan participation in foreign equity was merely altering the angle of dependency but not challenging the dominance of foreign interests. It was just a window-dressing exercise.

The inevitable result of the failure of some of those measures of control is that the dominance of foreign interests in manufacturing, agriculture, commerce and banking and insurance continued. The multinational companies in Kenya have in fact invaded every area of endeavour in Kenya, from manufacturing to commerce, agriculture to mining, banking and insurance to transport, and from oil supply to tour operations.²⁴

Even as a 1970 UNCTAD study reported, "not only in manufacturing, but in the primary and tertiary sectors also, foreign enterprises have led the expansion of the economy."²⁵ Indeed, by the end of the decade of the 1960's, Kenya's industrial sector was virtually foreign-owned.²⁶

In commerce, some of the largest firms were the Lonrho-controlled Mitchell Cotts, and Motor Mart & Exchange. Others were Mackenzie which is owned by the Inchape Group, the Marshalls E.A. Ltd., the Twentsche Overseas Trading Group, and the Unilever-owned Gailey & Roberts Ltd.

The multinational companies that dominated oil and petrol distribution included the Shell - B.P. group,

Esso Standard, Caltex, Agip, and Mobil. And in transportation, the Lonrho-owned ETCO is one of the biggest haulage firms. Besides that, the British Electric Traction Company controls the bus monopolies in Nairobi and Mombasa, and owns the United Touring Company.

Most of this foreign dominance was possible because of some government measures which were specifically designed to attract foreign capital. For instance, the Foreign Investments Protection Act of 1964 was meant to attract foreign capital and assure it of immunity to nationalisation.²⁷

Due to such measures, virtually all the expansion that occurred in commerce and industry between 1964 and 1970 was foreign-owned and controlled.²⁸ The total inflow of foreign capital between 1967 and 1970 alone was £14.3 million.²⁹ Those foreign companies that were registered after independence included Union Carbide, Firestone, General Motors, Union Still, Del Monte, Mitsui, Nomura, Lonrho, Inchape, and Cadbury Schweppes.

The contradiction of all these developments was that foreigners were dominating the very fields that the African petty-bourgeoisie wanted to venture into. And that contradiction underlined the powerlessness of the African petty-bourgeoisie in the face of imperialist capital, for even as the African petty-bourgeoisie resented that domination of imperialist capital, there was nothing they could do to control it, which in itself was evidence

of alienation on the part of this petty-bourgeoisie.

In the heat of their frustration, the petty-bourgeoisie decided to prohibit the Asian petty-bourgeoisie from getting into industry and sought measures to reduce them from commerce. But as we have already pointed out, Asians, like the African petty-bourgeoisie did not have any capital of their own which further meant that the contradiction between them and the African petty-bourgeoisie was only secondary. Though their success was a cause of frustration to the Africans, they cannot be regarded as the principal cause of that frustration and the accompanying alienation. But because the Asians were more sophisticated entrepreneurs in commerce, they offered stiff competition, and even caused frustrations to African businessman. And in that light, their entrepreneurial skills were a cause of alienation to the Africans.

* The State and Capital:

Capital, as we have seen, resulted in the development of certain relationships of domination and oppression, and enabled the African petty-bourgeoisie to join the ranks of the international bourgeoisie in the defence of capital in Kenya.

What really emerged at the time was the role of the state in the oppression of the workers in conjunction with the international bourgeoisie. The interaction of foreign property

with local labour had the effect of creating certain contradictions in Kenya, and it was those contradictions that, in turn, led to the alienation of different categories of people.

It has already been pointed out that the principal contradiction was that one between foreign capital and local human resources or labour. The subsidiary or secondary contradictions were expressed in the antagonism between the African petty-bourgeoisie and the Asian petty-bourgeoisie and between the petty-bourgeoisie and exploited workers.

The state, of course, played its historical role by intervening on the side of capital. As Leys points out:

In the course of these struggles, the power of the state was used forcefully to give the petty-bourgeoisie the various forms of protection it wanted, to subdue the (trade) unions and to progressively eliminate political opposition. The result was a structure of social control, based on clientism, and of ideological domination based on a mixture of tribalism, "free enterprise" ethics and "development" doctrines...31

The state's determination to curb the militancy of the trade unions, thus, reinforced the contradictions between labour and capital, between the bourgeoisie and the working class; and the alienation of the working class was reflected in the simultaneous decline of wages and rise of profits. As a result, "most of the country's wage-workers ... were super-exploited; depending for survival on supplementary income

from family agriculture".³²

What all this shows is that both foreign and local capital alienated labour, which is just another way of arguing that the working class was alienated by both the international bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeoisie. But the international bourgeoisie also oppressed and dominated the local petty-bourgeoisie. This oppression, domination and the resultant alienation underlined the contradictions between different classes of people, that is between the owners of property and the owners of labour, between the oppressors and oppressed. Indeed, alienation in Kenya in the decade of the 1960's could be summarised in the patterns of classes that emerged and the relationship of these classes to the means of production.

We have observed also that the lop-sided system of distribution in Kenya was defended by the government which was playing its role as the political instrument of the economically dominant class. The government has been taking its share of the oppression of workers in a system of production which is governed by the fact that the international bourgeoisie owns virtually all the major means of production and the workers have to sell their labour for a small wage. That, indeed, is the main dialectic in a capitalist society, the irreconcilable contradiction between the fact that production is social while appropriation is private, between the status of the workers and that of the property-

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FOOTNOTES:

1. K. MARX: F. ENGELS: Collected Works Vol. 3 (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1975) p. 247.
2. D. NABUDERE: "Imperialism, the National Question and the Politics of Class Formation in Uganda" (mimeo) p.4.
3. T.MBOYA: "Sessional Paper No.10. It is African and It is Socialism" in E.A.Journal, May 1969. In this paper, Mboya admitted that part of the price the country had paid for attracting foreign investments was to allow them to make large profits.
4. A.H. AMSDEN: International Firms and Labour in Kenya (Cass, London, 1971) p.8.
5. Ibid.
6. M.SINGH: History of Kenya's Trade Union Movement (Nairobi, EAPH, 1969) p.83.
7. Ibid. pp.141-160.
8. Ibid. pp.270-287.
9. K.MARX: F. ENGELS: Selected Works Vol.3 (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1973) pp.329.
10. Presidential Address, 11 February, 1957, FKE Files.
11. C.LEYS: Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Politics of Neo-Colonialism (London, HEB, 1975) p.54.
12. Ibid. p.274
13. For a full report, see DAILY NEWS (One issue in the last week of February 1977).
14. C.LEYS, op. cit. p.38.
15. M.MAMDANI: Politics and Class Formation in Uganda (New York, Monthly Review Press, 1976) p. 307 (Emphasis added).
16. R.M.A. van ZWANENBERG: Colonial Capitalism and Labour in Kenya 1919-1939 (Nairobi, EALB, 1975) p.XIX.
17. Ibid.

18. Ibid. p. 13
19. K.MARX: F. ENGELS: Selected Works Vol.I (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1973) p.230.
20. Ibid.
21. G.ARRIGHI: J.S.SAUL: Essays on the Political Economy of Africa (Nairobi-EAPH, 1974) p.109.
22. C.LEYS, op. cit. pp. 125-128.
23. Ibid. p. 135 (Emphasis added).
24. R.KAPLINSKY: Readings on the Multinational Corporation in Kenya. (Nairobi, OUP, 1978) pp. 135-148.
25. Ibid. p. 137.
26. C.LEYS, op. cit. p. 118.
27. KENYA: "Foreign Investments Protection Act", (Nairobi, Government Printer, 1964).
28. C.LEYS, op. cit. 118.
29. Ibid.
30. I Ibid.
31. Ibid. p.274.
32. Ibid. p. 256.

CHAPTER FIVE

POST-INDEPENDENCE CONTRADICTIONS AND ALIENATION.

...if in any process there are a number of contradictions, one of them must be the principal contradiction playing the leading and decisive role, while the rest occupy a secondary and subordinate position. Therefore, in studying any complex process in which there are two or more contradictions, we must devote every effort to finding its principal contradiction. Once this principal contradiction is grasped, all problems can be readily solved.

MAO TSE-TUNG

...the central contradiction of neo-colonialism (is)... its essential meaning of a system of domination of the mass of the population of a country by foreign capital, by means other than direct colonial rule. By its nature, such dominance requires the development of domestic class interests which are allied to those of foreign capital and which uphold their joint interests in economic policy and enforce their dominance politically.

COLIN LEYS

In nature, and more so in human society, contradictions arise from the interaction of opposed forces. A proper understanding of contradictions in society requires, therefore, that phenomena should be considered from the standpoint of their interconnection and interdependence.

What this further suggests is that no phenomenon in nature or society can be understood in its true perspective if taken by itself, isolated from the surrounding phenomena. It is precisely due to this interconnection of phenomena and this interaction of opposite forces that Lenin once observed: "Development is the struggle of opposites".¹

If there are no isolated phenomena in the world, and if all phenomena are interconnected and interdependent, then certainly every social system and every social movement in history must be evaluated from the point of view of the conditions which gave rise to that system or that social movement and with which they are connected. It is on the basis of this understanding that we have repeatedly emphasised in this thesis that the principal cause of alienation in Kenya was imperialism, because, if anything, it was imperialism as a social movement that brought Kenya under oppression and exploitation. It is imperialism that has established the principal contradiction between foreign bourgeoisie capital and the people of Kenya, and it is imperialism that has maintained in existence other secondary contradictions even after the attainment of constitutional independence. But what was the nature of these contradictions in the immediate post-independence Kenya?

Most of the contradictions in post-independence Kenya have already been discussed in the earlier chapters. The purpose of this chapter is, however, not to summarise them, but to point out how they affected the politics of the period.

At the level of the substructure, the contradictions manifested themselves in the land resettlement policies, in the unemployment and labour problems that were experienced by a sizeable proportion of the able-bodied Kenyans, and by the antagonism between the African petty-bourgeoisie and the international bourgeoisie, on the one hand, and between the African petty-bourgeoisie and the Asian petty-bourgeoisie, on the other. All these contradictions inevitably gave rise to a sense of alienation among the landless, the exploited workers, the unemployed and even among the petty-bourgeoisie who were in an ambivalent position of encouraging foreign investment while resenting its dominance.

In his discussion of the predicament of the African petty-bourgeoisie who had been entangled in the contradictions of neo-colonialism, Colin Leys pointed out:

In the Kenyan situation... a redistribution of income needed to be accompanied by a dismantling of domestic monopolies if it was to have a substantial effect on the growth of internal demand. But these monopolies were also very important to the interests of the domestic petty-bourgeoisie and auxilliary bourgeoisie who, far from wishing to dismantle it, pressed for its extension. They would have much preferred to see a reduction in the level of protection accorded to foreign capital, and in the level of capital exports by foreign firms. (But) the one solution jeopardised the alliance between domestic and foreign capital, and the

other threatened the continued inflow of foreign capital on which the neo-colonial economy depended. 2

That clearly indicates the powerlessness of the petty-bourgeoisie in the face of foreign capital, resulting from the dependence of those petty-bourgeoisie on that capital. They seriously considered taking steps to destroy the monopolies, particularly the multinational corporations, but they could not possibly do so without destroying their own bases. But Colin Leys mistakes foreign capital in the hands of the petty-bourgeoisie for domestic capital owned by the petty-bourgeoisie.

All the property of the petty-bourgeoisie in Kenya was, and still is, mortgaged property and, in effect, it all belongs to the foreign financial institutions - that is why the petty-bourgeoisie is powerless to act. And further, that is why they are controlled, and as a consequence alienated, by that foreign capital. Hence, the contradiction between foreign capital and the petty-bourgeoisie.

But there was another secondary contradiction between the African petty-bourgeoisie and the local Asian petty-bourgeoisie. This contradiction was only secondary because it was not the main problem in the way of African advancement, and even after the resolution of that contradiction, the African petty-bourgeoisie did not move up the economic ladder the way he had thought he would. That was mainly so because the Indian dukawallah, like his fellow African

petty-bourgeoisie, did not have much capital of his own. What he had belonged to the foreign lending institutions which controlled and oppressed him the way they oppressed the African petty-bourgeoisie. Therefore, what was gained through the confrontation between the Asian petty-bourgeoisie and the African petty-bourgeoisie was the increased participation of the latter in the economic activities of the country.

And, of course, the increased participation of the African petty-bourgeoisie in the economic activities of the country had the effect of sharpening the contradiction between the poor African workers, the unemployed and the landless. The axing of Asians from businesses opened the way for some more Africans to move into the class of exploiters and put them in an antagonistic position to the poor African workers. The relative affluence of the African petty-bourgeoisie pushed them to the state of the international bourgeoisie, and together they worked out various ways of oppressing and exploiting the workers.

This exploitation and oppression was partly worked out through subtle legal ways which involved tripartite agreements between the employers, the government, and leaders of workers unions. For instance, in the 1964 tripartite agreement, it was agreed that all private employers were to increase their staff by at least 10 percent and the central government and the local government

were to take an extra 15 percent in an effort to alleviate the problem of joblessness.³ Since the jobless are normally some of the most alienated group of people in society, to some extent this agreement went a step forward in minimising the alienation of the unemployed.

But at another level, it was just like the old story of filling one hole by digging another. The price for this was that the trade unions had to agree to one year's wage standstill and a complete ban on the workers' strikes. The futility of this whole arrangement was that the parties to the agreement did not consider the private firms' annual rates of expansion, and what eventually happened was that the private sector expanded its operations by 10 percent, increased its work-force by 10 percent, and still had the advantage of one year's wage freeze and a moratorium on the workers' strikes. The contradiction here is that the workers were more restricted in terms of strike action and exploited more by their employers. In a sense, that tripartite agreement of 1964 and a similar one of 1970 subtly served as a cause of alienation to the workers.

Not only did those agreements serve as a cause of alienation to the workers, but they also opened wider the door for foreign private investment, and, therefore, brought the country more and more under the oppression of the international bourgeoisie. Even as the one-time president of the Federation of Kenya Employers suggested immediately after signing the agreement:

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We hope very much that the Agreement we have signed today will help the Government to attract a massive inflow of foreign capital and I think it worth making the point that the best encouragement for overseas investors is to see existing industries receiving fair treatment ... We hope we have today taken a concrete step to support democratic government in this country. This is an aim we must all support.⁴

Of course any firm interested in making profit would support such a move aimed at curbing trade union activities and effectively controlling what is sometimes called "wildcat strikes" by the workers.

This was an indication of a determination by the international bourgeoisie that the colonial economy had to be maintained intact. And this despite assurances by Tom Mboya that the aim of the Kenya government was to build a "new society and a new Africa" which was based on "a new political philosophy - a philosophy of our own - that will explain validity and help to cement our experience".⁵ What was indeed emerging was a contradiction of what the nationalists had fought for.

And this capitalist trend in Kenya was given an official stamp by the government of independent Kenya in the ⁴Sessional Paper Number 10 of 1965 on AFRICAN SOCIALISM AND ITS APPLICATION TO PLANNING IN KENYA.⁶ That paper placed greater stress on the country's economic development and growth than on the equitable distribution of the national

or social wealth. In his criticism of the paper, Ahmed Mohiddin argues:

No drastic changes in the economic system are proposed, but only modifications, and these are in the nature of making the present system work more efficiently. Africanisation of the present capitalist system in Kenya is thus the answer. ⁷

And that is quite true since, according to the paper, and that is what the situation is in Kenya, production is fundamentally based on the profit motive, not on the distribution of social wealth.

On the nationalisation policy, the paper states:

Nationalisation, since it does not always lead to additional resources for the economy as a whole, will be used only where national security is threatened, higher social benefits can be obtained or productive resources are seriously and clearly being misused, when other means of control are ineffective and financial resources permit, or where a service is vital to the people and must be provided by the Government as part of its responsibility to the nation... ⁸

The paper made that position clear because it was feared by the petty-bourgeoisie that socialism and nationalisation would discourage the inflow of foreign investment.

But even then, president Kenyatta seemed to argue that nationalisation was even inconsistent with the tenets of African socialism. In his address to the Nairobi Chamber

of Commerce late 1964, Kenyatta argued:

We consider that nationalisation will not serve to advance the cause of African socialism... There would be a partnership of private enterprise and Government participation... Our aim is to establish a mixed economy. By (this) we mean that we shall work to a situation in which the role of private enterprise and that of Government are complementary to each other... We are determined that the development of African businesses and industries should be carried out without damaging the existing fabric of the economy.⁹

It was such policy statements that led to a contradiction between what the nationalists fought for and what was actually established by the new Kenya government. It was this same contradiction that alienated radicals from conservatives, and ultimately filled the people of Kenya with a sense of betrayal.

The ordinary people had been betrayed by the new government in several ways. First, they expected to get free ~~the~~ land which nationalists had died for, but the independent government made it clear that they would get nothing free. All the former white farms were in fact to be bought with money provided by imperialist financial institutions, i.e. the World Bank, the Commonwealth Development Corporation, and the British government.

The ordinary man had also thought that when independence came, there would be an end to the exploitation of man

by man, and that the nation's social wealth would be shared equally among all the people. But the new government instead consolidated the capitalist system and endorsed the system which stood for the exploitation of man by man. The system of private ownership of property was maintained and even president Kenyatta argued that the abolition of private ownership of property was inconsistent with the principles of the freedom of the individual and the protection of his several rights, including the right to ownership of property.¹⁰

It was such policy stances that filled the masses with a sense of betrayal, and disillusionment, and all these are indications of alienation. The contradictions consequent upon these policy stances had the further effect of polarising the politicians. The radicals, who were representatives of the masses and workers, were alienated from the conservatives, who were the representatives of capital and the bourgeoisie. The immediate result of this polarisation at the superstructural level was the split of the ruling party, the Kenya African National Union (KANU), and the subsequent formation of the then opposition party, the Kenya People's Union (KPU).¹¹

The KPU was led by the country's former vice-president, Oginga Odinga, and other radical¹² politicians like Bildad Kaggia and Achieng Oneko, who resigned from KANU to form the opposition party early 1966. But KANU was so threatened by the opposition party that they immediately responded by

consolidating enormous powers in the Executive, with a view to curbing the powers of the KPU, and they eventually weakened parliament. And the weakening of parliament itself meant the rendering of the people's representatives powerless, which was another way of alienating the electorate itself. With the enactment of the Preservation of Public Security Act of 1967, many radical politicians lived under fear of detention without trial any time and many of them were subjected to public embarrassment by conservative politicians and the provincial administration.

Eventually, some of the opposition politicians were rounded up towards the end of 1969 and detained without trial, and the KPU was itself banned at the same time. That was the last time people had a choice to join any political party other than the ruling party, though the Kenya constitution provides for the existence of opposition political parties.

Thus, the post-independence contradictions in Kenya consisted in the dominance of foreign capital, the establishment of a petty-bourgeoisie class of Africans that had links with international capital, and the disillusionment of the masses with the achievements of independence. They also involved a split at the superstructural level which led to the consolidation of power in the Executive and the outlawing of opposition political parties. And all these contradictions, like any contradictions in capitalist society, had the effect of exploiting and oppressing the people, and eventually

alienating them.

The dominant force in all these contradictions was imperialism. It is imperialism that dominated the local scene with foreign capital, established an African petty-bourgeoisie class and exploited the masses. It was over the question of modern imperialism in the independent state that the politicians were divided into two camps of radicals and conservatives, and it was with a view to protecting imperialist interests in the country that the Executive was consolidated and the KPU banned. Therefore, the principal contradiction in post-independence Kenya was that one between imperialism and the people of this country. All the other contradictions were only secondary and stemmed from that principal contradiction. And since contradictions give rise to alienation, it can reasonably be argued that the principal cause of alienation in Kenya was the principal contradiction.

1. V.I. LENIN: Selected Works, Vol. XI (Moscow, Progress Publishers) pp. 81-2.
2. C. LEYS: Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism (London, HEB, 1975) p.
3. Ibid. 217.
4. FKE files: Speech on 10 February 1964.
5. See TRANSITION (Kampala) No.8, p. 17
6. Though this document was purported to have been written by Tom Mboya who was the then minister for economic planning and development, it was later discovered that the paper had been written by a white man working for Mboya's ministry at the time, a certain N.S.Carey-Jones. For more details, see G.WASSERMAN: Politics of Decolonisation: Kenya Europeans and the Land issue 1960-1970. (London, Cambridge University Press, 1976) p.204, note 74.
7. A.MOHIDDIN: "Socialism or Capitalism? Sessional Paper No.10 Revisited" in E.A.JOURNAL Vol.VI, No.3 (March 1969) p.8.
8. KENYA: Sessional Paper No.10 of 1965: paras 33-37.
9. See EAST AFRICAN STANDARD, 30 September, 1964.
10. Ibid. 26 July 1964
11. For a fuller treatment of the politics of this period see C. GERTZEL: The Politics of Independent Kenya, 1970), Chapter 2.
12. The term radical in this context refers to those politicians who advocated populist measures.

CONCLUSION

HOW ALIENATION CAN BE MINIMISED

.... alienation of all kinds - political
legal, moral, psychological, religious,
philosophical, etc. - is ultimately
engendered by the alienation of labour,
but it by no means disappears automatically
when that alienation has been abolished;
it persists in the form of religion, ^{Statement too general.}
money-grubbing, and race and national
prejudices.

I.S. NARSKY

Since alienation is a very complex and multifaceted
phenomenon, we cannot offer a lasting solution to the
elimination of this problem. But there are ways in which
alienation can adequately be minimised.

The minimisation of alienation in a developing
country like Kenya calls for a proper system of planning.
And proper planning, in most cases, presupposes adequate
control over the country's resources and factors of
production. Yet, control is itself hollow unless the major
factors of production have been nationalised and put under
the collective ownership of the nationals. This means that
the institution of private property is to be abolished.

Thus, nationalisation, collectivisation, and abolition of private property should be able to involve more and more of the masses into the process of production.

But mass involvement per se does not minimise alienation. Mass involvement should necessarily go side by side with the process of nation-building. Thus, the people involved should recognize each other as compatriots, and not just as people of different ethnic groups.

The minimisation of alienation in a developing country like Kenya would thus involve four major processes, namely, planning, control, nationalisation, and nation-building.

PLANNING FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The process of planning at all levels of human endeavours has more or less the same purpose and objectives for the enterprise. And because of its nature, planning is necessary for the success of every endeavour, whether it is in industry, in government, or even in farming.

In designing an environment for the effective performance of individuals living and working together, the most important task is to see that purposes and objectives, and methods of attaining them, are clearly understood. And they can only be understood within the context of a proper plan. According to Harold Koontz and Cyril O'Donnell:

Planning is deciding in advance what to do, how to do it, and who is to do it.

...It makes it possible for things to occur which would not otherwise happen.¹

In the case of a state like Kenya, of course, it would not be a big problem deciding what to do and who is to do it after the attainment of independence. What to do was contained in the goals of the independence movement - the need for self-government, the need to end the problem of landlessness and to put the country's resources under the management of the indigenous people. And those to accomplish these things were to be the Africans. They needed also education and jobs after acquiring that education. But most Kenyans have been alienated mainly because most of these goals of Uhuru were ignored by the independent government.

This by no means suggests that there has been no planning in the country. There has, indeed, been planning, but it is planning based on wrong premises. J.S.Saul defined national planning as "that complex interweaving of social, political and economic features which the methods of political economy can alone be expected to identify."² He adds that such planning has necessarily to clarify the precise conditions of contemporary underdevelopment, to pinpoint such obstacles to a proper transition as induced dependency upon international capitalism, nascent class

interests, and cultural-ideological mystification.³

What Saul fundamentally suggests is that proper planning should take into account the fact that the relationship between a developing country like Kenya and the developed capitalist nations of the west is one in which Kenya is exploited. It should also consider the imperialist nature of foreign aid and foreign investments from the developed countries. In other words, a prerequisite to national planning in developing countries "must be a clear knowledge of the main movement - namely imperialism - which historically brought those countries under domination".⁴ And as we pointed out, imperialism is the most fundamental cause of alienation in Kenya.

Thus, if alienation is to be minimised in Kenya, the country's planners must take into account such factors as the causes of the country's dependence on western capitalist nations, namely foreign aid and foreign investments. They have to consider also a proper distribution of the national cake so that no class of individuals emerges to oppress other classes; and has to consider giving land to the landless instead of selling it to the rich, so that we eliminate landlessness in the country. Planners have to take into account the establishment of a mass-oriented political party and other mass-oriented institutions which can ensure adequate mass participation in the political process.⁵

Ideology is one of the greatest instruments of mass participation, so planners must consider the kinds of "mystification which have masked dependence and the Africanisation of privilege" in the country like the "Africanisation" and "African socialisation" which Sessional Paper No.10 of 1965 stipulates.⁷ That paper is nothing but a manipulative document designed to maintain the colonial economy while putting a few Africans in positions of privilege.

Finally, planners, ought to put a ^{ceiling} sealing on the amount of wealth a person can acquire, look for ways of minimising the inflow of foreign investments, and look for ways of establishing a strong industrial base so that the country lessens its dependence on foreign countries. But planning for national development cannot be quite effective unless the government or the state is in full control of certain important factors. In the next section, we want to look at control and nationalisation of certain factors of production.

NATIONAL CONTROL AND NATIONALISATION

The fundamental objective of national control and nationalisation policies for any state is to economically disengage the satellite state from the metropolitan centre and establish collective ownership of the major means of production in the satellite state. In other words, the twin objectives of these policies are economic disengagement and collective ownership.

Economic disengagement automatically takes care of the problems of imperialist exploitation and domination, which is one of the principal causes of alienation in Kenya as we have seen. Collective ownership, on the other hand, implies the abolition of the institution of private property and thus takes care of the internal problem where a few social overlords use their property to oppress and exploit the majority of the people in the country. And since the institution of private property is one of the principal causes of alienation in the country, its abolition will be a step forward in the minimisation of alienation which results from politico-economic factors.

Economic disengagement is one option which African states have not tried with success, and conventional theory⁸ suggests that no one African state can afford its high cost unless it forms a union with other African states. It has even been pointed out that "autarchic planning

of small-scale factories to produce substitutes for imported manufactured goods"⁹ has come to no good end. This school of thought points out that the easiest imports to eliminate in most cases tend to be those from other African states, and not from imperialist powers.¹⁰ Secondly, "only a limited array of products can be produced for the small African home market."¹¹

Finally, given the limited range of natural resources in most African states, the imports of fuel, raw materials, intermediate and capital goods required by the import substitute sectors add up to a substantial proportion of their output.¹² Consequently, a nationally integrated economy is not achieved, dependence on imports is not reduced, and the disengagement policy is defeated.

The defeat of the disengagement policy will automatically mean the failure of national control and the continuation of alienation unabated.

However, although the creation of an integrated modern economy with high levels of productivity requires economic size, small economies cannot always fail to be self-sustaining if they are properly planned. In any case, Israel is a small country, but with proper planning, it has achieved productivity to the level at which it cannot be intimidated by another country.

With proper planning, there is no doubt that Kenya can establish a modern integrated economy, allowing for the use of the output of one productive sector, say forestry, as raw material for another, say construction or pulp or paper-making. With a wide array of natural resources, Kenya can diversify production and achieve vertical economic integration. What it lacks is a large industrial base, but it cannot establish an industrial base if it continues to allow foreigners to dominate the industrial sector of the economy.

There are, indeed, numerous problems as far as industrialisation is concerned, but they are problems which can be tackled. The beginning of the solution consists in sending out our engineers and exposing them to an environment where they learn to invent instead of always dumping them in service industries where they just function like technicians.

Even as J.S. Saul points out, we can initially "admit the existence of difficult and relatively narrowly-defined technical problems involved in identifying ... the export strategy most serviceable to industrialisation or the exact linkages to be established between industrial activity" and the country's resource base.¹³ But as we try to cut off other imperialist links using, in part, import - substitution, these problems may exist in a

different form. And that way, we shall have set a process towards the disalienation of the people of Kenya.

That is about economic disengagement. But there is still a major problem with regard to the institution of private property.

In Kenya, one way of weakening the force of the principal politico-economic causes of alienation is the abolition of the system of private ownership of the major means of production.

A policy of nationalisation will, in a way, liberate not only the poor but also the petty-bourgeoisie from oppression and exploitation. It liberates the petty-bourgeoisie by defeating the powers of foreign capital and imperialist control. But by abolishing the whole system of private ownership of the implements and means of production, it eliminates "the exploiter classes"¹⁴ and puts an end to class antagonisms.

The disalienation of the people would further require that the lop-sided system of production and distribution of social wealth is destroyed, and social wealth is equally distributed among the people instead of going into the hands of a few social overlords who live on the sweat of the exploited workers. In a capitalist society, alienation of the workers is sometimes mitigated by the establishment of social organisations which unite the working people and encourage them to struggle against their exploiters.

However, the drawing of workers into certain social organisations may not necessarily mean an end to their alienation. For instance, the trade union movement, which is a social organisation, can be either a means of overcoming alienation or an instrument for keeping the workers oppressed and alienated. Even as Lenin pointed out:

The class interests of the bourgeoisie inevitably give rise to a striving to confine unions to petty and narrow activity within the framework of the existing social order, to keep them away from any contact with socialism; and the neutrality theory is the ideological cover for these strivings of the bourgeoisie.¹⁵

After the nationalisation of property, the logical step would appear to be the establishment of socialism. But even this establishment of socialism does not necessarily put a stop to the phenomenon of alienation. Vestiges of alienation still persist, particularly in the relations between individuals from different ethnic groups and in relations between the individual and the social organisation as a collective. It also continues to exist between the social organisation itself and the rest of society.

This kind of relationship is usually due to the fact that the social organisation is just a form which

absorbs the existing social relations and phenomena.

So long as some elements of alienation persist in society, they tend to penetrate various social formations through their weak points.

Some of these remnants of alienation manifest themselves in different organisations in different forms, and in varying degrees. They sometimes take the form of bureaucracy, isolation of the elected bodies from the rank-and-file members, and sometimes in the actual supremacy of the governing apparatus over the elective bodies and their members.¹⁶ It is sometimes because of this persistence of alienation in even the most advanced socialist countries that some writers have maintained that alienation is eternal and that socialism engenders new forms of alienation.

That does not mean, however, that there are no ways of achieving the disalienation of the people in a country like Kenya. In fact in Kenya, the process of nation-building is, to a certain degree, a disalienating process.

ON NATION BUILDING:

Nation-building is a very involving process. According to Professor Ali Mazrui, the entire process of nation-building involves not less than five other small processes.¹⁸ He postulates that the minimum requirements for nation-building

must include:

1. The achievement of some degree of cultural and normative fusion.
2. The promotion of economic interpenetration among different states and sectors of society.
3. The process of social integration.
4. The building of certain institutions for effective conflict-resolution.
5. The psychological accumulation of a shared national experience.

According to this scheme of thought, the process of cultural and normative fusion ultimately has to involve the acquisition of shared values and modes of expression and a shared life style and view of one's place in the universe.¹⁹ The implication of this is that the process of cultural fusion requires that the people of a particular nation have to shed off their narrow cultural marks and accept one culture. Presumably this process has to begin with cultural interaction between people of different ethnic groups, for instance, Kikuyu and Luos, Kikuyus and Luyias, Luyias and Luos, Luos and Kalenjins, and so on. Theoretically, that would be a step forward towards the dis-alienation of the different sub-groups in Kenya.

But that would not be a sufficient condition for the total disalienation of the people from each other. Mazrui

suggests the promotion of economic interaction and exchange relationships between the different ethnic groups as the next movement towards national integration. His argument is that this is the process by which the different groups can come to develop a conscious vested interest in the national economy.²⁰ But actually such a step is not necessary if the people have been educated to know who their exploiters are.

The promotion of economic interaction works in a situation where the people have not been educated to understand that their oppressor and exploiter is international capitalism. And if its aim is not to enable people to disengage their economy from the international capitalist system, then it cannot be a good disalienating process.

What might, however, work for the disalienation of the masses in the nation-building endeavours is the process of social integration. Ideally, this is a process by which the gaps between the elite and the masses, the town and the countryside, the privileged and underprivileged, are gradually narrowed.²¹ But its disalienating impact depends very much on how narrow the gap is. If the narrowing of the gap does not put an end to class antagonism, then it would not have minimised alienation in any serious way. Our proposition is that social integration should completely destroy the class boundaries and ethnic divisions if it is to serve as a disalienating process.

The process of social integration is complete only when all people in the country see each other as compatriots, and define their destinies along similar lines. A portent force in this social integration process is what Mazrui terms the psychological accumulation of a shared national experience. This process which facilitates the acquisition of a consciousness of having undergone some important experiences together,²² is not different from the process of cultural fusion. So that what Mazrui calls five processes are in fact just one or two processes.

8 All those five processes, including the routinisation of conflict - resolution, are nothing but aspects of social integration. And it is this process of social integration that, as a prerequisite of nation-building, serves as an important factor in the disalienation of the alienated Kenyans. It is essentially in that manner that we see nation-building as an important factor in the minimisation of alienation in Kenya.

FOOTNOTES:

1. H.KOONTZ & O'DONNELL: Management: A Systems and Contingency Analysis of Managerial Functions (Tokyo, McGraw-Hill, 1972) p.129.
2. J.S.SAUL: "Planning for Socialism in Tanzania: The Socio-Political Context" in TOWARDS SOCIALIST PLANNING (Dar es Salaam, TPH, 1974) p.2.
3. Ibid.
4. A.W.NABUDERE: "Imperialism, The National Question and the Politics of 'Class Formation' in Uganda" (mimeo) p.3.
5. Though participation is not an absolute measure for alienation, it suggests involvement, and people who are actively involved cannot be said to be brutally alienated.
6. J.S. SAUL, Op. cit. p.9.
7. See KENYA GOVERNMENT: Sessional Paper No.10, 1965: "African Socialism and Its Application to Planning in Kenya". For criticisms of the Paper see "The African Communist No.22, 3rd Quarter, 1965" and A. MOHIDDIN: "Socialism or Capitalism?..." in E.A. Journal, March, 1969.
8. Conventional theory here refers to Nkrumah's theory.
9. R.H. GREEN & A. SEIDMAN: Unity or Poverty: The Economics of Pan-Africanism (Baltimore - Maryland, Penguin, 1968) p.
10. Ibid.p.
11. Ibid.p.
12. Ibid.p.
13. J.S.SAUL: "Planning for Socialism..." pp. cit. p.14.
14. T.S. YAMPOLSKAYA: Social Organizations in the Soviet Union (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1975) p.140.
15. V.I.LENIN: Collected Works Vol.13 (Moscow, Progress Publishers) p.466.

16. Ibid. pp. 141-142.
17. See "Communist Partisanship Is a Fundamental Principle of Philosophy" in KOMMUNIST No.3,1970, p.75.
18. A.A.MAZRUI: Cultural Engineering and Nation-Building in East Africa (Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1973) p. 277.

19. Ibid. p.277

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid. pp. 277-8.

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