measure of our efforts. It means, not merely resisting the onslaught of Western colonialism, but actively promoting ways of living, of being together, of answering need, that radically resist it. It means de-linking from exotic, mass-produced answers to basic needs, and the recovery of how much can be done locally, with minimal resources. It means reactivating the sense of community, the capacity of human beings to make and do and create and give things and services to each other, outside of the market economy. It means reclaiming, not only the common material resources, but retrieving the enclosed human resources from the clutches of the market economy.

It involves the unlocking and flowering of human capacities to invent and make and offer each other all the consolation and sweetness of living together, so much of which has been put to sleep in Western industrial society. There are many surviving traditional societies which can offer us precious instruction, individuals who offer inspiration with vibrant living words - Gandhi, for instance. There are groups of people all over the world who are recovering ancient practice and tradition that can inspire hope and courage.

The future is not in the past, but is a living continuity in the present of ways of sustenance that do not injure the earth or its creatures more than is minimally necessary for our survival

"with a genuine 'bottom up' approach (talked about but hardly ever practised) rather than the usual 'top down' methodology.

Excerpts from:

COLONIALISM AND UNDER-DEVELOPMENT IN GUYANA 1580-1803

by Alvin Thompson (published 1987)

Guyana is a typical Third World country with the usual problems associated with internal under-development and external dependence. This dependence can be seen in regard to "capital, markets, supplies, skills and expertise, banking and financial services and ... the maintenance and growth of internal levels of employment, output and demand."

Like most Third World countries, too, the roots of underdevelopment and dependence can be traced to its connection with the developed countries - in this case mainly the Netherlands (Holland) and Great Britain, which exploited it continuously for over 350 years (the Netherlands from c.1580 to 1803 and Britain from 1803 to 1966).

During this period the physical, economic, ethnic, social and political landscape of the country changed considerably under the impact of European colonialism. These changes included the development of plantations, the production of export crops, the importation of large numbers of Africans and East Indians as a servile labour force, and the transplanting of the European social and political institutions into the country.

More sophisticated and stratified economic and socio-political systems in time largely replaced the indigenous systems. This process of change has on the whole been detrimental to the vast majority of the inhabitants of the country because change, or 'development' as it is sometimes called, was intended to benefit a narrow class of people - the European master class - at the expense of the rest of the population. All significant inputs into the colonial economy were geared exclusively to the more effective exploitation of the material and human resources of the colonies for the benefit of the metropolitan countries.

George Beckford states, in the context of the Third World economies, that colonialism transformed them from 'undeveloped' into 'underdeveloped' ones, a process which Andre Frank refers to as the "development of ...underdevelopment". And Walter Rodney explains that "underdevelopment is not the absence of development, because every people have developed in one way or another and to a greater or lesser extent. Underdevelopment makes sense only as a means of comparing levels of development".

In the specific context of Guyana, the country was clearly 'undeveloped' during the pre-European era. Its population was sparse and widely scattered, very little of the resources of the land was being utilized, the plantation system was nonexistent, and the social system was basically egalitarian. No evidence exists to suggest that the indigenous communities had developed clearly defined hierarchical political and social systems.
While social relations were not always harmonious among the various groups and while physical conflicts ensued, neither political aggrandisement nor social control over individuals appears to have a major cause of conflict. The exploitation of one group or individual by another was certainly not institutionalized, as in the case of New World slavery.

Thus the small Amerindian population, the relatively simple lifestyle of the inhabitants and the absence of a master class, ensured that the country remained largely "undeveloped". This was the way Sir Walter Raleigh, one of the earliest English imperialists, saw the country: Guiana is a country that hath yet her maidenhead, never sacked, turned, nor wrought, the face of the earth has not been torn, nor the virtue and salt of the soil spent by manurance.

The situation was to change substantially as the European colonial regimes were implanted and expanded.

It should be pointed out here that it was not until about the third quarter of the eighteenth century that the process of plantation development really got underway, though the earliest plantations were established around the mid-seventeenth century. But from the earliest days of the plantation the features associated with Third World underdevelopment began to manifest themselves.

Up to today, of course, a large part of the country remains undeveloped. Nonetheless, the coast and immediate hinterland, in which the vast majority of the population has resided since the advent of European colonization, have been extensively exploited. It must also be borne in mind that this area produces the largest quantity of the goods intended for export and that all the plantations were located there; so in economic terms its importance is proportionately far greater than its physical size.

A major point arises from the observation above: attention was paid by the Europeans almost exclusively to those areas of the country and those aspects of the economy that could produce relatively quick and large-scale profits. For instance, when certain riverine and even coastal estates began to produce low yields of export crops the decision was taken simply to abandon them rather than to attempt the cultivation of food crops, or to improve their yield by more scientific farming. The result was that areas which were once cleared of forest and poldered were simply allowed to return to 'bush'. This was part of the process of underdevelopment - the failure to adopt a rational approach to the development of the country.

Thus years of arduous work in clearing land, digging canals, building dikes ('kokers'), etc. were often allowed to go to waste, even though these undertakings could have formed part of the infrastructure for the future development. What Beckford says about the attitude of plantation owners in colonies where there was a great deal of land available, is also true of Guyana. They adopted the easiest recourse available to them - abandoning the old land and opening up new ones.

The mercantilist concept, which dominated the economic thought of Europe for a considerable part of the colonial era, stressed that for a nation to become rich it had to try to acquire as much trade as possible and eliminate all competitors. In terms of Europe's connection with the Americas, it meant dominating sea trade through cut-throat commercial competition, backed up if necessary by naval power. Thus war and trade were complementary activities in the quest to become rich. Colonies were important - and only important - in so far as they served to increase the wealth and power of the imperialist countries. In other words, colonies existed solely for the benefit of the colonial powers. A number of regulations and restrictions were imposed on the colonies towards this end. For instance, "navigation laws" were passed prohibiting colonists of a given metropolitan power from trading with non-nationals and sometimes even forbidding them from trading with nationals who were not licensed to carry on the trade.

Colonies were expected to send their produce directly to the metropolis, in metropolitan ships, and purchase the articles they needed only from the said metropolis. They were forbidden to manufacture any commodities which could compete with those in the metropolis. This meant, among other things, that colonies were to be producers only of primary products which could be processed in Europe and sometimes even resold to them in this form. Since the product elaboration occurred in the metropolis, rather than the colonies, the value added benefited the former far more than the latter.

Thus while new and more sophisticated technology was invented and applied to manufacturing activities in Europe, for a long time essentially the same old technology was used in primary production. For instance, the use of vacuum pans was only introduced into sugar technology in the nineteenth century, while the hoe remained the basic tool for working the land for a considerable period. Technological backwardness is today one of the hallmarks of underdevelopment in Third World countries.

The development and diversification of the European economies and the steady tendency towards integration contrasted sharply with the underdevelopment and fragmentation of the colonial economies. This situation, which was apparent both at the micro and macro levels, was a function of the structural dependence of the colonies on the metropolis. As Norman Girvan points out: The necessary corollary of such external dependence is a lack of internal structural inter-dependence between many of the most important elements of the economic system.

The export economy developed few positive and beneficial links with the domestic economy. Emphasis was placed on expanding the former, while the latter was neglected. This was seen in the failure to develop the infrastructure for the expansion of the domestic economy, while improving that of the export economy.
Thus the expansion of the domestic economy was largely incidental and geared
mainly to subsistence agriculture for feeding the slaves. The latter themselves
played the most important role in the growth of this sector through the cultivation of
their small garden plots, their handicraft, and the limited retail trade which they
carried on.

The planters paid little attention to the production of food locally. Food constitutes
the most basic form of production in any society, and most societies in the pre-capitalist
stage attempt to produce sufficient food for local consumption before orienting their
economies towards the export market. It is true that no society is ever entirely self-sufficient
in food production - in terms of quantity and variety - and so some form of
trade or barter usually develops to supply the deficiency.

This was generally the case with the Amerindian societies in Guyana. But with the
coming of the plantation system the colonies relied heavily upon external sources of
food supplies. This is one of the sad legacies of the colonial era in Guyana and in
most Third World countries, which have been and still are primarily producers of
agricultural commodities.

Each plantation was a unit linked more to the metropolis than to the other units
within the colony. Only the most minimal and necessary contact took place between
these units. Thus each plantation usually made its own arrangements to ship its
produce to Europe and to receive supplies from there. In the case of Guyana where
the estates were often large and separated by intervening forests, the tendency
towards isolation was greater than in small island-colonies like Barbados, Jamaica
and St Domingue.

Each estate had its own system of irrigation, its own wharf and its own ‘punts’ or
boats for transporting produce to the ships waiting in the estuaries or in the lower
reaches of the river. The degree of isolation might best be appreciated by noting that
up to the end of the Dutch period in Guyana in the early nineteenth century, there
were no central warehousing facilities. At the macro level, each colony dealt almost
exclusively with the metropolis.

Hardly any economic links existed between the colonies. This was the more
remarkable in the case of the Dutch Guiana colonies since Suriname, Berbice and
Essequibo-Demerara were contiguous territories. The only instances discovered so
far of cooperation among these colonies were when external attacks or slave revolts
occurred. Colonialism therefore kept the territories apart, producing basically the
same commodities and competing with each other for markets, slaves and capital.

Another way in which the metropolis exploited the colonies was by fixing the prices
for primary products on the one hand and manufactured goods in the other hand. It
also determined the cost of freightage and insurance, the prices of slaves, and the
time of arrival and departure of ships trading with the colonies (subject, of course, to
natural disasters and other unforeseen events).

The economic life of the colonies was therefore narrowly proscribed: in fact the
metropolis had a stranglehold on the colonies. The result was that many small
planters were squeezed so tightly by the system that they eked out a precarious
existence, or were forced to abandon production of crops altogether and leave the
colony or become paid employees of the rich planters. The latter did not usually fare
so badly, because they possessed greater financial resources and also often had
investments in the financial houses in Europe, which profited greatly from this
situation.

The fact too that major financial transactions between the colonies and the
metropolis were usually ‘book transactions’, or transactions carried out by bills or
exchange payable in Europe rather than by colonial currencies, meant that there was
no need for banks and other financial institutions in the colonies. The whole system
was designed to expatriate whatever surplus profits were made in the colonies, thus
leaving little scope for capital formation there.

Ultimately, it was the slaves who paid the price with their health and lives for the
profits which accrued to the planters, merchants and financial houses in Europe
through this system of exploitation. By defining slaves as ‘chattel’ or at best as
‘marginal’ human beings, the master class could soothe their conscience by
keeping them on the periphery of subsistence, while expropriating the fruits of their
labour.

Lloyd Best points out that “the product accruing to slaves is, strictly speaking, an
item of maintenance costs”. Very few slaves were able to improve their material
position substantially and when they did so it was usually through hard work during
the ‘spare’ time allowed them by their masters.

There is a parallel here between the master-slave relations on the one hand, and
the colony-metropolis relations on the other. Both depend upon massive exploitation
and expropriation to secure huge profits.

Clive Thomas points out, in the context of the sugar industry in Guyana, that “it is the
social relations under which sugar has been produced that have determined the
pattern of development of the industry” These relations involved the exploitation of
the working class by the master class. This was true not only of sugar but of coffee,
cocoa and cotton during the Dutch period. There existed a wide gap between the
interests of the master class and those of the community as a whole.

The politico-military apparatus was expected to provide the coercive power and
create the stability necessary to the exploitation of the material and human
resources of the colonies. One would therefore have expected to find large
bureaucracies and armies in these colonies; but, curiously enough, this was not the
case in most Third World colonial dependencies. Several reasons account for this.

The usual approach of the metropolitan powers was to spend as little as possible on the administration of the colonies. Consequently, only very small bureaucracies and armies were placed there permanently. The metropolitan countries trusted in their own naval and military power to protect their dependencies against external attacks. While these attacks occurred from time to time, most colonial powers in the Americas did not consider the situation sufficiently grave or frequent to merit the stationing of large forces there on a permanent basis.

The colonists were expected to see to the internal defense of the colonies through the establishment of militias and only to request the assistance of the imperial power in the event of major civil unrest. Stability did not portend long life in plantation societies; in spite of this, handsome profits were often made. The situation in present-day South Africa (1987) speaks strikingly to this point.

While the few colonial officials at the very top of the political and military ladder were usually reasonably well-paid by the colonial standards of the time, most received meager salaries and wages. The colonies, of course, had to foot the bill, though the actual amount was decided in Europe. In fact, all recruitment of personnel, civil and military, either had to be done initially in the metropolis or sanctioned ultimately by it. Almost all the civil and military personnel in the Dutch colonies under discussion were imported from Europe, so that a truly local bureaucracy never developed.

The laws of the colonies were also based on those of particular metropolitan country, so Roman-Dutch law became established in Guyana, as in the Dutch territories elsewhere. Any modifications of these laws to meet particular circumstances in the colonies had to be approved in Europe.

When the British took over the colonies in the nineteenth century, they modified most of the laws, especially those relating to criminal offenses, to bring them in line as far as possible with British laws in Europe. In this sense, therefore, colonies were legal dependencies of the metropolitan powers. This was seen most clearly in the fact that the courts in Europe were the final arbiters of appeals against judgments delivered in the colonial courts.

The most disturbing feature of this situation was that neither in theory nor practice were all individuals resident in the colony equal in the eyes of the law. The legal distinctions remained constantly entrenched in the last days of slavery in Guyana (and in several other colonial societies of the period) the law specifically determined that slaves could not bring suits against any person in the colonial courts. Thus the vast majority of the population remained outside the protection of the law, or rather, were only protected in so far as they were regarded as the property of free persons. Even the theoretically free colored and Indian groups found it difficult, if not impossible, to secure justice in the Dutch colonial courts. The colonial laws and courts played a major role in the economic and social exploitation of the mass of the people.

Socially, the dependent relationship of the colony to the metropolis normally expresses itself in the transplantation of social institutions from the latter to the former. This was the case in Guyana, but during the Dutch period few of the social institutions of the metropolis were clearly visible. The Church, which was the largest and most powerful social institution in Europe at the time and which assumed a major role in Spanish and French colonial America, played only a small part in the social life of the Guyana colonies. This was true of both the ‘institutional’ or Dutch Reformed Church and the dissenting Lutheran Church.

The same observation can be made of such other social institutions as schools, music societies and theaters. These were more conspicuous by their absence than their presence. It is therefore appropriate to raise the question as to the extent to which the Dutch colonists saw themselves as making a home in Guyana rather than making a fortune and returning to Europe as soon as possible. On the basis of current evidence it is reasonable to conclude that the majority of Dutchmen saw themselves as birds of passage.

At another level, that of the plantation, the social system reinforced the other systems designed to exploit the mass of the population and maintain the dominance of the master class. Franklin Knight, writing in the context of Caribbean plantations generally, observes: As the plantation system matured throughout the eighteenth century, a concomitant social complex based on the mutually reinforcing cleavages of race, color and occupation not only manifested itself throughout the Caribbean but became indelible and pervasive.

The master class usually determined the terms of the social relationships between them and the “lower orders of society” and since the master, in practice, often had almost absolute discretion over the welfare and even the lives of his slaves, he could use his power and authority to lower one and elevate another socially.

A few slaves moved from the very bottom of the social ladder; still, through a system of social manipulation the master could keep (or attempt to keep) them dependent on him. While most of the free workers sought to steer an independent course, as the plantation system developed and became more mature it bred inferiority complexes, social aping and social dependence among some of them. Here again, the relationship between the master and the masses on the plantation was similar to that between the metropolis and the colony.

While at the economic level one can identify a certain measure of growth in terms of the number of plantations, the size of the slave populations, the volume of production, the communications networks, etc., at the social level little or no growth was discernible. In this respect the plantation was more like a stagnant pool, or a social prison in which the majority of slaves were condemned to a life of poverty, disease and lingering death. Uprooted from their homeland, the plantation held no
Maroon societies offered the only viable alternative to the plantation system during the period of slavery. All the large New World slave societies possessed such communities; even so these did not pursue an existence completely independent of the plantations. Maroon communities generally depended upon the plantations for reinforcement of their numbers, a wide variety of manufactured goods, and sometimes intelligence about European military activities.

Nevertheless, these societies represented the only substantial break with the plantation system during the period of slavery. Since emancipation the peasantry has offered the most viable alternative, but it has not been able to break the dominance of the plantation, which has remained the basic unit of production in all New World societies where it was dominant during the slavery period. Beckford attributes the persistence of underdevelopment in the Third World countries of the Americas to the plantation influence. The structure of the relationship between these Third World countries and the metropolitan ones has not changed - hence the persistence of underdevelopment, dependence and exploitation.

Guyana is very much part of the situation described above. The Dutch laid the foundation; the British built the superstructure.

Conclusion

Dutch colonialism in Guyana lasted for about two hundred years and when the Dutch departed the long night of colonialism continued under the British until 1966. During this long period of alien domination the economic, political and social landscape underwent continuous modification, adaptation and social transformation to cater to the development priorities of the imperialist powers. Colonialism came with a human face, but not with a humane one.

Colonialism was characterised by mercantilism, parasitism and stagnation, and led ultimately to dependency. All the major production mechanisms and political and social services were geared towards the exploitation of the colonies for the benefit of the so-called Mother Country. The gravamen of the charge against colonialism is that officially it left no scope for independent thought or action - not even among the colonists themselves who were of European extraction. As Roger Bastide points out, "...the umbilical cord linking the colony with the mother country was never cut".

With the exception of those territories with large resident white populations - sometimes referred to as colonies of settlement - colonies were not expected to grow up to assume a role as autonomous or independent centres of production, looking after their own development needs. Instead, the metropolitan-colonial relationship would be like a vampire sucking the lifeblood of its own child, thus leaving it enfeebled and anemic.

Because of a variety of factors since the Second World War, most colonial territories, or Third World countries, have achieved political independence in the narrower sense of the term, but none of these has achieved any measure of economic independence or vitality. Guyana fits squarely into this framework. The roots of its poverty and underdevelopment were firmly planted during the Dutch period.

The mass of the colonial population, largely imported from Africa, were put to the production of staples for export, while the profits of their labor were expatriated to Europe. Where investment in the colonial economy took place it was the intention of increasing the volume of export staples, and so the cycle of production, export and limited reinvestment continued, all geared to the exploitation of the land and the human resources. The development of the plantation economy was made possible through a captive labor force and a plantocracy anesthetized to the sufferings of the slaves.

This does not mean that the slaves were entirely malleable in the hands of the plantocracy. We have shown that the slaves were actuated not only by the elemental desire for freedom, but also to improve their social and economic well-being, and that they frequently took matters into their own hands in attempting to achieve these objectives. Even those slaves who did not revolt overtly never quite accepted the imperatives of the master class.

On other occasions several of those who seemed to have submitted to plantocratic control and who attained "privileged" positions within the system eventually revolted. Even those who betrayed revolts did so in the hope of opting out of the system through manumission. So that we find it difficult to draw clear distinction between the submitters, adapters, collaborators and insurgents as a typology of slave reaction to the plantation system.

In any case, the recalcitrance of slaves as whole deeply influenced the plantocracy and forced them to react in a number of ways - purchase of military apparatus, costly expeditions, gifts to the Indians (Amerindians), more restrictive slave laws, absenteeism, etc. The plantation system bred animosities and antagonisms between the Amerindians, African and European population groups in the colonies.

In terms of human geography, the scale of Dutch enterprise contrasted sharply with that of the British, but it was the former who laid down the colonial infrastructure. The Dutch restricted their plantation activities from the second half of the eighteenth century to the coastal areas and immediate hinterland, where they undertook extensive poldering in order to create the necessary network of dams and canals for the exploitation of those areas.
pattern of rainfall, causing drought to succeed flooding by precipitation, the high
temperatures which sometimes caused the soil to be baked, the saline content of
the sea-water which periodically flooded the land, and the overflow of adjacent rivers
which also caused the water to sweep down upon the estates. Coastal estates
therefore had to undertake more elaborate poldering than riverine ones.

The Dutch, partly drawing upon their experience acquired in Europe and partly
innovating in the Guyana situation, came up with solutions that made it possible to
establish coastal plantations. The system of poldering was the main legacy that the
Dutch bequeathed to the British in relation to the modification of the geographical
landscape. Their solutions were utilised by the British in the nineteenth century with
few modifications. This was also true of the system of loading and unloading
cargoes in respect of the riverine areas, where each estate erected a wharf to
facilitate these activities. The cargo was loaded into flat-bottomed boats, called
punts, and transported to merchant ships waiting in the estuaries.

While the Dutch built dams and canals, they spent little time building roads.
Instead, they utilised the rivers and Indian paths as the highways into the interior. It
was only from about the last decade of the eighteenth century that they made some
attempts to develop coastal roads, assigning the responsibility to the planters who
were required to build and maintain that section of the public road continuous with
the coastal boundaries of their estates. The result was that nothing better than dirt
tracks were laid and these became slippery and sometimes impassable in the rainy
season.

It was left to the British to expand and improve these roads and it is to them that the
first proper roads must be attributed. We should note, however, that the British, like
the Dutch, concentrated on improving coastal communication and paid little attention
to linking the hinterland and the coast by an extensive network of roads.

Apart from the network of dams and canals and more limited attention to road-
building, the Dutch were also responsible for the introduction and/or development
on a commercial scale of a number of commodities. The main ones were coffee,
cotton and sugar, but spasmodic attention was also paid to the production of indigo
and rice. The Dutch turned out to be less rigid monoculturists than the British, but
were no less irrational in their emphasis on export staples, to the detriment of local
food production. Moreover, while the hinterland serviced many of the needs of the
plantations throughout the Dutch period, the two sectors were never integrated.

For one thing, a substantial portion of the items derived from the hinterland were
exported directly to Europe, while practically all items imported into the hinterland
originated in Europe and not from the plantations. Secondly, even where at times
the hinterland was capable of servicing the needs of the plantations, as in the case
of lumber, great emphasis was still placed on imports from overseas. The
economic link between the plantations and the hinterlands therefore remained
largely underdeveloped, and the British period did not redress this situation
substantially.

The failure to integrate the two areas of production was due to the outward
orientation of the plantation economy. Thus, even at the most basic level, the
production of food, the colonies depended heavily on imports from Europe and North
America. The range of imports included groats, beans, oats, rye, fish, ham, butter
and wine. Obviously, it would have been difficult to produce some of the
commodities locally, but it was possible in a number of instances to find or develop
adequate local substitutes.

This heavy reliance on imports was typical of European colonialism in America and
the Caribbean, and was a policy applied deliberately in respect of manufactures
which would compete with those of the metropolis. Colonies were expected to
supply raw materials and receive in return manufactured goods from the
metropolis. While the same restrictions did not apply to food and building materials
which could be acquired locally, some planters found it cheaper to purchase certain
commodities from abroad, than to procure them locally, especially if this meant
utilising slave labour.

Guiana was seen essentially as an area of exploitation, indulging in a narrow range
of economic activities exclusively for the benefit of the master class. If this meant
sacrificing long-term development for the short-term gains, none of them became
worried, for the colonies were the places to get “a quick fix” and return to Europe.

The plantation increasingly dominated the economic landscape in Guiana to such
an extent that by the last quarter of the eighteenth century it may be referred to as a
“pure plantation economy”. By that time the hinterland trade had become
insignificant, while no urban communities existed until the 1780s. Monsieur Le Conte de Kersaint, Governor of Essequibo-Demerara during the brief
period of French conquest of that colony declared that it was only the only European
city which had attained some degree of development without a city or town.

In 1898 Lincoln Burr, referring to this period, declared that the settlement in
Essequibo was a "community all scattered on a plantation" - a statement also
applicable to Berbice. The dominance of the plantation and the peculiar
environmental factors went a long way towards determining the nature of the social
and cultural institutions which developed.

During the entire Dutch period these institutions were virtually nonexistent, with the
exception of the church. The first music and theatrical societies appear to have come
into existence only in the nineteenth century, and no evidence exists in the records
consulted of occasional musical or theatrical performances. Occasionally, balls
were held at the Governor’s residence, and card-playing was a common pastime on the
A similar situation prevailed in respect of educational institutions. The records consulted do not indicate that a single school existed in Guyana during the Dutch period, though the need to establish schools was mentioned periodically. The church was the only social institution with a visible presence in the colonies, but its presence was not nearly as monumental as in the Catholic colonies of Spain and France. On the other hand, the situation in Guiana closely paralleled that in the other Dutch colonies of Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao, where the proprietors and the Amsterdam Classis paid very little attention to the establishment of organised worship.

Even if the Dutch did establish rudimentary social institutions in Guyana, the British presence later on must have wiped these out completely. The Lutheran Church was the only social institution that appears to have survived the coming of the British for any length of time, but this church had to be restarted virtually from scratch during the British period.

The Dutch made a more durable impression in respect of their architectural styles, though their legacy in this regard is confined almost exclusively to the two urban centres, New Amsterdam and Stabroek (Georgetown). Several Dutchmen continued to reside in these centres during the early British period and their building styles might well have been adopted by the later British settlers.

The Dutch built mainly in wood. Stone structures of any magnificence existed only in the form of natural pyramids, the artifice of nature rather than of man. The legacy is less obvious in the area of language. A number of Dutch lexical items can be found in present-day Guyanese creole, which is based largely upon English vocabulary and African syntactical forms. However, one or two small pockets of "Creole Dutch" exist in Berbice and Essequibo (referred to in the latter case as "Skepi Dutch"). In the legal field, remnants of Roman-Dutch law have survived to the present day, mainly in the civil law of the country. In terms of the physical structures and the political and social institutions, the Dutch legacy is clearly not as obvious in Guiana as in the Netherlands Antilles or Suriname, which remained under Dutch control for most of the period since 1800. But even in South Africa, which the British held roughly the same time that they held Guiana, the Dutch legacy in those areas just mentioned is far stronger.

In each case, different historical forces were at work. In South Africa, for instance, from the early days of colonialism, the Dutch began to establish an area of settlement to create a homeland - in a much more purposeful way than was the situation in Guyana. So that long before the British period Dutch social and cultural institutions had been firmly established there, especially in Cape Town. On the other hand, the legacy persists in Guiana in more subtle but no less durable ways. The Dutch left the legacy of parasitism, underdevelopment and dependency which the British built on and which the post-independence governments in Guaya have been unable to break.

Footnote: by P.L.K. I have come to know a fellow Quaker in England who is the great-great-grand-son of the late Captain Milliken Craig of Scotland. Milliken Craig was Commodore of East India Company's ships which transported slaves to Guiana and the West Indies in the early part of the nineteenth century, through which he not only made a fortune but acquired plantations in Guiana such as Craig Nismes, Den Amstel, Leguan and Anna Catherina. He died in Guyana and was buried in Georgetown.

Looking through a copy of Craig's will, one notes what vast amounts of money were to be divided among his heirs, and what was to be repatriated to the U.K. for investment there: one third of his fortune to his heir; one third to the offsprings of his heir and £10,600 to some others. Of the remainder, £250,000 was to be invested in a landed estate in some part of the U.K., preferably Scotland.

(Remembering the value of £ sterling at that time, as compared with the present, all this adds up to Milliken Craig virtually becoming a multi-millionaire from his trade!)

In his will he also named persons to take charge of 'my Estates Real and Personal of my slaves'.

And in the contemporary Guiana Chronicle, of December 1819, notice was given: 'to be sold by Public Auction at Garraway's Coffee-house, London, of...the valuable Plantation called the Grove (in Guiana) containing 400 acres or thereabouts, and consisting of 116 fine healthy Negroes, together with live and dead Stock thereon.'

Excerpts from book:

**THE GROUNDINGS WITH MY BROTHERS** by Dr. Walter Rodney

**African History and Culture**

Every human society has a history and a form of culture, and this includes Africa. Africans in the West have been deliberately kept ignorant of African achievements by the white men for centuries. The purpose of their policy was to build up a picture of a barbarous Africa, so that we Africans who had been removed from our homes and made into slaves would be afraid to admit even to ourselves that we were Africans. In the West Indies, names like 'Bungo' and 'Quashie,' which refer to Africans, are names which most black people hate, and our knowledge of Africa is got from
We are the only group in the world who deny ourselves, preferring to be known as 'Negroes' rather than Africans. In order to know ourselves we must learn about African history and culture. This is one of the most important steps towards creating unity among Africans at home and abroad.

Africa is the home of mankind. The human being came into existence on the African continent nearly two million years ago, and human society and culture reached great heights in Africa before the white men arrived. We must learn something about the following African kingdoms and empires:

(a) On the River Nile there was Egypt and Meroe (Sudan). These kingdoms flourished on earth before the birth of Christ, and Egypt in particular is recognised as having contributed to the modern world. Its huge pyramids and sculptures are still considered as wonders, and mankind has never re-discovered some of the technical skills which the Egyptians possessed, such as the art of preserving the dead body. Europeans have long refused to accept the simple geographical fact that ancient Egypt (like modern Egypt) was an African country, and even though some of its culture came from Asia, its achievements must go to the credit of Africa.

Meroe produced a culture very similar to Egypt, and also ruled over Egypt for a long period. The Egyptians were Africans of a light complexion, while the people of Meroe were dark-skinned.

(b) In ancient Ethiopia there was the kingdom of AXUM, fore-runner to the Ethiopian kingdom. The written language of Axum was called Ge'ez, and it is still used within the Ethiopian church today. Axum, along with other parts of ancient Ethiopia, is famous for its architecture, especially of tall and finely carved stone pillars and its churches carved out of solid rock.

(c) In West Africa, some of the most powerful political states in Africa, began to develop some 1500 years ago and their period of greatness lasted for more 1200 years. These kingdoms bore the names of Ghana, Mali, Songhai and Kanem; and they all arose near the great Niger River. They were noted for their agricultural production, their learning and commerce, especially in gold. These states also encouraged the religion of Islam (while Ethiopia, of course, was the centre of Christianity).

Apart from the states of Egypt, Meroe, Axum, Ghana, Mali, Songhai and Kanem, which have already been mentioned, there were many others in different parts of Africa, which achieved greatness before the arrival of the white man and before we were snatched away as slaves. On the West African coast, the states of Benin and Oyo were famous; in Central Africa we can take as examples Kongo and Monomotapa (Zimbabwe); and in East Africa two of the oldest kingdoms were those of Bunyoro and Buganda.

Certain things were outstanding in the African way of life, whether in a small or large society. These distinctive things in the African way of life amount to African culture. Among the principles of African culture, the following are to be noted: hospitality, respect (especially to elders), importance of the woman (especially in case of inheritance), humane treatment of law-breakers, spiritual reflection, common use of the land, constant employment of music (especially drums) and bright colours. Some of these principles are found in many different societies, but very few are encouraged in the present white capitalist world.

Excerpts from book:

HOW EUROPE UNDER-DEVELOPED AFRICA

by Dr. Walter Rodney

Some Questions On Development

*While all societies have experienced development, it is equally true that the rate of development differed from continent to continent, and within each continent different parts increased their command over nature at different rates. Inside Africa, Egypt was capable of producing wealth in abundance twenty-five centuries ago, because of mastery of many scientific natural laws and their invention of technology to irrigate, grow food, and extract minerals from the sub-soil. At that time, hunting with bows and even wooden clubs was what people depended on for survival in most parts of the African continent - and in various other places such as the British Isles.

One of the most difficult questions to answer is exactly why different peoples developed at different rates when left on their own. Part of the answer lies in the environment in which human groups evolved and part of it lies in the 'superstructure' of human society. That is to say, as human beings battled with the material environment, they created forms of social relations, forms of government, patterns of behaviour and systems of beliefs which together constituted the superstructure - which was never exactly the same in any two societies.

At the political level, capitalism was also responsible for most of the features which today are referred to as "Western Democracy". In abolishing feudalism, the capitalists insisted on parliaments, constitutions, freedom of the press, etc. These too can be considered as development. However, the peasants and workers of Europe (and eventually the inhabitants of the whole world) paid a high price so that the capitalists could make their profits from the human labour that always lies behind the machines.
Capitalism has created its own irrationalities such as a vicious white racism, the tremendous waste associated with advertising, and the irrationality of incredible poverty in the midst of wealth and wastage even inside the biggest capitalist economies, such as that of the U.S.A.

Obviously, under-development is not absence of development, because everywhere people have developed in one way or another and to a greater or lesser extent. Under-development makes sense only as means of comparing levels of development. It is very much tied to the fact that human social development has been uneven; and from a strictly economic viewpoint some human groups have advanced further by producing more and becoming more wealthy.

Today, our main preoccupation is with the difference in wealth between on the one hand Europe and North America and on the other Africa, Asia and Latin America. In comparison with the first, the second group can be said to be backward or under-developed. At all times, therefore, one of the ideas behind under-development is a comparative one.

An even more indispensable component of modern under-development is that it expresses a particular relationship of exploitation: namely the exploitation of one country by another. All the countries named as ‘underdeveloped’ in the world are exploited by others; and the under-development with which the world is now preoccupied is a product of capitalist, imperialist and colonialist exploitation. African and Asian societies were developing independently until they were taken over directly or indirectly by the capitalist powers. When that happened, exploitation increased and the export of surplus ensued, depriving the societies of the benefit of their natural resources and labour. That is an integral part of under-development in the contemporary sense.

Actually, if ‘under-development’ were related to anything other than comparing economies, then the most under-developed country in the world would be the U.S.A., which practises external oppression on a massive scale, while internally there is a blend of exploitation, brutality, and psychiatric disorder. However, on the economic level, it is best to remain with the word ‘under-developed’ rather than ‘developing’, because the latter creates the impression that all the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America are escaping from a state of economic backwardness relative to the industrial nations of the world, and that they are emancipating themselves from the relationship of exploitation.

The per capita income is a useful statistic for comparing one country with another; and the developed countries all have per capita incomes several times higher than any one of the recently independent African nations.

Many people have come to realise that the developed countries are growing richer quite rapidly, while under-developed countries, for the most part show stagnancy or slow rates of growth.

Developed economies have certain characteristics which contrast with underdeveloped ones. The developed countries are all industrialized. That is to say, the greater part of their working population is engaged in industry rather than agriculture, and most of the wealth comes out of mines, factories, etc. The high output of labour per man in industry because of their advanced technology and skills. This is well known, but it is also striking that the developed countries have much more advanced agriculture than the rest of the world. Their agriculture has already become an industry, and the agricultural part of the economy produces more although it is small. The countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America are called agricultural countries because they rely on agriculture and have little or no industry; but their agriculture is unscientific and the yields are far less than those of developed countries.

An even more gloomy set of statistics relate to basic food requirements. Persons in developed capitalist and Socialist countries consume twice as much protein food as those in underdeveloped countries. Such differences help to make it clear which countries are ‘developed’ and which are ‘underdeveloped’. The availability of basic goods and social services are available in a country can also be measured indirectly by looking at the life expectancy the frequency of deaths among children, the amount of malnutrition, the occurrence of diseases which could be prevented by inoculation and the public health services, and the proportion of illiterates.

The lopsided nature of the present international economy is strikingly brought home by the fact that the underdeveloped countries have in turn to recruit foreign experts at fantastic costs. It is typical of underdeveloped economies that they do not (or are not allowed to) concentrate on those sectors of the economy which in turn will generate growth and raise production to a new level altogether, and there are very few ties between one sector and another so that (say) agriculture and industry could react beneficially on each other.

Furthermore whatever savings are made within the economy are mainly sent abroad or are frittered away in consumption rather than being redirected to productive purposes. Much of the national income which remains within the country goes to pay individuals who are not directly involved in producing wealth but only in rendering auxiliary services: civil servants, merchants, soldiers, entertainers, etc. What aggravates the situation is that more people are employed in those jobs than are really necessary to give efficient service; and to crown it all these people do not reinvest in agriculture or industry. They squander the wealth created by the peasants and the workers by purchasing cars, whisky and perfume.

Figures indicate that in describing a typical underdeveloped economy it is essential to point out the high disproportion of the locally distributed wealth that goes into the pockets of a privileged few. Taxes do not produce national wealth and development. Wealth has to be produced out of nature: from tilling the land or mining metals or

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felling trees or turning raw materials into finished products for human consumption. In pursuing the goals of development, one must start with the producers and move on to see whether the products of their labour are being used to bring greater independence and well-being to the nation. In fact, it can be shown that the underdeveloped countries are the ones with the greatest wealth of natural resources and yet the poorest in terms of goods and services presently provided by and for their citizens.

The United Nations Survey of Economic Conditions in Africa up to 1964 had this to say about the continent's natural resources: Africa is well endowed with mineral and primary energy resources. With an estimated 9 per cent of the world's population the region accounts for approximately 28 per cent of the total value of the world mineral production and 6 per cent of its crude petroleum output. In recent years, its share of the latter is increasing. Of sixteen important metallic and non-metallic minerals the share of Africa in ten years varies from 22 to 95 per cent of the world production.

Even the goods and services which are produced inside Africa and which remain in Africa nevertheless fall into the hands of non-Africans. In a way, underdevelopment is a paradox. Many parts of the world that are naturally rich are actually poor and parts that are not so well off in wealth of soil and sub-soil are enjoying the highest standards of living.

When the capitalists from the developed parts of the world try to explain this paradox, they often make it sound as though there is something 'God-given' about the situation. The interpretation that underdevelopment is somehow ordained by God is emphasised because of the racist trend in European science. Sometimes 'experts' from capitalist countries do not give a racist explanation; they nevertheless confuse the issue by giving as causes of underdevelopment the things which really are consequences. For example, they would argue that Africa is in a state of backwardness as a result of lacking skilled personnel to develop. The true explanation lies in seeking out the relationship between Africa and certain developed countries and in recognising that it is a relationship of exploitation.

One of the common means by which one nation exploits another and one that is relevant to Africa's external relations is exploitation through trade. The big nations establish the price of the agricultural products, and subject these prices to frequent reductions. At the same time the price of manufactured goods is also set by them, along with the freight rates necessary for trade in the ships of those nations. The minerals of Africa also fall into the same category as agricultural products as far as pricing is concerned. The whole import/export relationship between Africa and its trading partners is one of unequal exchange and of exploitation.

More far-reaching than just trade is the actual ownership of the means of production in one country by the citizens of another. When citizens of Europe own the land and the mines of Africa, this is the most direct way of sucking the African continent. Under colonialism the ownership was complete and backed by the military domination. Today, in many African countries the foreign ownership is still present, although the armies and the flag of foreign powers have been removed. So long as foreigners own land, mines, factories, banks, insurance companies, newspapers, power stations etc. then for so long will the wealth of Africa flow outwards into the hands of those elements. In other words, in the absence of direct political control, foreign investment ensures that the natural resources and the labour of Africa produce economic value which is lost to the continent.

Foreign investment often takes the form of loans to African governments. Naturally, these loans have to be repaid; and in the 1960s the rate of repayment (amortization) on official loans in underdeveloped countries rose from $400 millions per year to about $700 millions; and it is constantly on the increase. In more recent times the forms of investment have become more subtle and more dangerous. They include so-called 'aid' and the management of local African companies by international capitalist experts. The United States has a small proportion of the World's population and exploitable natural wealth but it enjoys a huge percentage of the wealth which comes from exploiting the labour and natural resources of the whole world. The socialist camp includes all the countries big and small which have decided to break away from international capitalism. The imperialist camp contains not only the capitalist giants like the U.S.A., France, West Germany and Japan but also the weak nations in which industrial nations have investments. Therefore the imperialist camp can be sub-divided into exploiting and the exploited countries. For the most part, the nations of Africa fall into the group of exploited countries inside of the capitalist/imperialist system. The things which bring Africa into the capitalist market system are trade, colonial domination and capitalist imperialism. Trade has existed for several centuries; colonial rule began in the late 19th century and has almost disappeared; and the investment in the African economy has been increasing steadily in the present century.

Throughout the period that Africa has participated in the capitalist economy, two factors have brought about underdevelopment. In the first place, the wealth created by African labour and from African resources was grabbed by the capitalist countries of Europe; and in the second place restrictions were placed upon African capacity to make the maximum use of its economic potential; which is what development is all about. Those two processes represent the answer to the two questions raised as to why Africa has realized so little of its potential and why so much of its present wealth goes outside the continent.

African economies are integrated into the very structure of the developed capitalist economies; and they are integrated in a manner that is unfavourable to Africa and ensures that Africa is dependent on the big capitalist countries. Indeed, structural dependence is one of the characteristics of underdevelopment. The same idea is conveyed by simply saying that the underdeveloped countries are dependencies of the metropolitan capitalist economies. When a child or the young of any animal species ceases to be dependent upon its mother for food and protection, it can be said to have developed in the direction of maturity. Dependent nations can never be
imperialism has extended into their countries. It is the technologically advanced metropoles who can decide when to end their dependence on the colonies in a particular sphere. When that happens, it is the colony or neo-colony which goes begging cap in hand for a reprieve and a new quota. It is for this reason that a formerly colonised nation has no hope of development until it breaks effectively with the vicious circle of dependence and exploitation which characterises imperialism.

At the social and cultural level, there are many features which aid in keeping underdeveloped countries integrated into the capitalist system and at the same time hanging on to the apron strings of the metropoles. The Christian Church has always been a major instrument for cultural penetration and cultural dominance, in spite of the fact that in many instances Africans sought to set up independent churches. Equally important has been the role of education in producing Africans to service the capitalist system and to subscribe to its values. Recently, the imperialists have been using new universities in Africa to keep themselves entrenched at the highest academic level.

Any diagnosis of underdevelopment in Africa will reveal not just low per capital income and protein deficiencies, but also the gentlemen who dance in Abidjan, Accra and Kinshasha when music is played in Paris, London and New York. The question as to who and what is responsible for African underdevelopment can be answered at two levels. Firstly, the answer is that the operation of the imperialist system bears major responsibility for African economic retardation by draining African wealth and by making it impossible to develop more rapidly the resources of the continent. Secondy, one has to deal with those who manipulate the system and those who are either agents or unwitting accomplices of the said system. The capitalists of Western Europe were the ones who actively extended their exploitation from inside Europe to cover the whole of Africa.

In recent times, they were joined, and to some extent replaced by capitalists from the United States; and for many years now even the workers of those metropolitan countries have benefited from the exploitation and underdevelopment of Africa. None of these remarks are intended to remove the ultimate responsibility for development from the shoulders of Africans. Not only are there African accomplices inside the imperialist system, but every African has a responsibility to understand the system and work for its overthrow.

**How Africa Developed Before The Coming Of The Europeans - Up To The 15th Century**

It has been shown that, using comparative standards, Africa today is underdeveloped in relation to Western Europe and a few other parts of the world; and that the present position has been arrived at, not by the separate evolution of Africa on the one hand and Europe on the other, but exploitation.

Because of the impact of colonialism and cultural imperialism, Europeans and Africans themselves in the colonial period lacked due regard for the unique features of the African culture. Those features have a value of their own that cannot be eclipsed by European culture either in the comparable period or in subsequent centuries. They cannot be eclipsed because they are not really comparable phenomena. Who in the world is competent to judge whether an Austrian waltz is better than a Makonde Ngoma? Furthermore, even in those spheres of culture that are more readily comparable, such as the ‘fine arts’, it is known that African achievements of the European period stand as contributions to man’s heritage of beautiful creations. The art of Egypt, the Sudan and Ethiopia was known to rest of the world at an early date. That of the rest of Africa is still being ‘discovered’ and rediscovered by Europeans and present-day Africans. The verdict of the art historians on the Ife and Benin bronzes is well known: They date from the 14th and 15th centuries, they are relevant to any discussion of African development in the epoch before the contacts with Europe. Nor should they be regarded as unusual, except with regard to the material in which the sculptures were executed. The same skill and feeling obviously went to the sculpture and art-work in nondurable materials, especially wood.

African dance and art were almost invariable linked with a religious world-outlook in one way or another. As is well known, traditional African religious practices exist in great variety, and it should also be remembered that both Islam and Christianity found homes on the African continent almost from their very inception. The features of the traditional African religions help to set African cultures apart from those in other continents; but in this present context it is more important to note how much African religion had in common with religion elsewhere and how this can be used as an index to the level of development in Africa before European impact in the 15th century.

Religion is an aspect of the superstructure of a society, deriving ultimately from the degree of control and understanding of the material world. However, when man thinks in religious terms, he starts from the ideal rather than with the material world (which is beyond his comprehension). This creates a non-scientific and metaphysical way of viewing the world, which often conflicts with the scientific materialist outlook and with the development of society. African ancestral religions were no better or worse than other religions as such.

In Africa, before the 15th century, the predominant principle of social relations was...
that of family and kinship associated with communalism. Every member of an African society had his position defined in terms of relatives on his mother's side and on his father's side. The labour that worked the land was generally recruited on a family basis.

Numerous examples could be brought forward to show the dominance of the family principle in the communal phase of African development. It affected two principal factors of production - land and labour - as well as the system of distributing goods. European anthropologists who have studied African societies have done so mainly from a very prejudiced and racist position, but their researches can nevertheless provide abundant facts relating to family homesteads and compound, to the extended family (including affinal members who join by association through birth or marriage), and to lineages and clans which carried the principles of kinship alliances over large areas. However, while the exact details might have differed, similar social institutions were to be found among the Gauls of 11th century France, among the Viets of Indo-China at the same date, and virtually everywhere else in the world at one time or another - because communalism is one phase through which all human society passed.

In African societies during the early epoch, the individual at every stage of life had a series of duties and obligations to others in society as well as a set of rights: namely, things that he or she could expect or demand from other individuals. Age was a most important factor determining the extent of rights and obligations. The oldest members of society were highly respected and usually in authority; and the idea of seniority through age was reflected in the presence of age-grades and age-sets in a great many African societies.

The first prerequisite for mastery of the environment is knowledge of that environment. By the 15th century, Africans everywhere had arrived at a considerable understanding of the total ecology - of the soils, climate, animals, plants and their multiple interrelationships. The practical application of this lay in the need to trap animals, to build houses, to make utensils, to find medicines, and above all to devise systems of agriculture.

In the centuries before the contact with Europeans, the overwhelmingly dominant activity in Africa was agriculture. In all the settled agricultural communities people observed the peculiarities of their own environment and tried to find techniques for the dealing with it in a rational manner. Advanced methods were used in some areas, such as terracing, crop rotation, green manuring, mixed farming and regulated swamp farming.

The weakness in Africa seemed to have been the lack of a professional interest in acquiring more scientific knowledge and in devising tools to lighten the load of labour as well as to transform hostile environments into areas suitable for human activity.

Under communalism every African was assured of sufficient land to meet his own needs by virtue of being a member of a family or community. For that reason, and because land was relatively abundant, there were few social pressures or incentives for technical changes to increase productivity.

When it comes to the question of manufacturing in Africa before the time of the white man, it is also essential to recognise where achievements have been underestimated. African manufactures have been contemptuously treated or overlooked by European writers, because the modern conception of the word brings to mind factories and machines. However, 'manufactures' means literally "things made by hand"; and African manufacture in this sense had advanced appreciably. Most African societies fulfilled their own needs for a wide range of articles of domestic use, as well as for farming tools and weapons.

One way of judging the level of economic development in Africa five centuries ago is through the quality of the products. Here a few examples will be given of articles which came to the notice of the outside world. Through North Africa, Europeans became familiar with a superior brand of red leather from Africa which was termed 'Moroccan leather'. In fact, it was tanned and dyed by Hausa and Mandinga specialists in northern Nigeria and Mali. When direct contact was established between Europeans and Africans on the East and West Coasts, many more impressive items were displayed. As soon as the Portuguese reached the old kingdom of Kongo, they sent back word on the superb local cloths made from bark and palm fibre, and having a finish comparable to velvet. The Baganda were also expert bark-cloths makers. Yet, Africa had even better to offer in the form of cotton cloth, which was widely manufactured before the coming of the Europeans. Well into the present century, local cotton from the Guinea coast was stronger than Manchester cottons.

Once European products reached Africa, Africans too were in a position to make comparisons between their commodities and those from outside. In Katanga and Zambia, the local copper continued to be preferred to the imported item. While the same held true for the iron in a place like Sierra Leone. It was at the level of scale that African manufactures had not made a breakthrough. That is to say, the cotton looms were small, the iron smiths were small, the pottery was turned slowly by hand, and not on a wheel, etc. Yet some changes were taking place in this context. Under communalism, each household met it's own needs by making it's own cloths, pots, mats, etc.

Traditional African economies are usually called 'subsistence' economies. Often, small villages farmed, hunted, fished, etc., and looked after themselves independently with little reference to the rest of the continent. Yet, at the same time the vast majority of African communities fulfilled at least a few of their needs by trade. Africa was a continent of innumerable trade routes.
Again, it must be emphasised that a survey of the scene in Africa before the coming of Europeans would reveal considerable unevenness of development. There were social formations representing hunting bands, communalism, feudalism, and many positions intermediate between the last two.

It should also be reiterated that slavery as a mode of production was not present in any African society, although some slaves were to be found where the decomposition of communal equality had gone furthest. This is an outstanding feature illustrating the autonomy of the African path within the broader framework of universal advance.

Several historians of Africa have pointed out that after surveying the developed areas of the continent in the 15th century and those within Europe at the same date, the difference between the two was in no way to Africa’s discredit. Indeed, the first Europeans to reach West and East Africa by sea were the ones who indicated that in most respects African development was comparable to that which they knew.

Africa’s Contribution To European Capitalist Development - The Pre-colonial Period

The first significant thing about the internationalisation of trade in the 15th century was that Europeans took the initiative and went to other parts of the world. No Chinese boats reached Europe, and if any African canoes reached the Americas (as is sometimes maintained) they did not establish two way links. What was called international trade was nothing but extension overseas of European interests.

Europeans used the superiority of their ships and cannons to gain control of all the world’s waterways, starting with the western Mediterranean and the Atlantic coast of North Africa.

From the beginning, Europe assumed the power to make decisions within the international trading system. An excellent illustration of that is the fact that the so-called international law which governed the conduct of nations on the high seas was nothing else but European law. Africans did not participate in its making, and in many instances African people were simply the victims, for the law recognised them only as transportable merchandise. If the African slaves was thrown overboard at sea, the only legal problem that arose was whether or not there was compensation from the insurers! Above all, Europeans’ decision-making power was exercised in selecting what Africa should export - in accordance with the European needs.

Karl Marx also commented on the way that European capitalists tied Africa, the West Indies and Latin America into the capitalist system; and (being the most bitter critic of capitalism) Marx went on to point out that what was good for Europeans was obtained at the expense of untold suffering by Africans and American Indians. Marx noted that the "the discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the turning of Africa into a commercial warren for the hunting of black skins signalised the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production'.

The connection between slavery and capitalism in the growth of England is adequately documented by Eric Williams, late Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, in his well-known book Capitalism and Slavery.

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Williams gives a clear picture of the numerous benefits which England derived from trading and exploiting slaves, and he identified by name several of the personalities and capitalist firms who were the beneficiaries. Outstanding examples are provided in the persons of David and Alexander Barclay, who were engaging in slave trade in 1756 and who later used the loot to set up Barclays’ Bank. There was a similar progression in the case of Lloyds - from being a small London coffee house to being one of the world’s largest banking and insurance houses, after dipping into the profits from slave trade and slavery. Then there was James Watt, expressing eternal gratitude to the West Indies slave owners who directly financed his famous steam engine, and took it from the drawing-board to the factory.

In speaking of the European slave trade, mention must be made to the U.S.A., not only because its dominant population was European, but also because Europe transferred its capitalist institutions more completely to North America than to any other part of the globe, and establishing a powerful form of capitalism - after eliminating the indigenous inhabitants and exploiting the labour of millions of Africans

It was the carrying trade between the West Indies slave colonies and Europe which lay behind the emancipation of the American colonies from British rule, and it was no accident that the struggle for American independence started in the leading New England town Boston. In the 19th century, the connection with Africa continued to play an indirect role in American political growth. In the first place, profits from the slave activities went into the coffers of political parties and even more important the African stimulation and black labour played a vital role in extending European control over the present territory of the U.S.A. - notably in the South, but including also the so-called ‘wild west’ where black cowboys were active.

Slavery was useful for early accumulation of capital, but it was too rigid for industrial development.

Europe And The Roots Of African Under-development - To 1885

To discuss trade between Africans and Europeans in the four centuries before colonial rule is virtually to discuss slave trade. The shipments were all by Europeans
On the whole, the process by which captives were obtained on African soil was not trade at all. It was through warfare, trickery, banditry and kidnapping. When one tries to measure the effect of European slave trading on the African continent, it is very essential to realise that one is measuring the effect of social violence rather than trade in any normal sense of the word. Many things remain uncertain about the slave trade and its consequences for Africa, but the general picture of destructiveness is clear.

On every other continent from the 15th century onwards, the population showed constant and sometimes spectacular natural increase; while it is striking that the same did not apply to Africa. One European scholar gave the following estimates of the world population (in millions) according to continents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Asia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1650</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1750</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>857</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

None of the above figures are really precise, but they do indicate a consensus among researchers on population that the huge African continent has an abnormal record of stagnation in this respect, and there is no causative factor other than trade in slaves to which attention can be drawn.

Certainly, many African rulers acquiesced in the European slave trade for what they considered to be reasons for self-interest, but on no scale of rationality could the outflow of population be measured as being anything but disastrous for African societies. African economic activity was affected both directly and indirectly by population loss.

In effect, enslavement was causing these people to lose their battle to tame and harness nature - a battle which is at the basis of development. Violence also meant insecurity. The opportunity presented by European slave dealers became the major (though not the only) stimulus for a great deal of social violence between different African communities and within any given community. It took the form more of raiding and kidnapping than regular warfare, and that fact increased the element of fear and uncertainty.

The changeover to warlike activities and kidnapping must have affected all branches of economic activity, and agriculture in particular. Occasionally, in certain localities food production was increased to provide supplies for slave ships, but the overall consequence of slaving on agricultural activities in Western, Eastern and Central Africa were negative.

In any case, slaving prevented the remaining population from effectively engaging in agriculture and industry and it employed professional slave hunters and warriors to destroy rather than build. Quite apart from the moral aspect and the immense suffering that it caused, the European slave trade was economically totally irrational from the viewpoint of African development.

It might appear that slave trade did not adversely affect the development of some parts of Africa, simply because exports were non-existent or at a low level. However, the contention that European slave trade was an underdeveloping factor for the continent as a whole must be upheld, because it does not follow that an African district which did not trade with Europe was entirely free from whatever influences were exerted by Europe. European trade goods percolated into the deepest interior, and (more significantly) the orientation of large areas of the continent towards human exports meant that other positive inter-actions were thereby ruled out.

During the colonial epoch, the British forced Africans to sing

Rule Britannia, Britannia rule the waves
Britons never never never shall be slaves

The British themselves started singing the tune in the early 18th century, at the height of using Africans as slaves What would have been Britain’s level of development had millions of them been put to work as slaves outside their homelands over a period of four centuries?

One tactic that is now being employed by certain European (including American) scholars is to say that the European slave trade was undoubtedly a moral evil, but it was economically good for Africa. Here attention will be drawn only very briefly to a few of those arguments to indicate how ridiculous they can be. One that receives much emphasis is that African rulers and other persons obtained European commodities in exchange for their captives, and this was how Africans gained ‘wealth’. This suggestion fails to take into account the fact that several European imports were competing with and strangling African products; it fails to take into account the fact that none of the long list of European articles were of the type which entered into the productive process, but rather items to be rapidly consumed or stowed away uselessly; and it incredibly overlooks the fact that the majority of the imports were of the worst quality even as consumer goods: cheap gin, cheap gunpowder, pots and kettles full of holes, beads, and other assorted rubbish.
A few of the arguments about the economic benefits of the European slave trade for Africa amount to nothing more than saying that exporting millions of captives was a way of avoiding starvation in Africa! All the above points are taken from books and articles published recently, as the fruit of research in major British and American Universities. They are probably not the commonest views even among European bourgeois scholars, but they are representative of a growing trend that seems likely to become the new accepted orthodoxy in metropolitan capitalist countries; and this significantly coincides with Europe's struggle against the further decolonization of Africa economically and mentally.

The European slave trade was a direct block, in removing millions of youth and young adults who are the human agents from whom inventiveness springs. Those who remained in areas badly hit by slave-capturing were preoccupied about their freedom rather than with improvements in production.

Modern African nationalist historians correctly stress that Africa had a meaningful past long before the coming of Europeans. They also stress that Africans made their own history long after coming into contact with Europe, and indeed right up to the period of colonisation.

Political divisions in Africa were no evidence of innate inferiority or backwardness. That was the state in which the continent then found itself - a point along a long road that others traversed and along which Africa was moving.

Africa's Contribution To the Capitalist Development of Europe - The Colonial Period

Colonialism was not merely a system of exploitation, but one whose essential purpose was to repatriate the profits to the so-called 'mother country'. From an African viewpoint, that amounted to consistent expatriation of surplus produced by African labour out of African resources. It meant the development of Europe as part of the same dialectical process in which Africa was underdeveloped.

There were several reasons why the African worker was more crudely exploited than his European counterpart in the present century. Firstly, the alien colonial state had a monopoly of political power, after crushing all opposition by superior armed force. Secondly, the African working class was small, very dispersed, and very unstable owing to migratory practices. Thirdly, while capitalism was willing to exploit all workers everywhere, European capitalists in Africa had additional racial justifications for dealing unjustly with the African worker.

In addition to private companies, the colonial state also engaged directly in the economic exploitation and impoverishment of Africa. The equivalent of the colonial office in each colonising country worked hand in hand with their governors in Africa to carry out a number of functions; the principal ones being as follows:

(a) To protect national interest against competition from other capitalists.
(b) To arbitrate the conflicts between their own capitalists.
(c) To guarantee optimum conditions under which private companies could exploit Africans.

When colonial governments seized African lands, they achieved two things simultaneously. They satisfied their own citizens (who wanted mining concessions or farming land) and they created the conditions whereby landless Africans had to work not just to pay taxes but also to survive. In settler areas such as Kenya and Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) the colonial government also prevented Africans from growing cash-crops so that their labour would be available directly for the whites.

When all else failed, colonial powers resorted widely to the physical coercion of labour - backed-up of course by legal sanctions, since anything which the colonial government chose to do was 'legal'. The laws and by-laws by which peasants in British East Africa were required to maintain minimum acreages of cash-crops like cotton and groundnuts were in effect forms of coercion by the colonial state, although they are not normally considered under the heading of 'forced labour'.

A great deal of this forced labour went into the construction of roads, railways and ports to provide the infrastructure for the private capitalist investment and to facilitate the export of cash-crops. Colonialism meant a great intensification of exploitation within Africa - to a level much higher than that previously in existence under communalism or feudal-type African societies. Simultaneously, it meant the export of that surplus in massive proportions, for that was the central purpose of colonialism.

One Nigerian after visiting Brussels in 1960, wrote, 'I saw for myself the massive palaces, museums and other public buildings paid for by Congo ivory and rubber.'

Britain and France ruled over the greater part of colonial Africa and they also had the largest empires in other parts of the world. The whole existence and development of capitalism in Britain and France between 1885 and 1960 was bound up with colonisation, and Africa played a major role. It was no ordinary post-war crisis such as Western Europe faced in the 1940's and 1950's.

In the capitalist struggle to keep off the challenge of socialism as a competing mode of production and way of life, Africa played at least two key roles - one being to provide bases for the capitalist militarists, and the other being to provide a wide range of raw materials essential for modern armament industries. The most vital of
these raw materials were uranium and other radioactive substances for atomic and later nuclear weapons, including the hydrogen bomb. Almost rivaling uranium in importance were certain rare minerals (like lithium from Rhodesia) needed for the special steel that went into new aircraft rockets, tanks, guns, bombs, etc.

Needless to say, in the 1950s when most Africans were still colonial subjects, they had absolutely no control over the utilisation of their soil for militaristic ends. Virtually the whole of North Africa was turned into a sphere of operations for NATO, with bases aimed at the Soviet Union. They could easily have become involved in nuclear war without African people having any knowledge of the matter. The colonial powers actually held military conferences in African cities like Dakar and Nairobi in the early 1950s, inviting the whites of South Africa and Rhodesia and the government of the U.S.A.

Time and time again, the evidence points to this cynical use of Africa to buttress capitalism economically and militarily, and therefore in effect forcing Africa to contribute to its own exploitation.

Colonialism As A System For Under-developing Africa

The argument suggests that, on the one hand, there was exploitation and oppression, but on the other hand, colonial governments did something for the benefit of Africans and they developed Africa. It is our contention that this is completely false. Colonialism had only one hand - it was a one-armed bandit. What did colonial governments do in the interest of Africans? Supposedly, they built railroads, schools, hospitals and the like. The sum total of these services was amazingly small. For the first three decades of colonialism, hardly anything was done that could remotely be termed a service to the African people. It was in fact only after the last war that social services were built as a matter of policy.

In the predominantly black countries, it was also true that the bulk of the social services went to whites.

The viciousness of the colonial system with respect to the provision of social services was most dramatically brought out in the case of economic activities which made huge profits, and notably in the mining industry. Mining takes serious toll of the health of workers, and it was only recently in the metropoles that miners have had access to the kind of medical and insurance services which could safeguard their lives and health. In colonial Africa, the exploitation of miners was entirely without responsibility.

South Africa's large working class African population was in a sad state. The Tuberculosis Commission of 1912 reported that in the shanty towns:

Scarceley a single family exists in which at least one member is not suffering or dying from tuberculosis. Hospital services are so inadequate that incurable tuberculosis and other cases are simply sent home to die - and spread the infection. In some areas, a single doctor has to attend to the needs of 40,000 people. The natives must pay for medical treatment. There is no provision for pauper patients. About 65% of the native children die before reaching two years.

That was as early as 1912, when the basis of the South African gold and diamond empire was already laid. Since then, the shanty towns increased, the slum conditions grew worse, and the government committed itself to pursuing the odious policy of apartheid, which meant separation of the races so as better to exploit the African people. Many Africans trekked to towns, because (bad as they were) they offered a little more than the countryside. Modern sanitation, electricity, piped water, paved roads, medical services and schools were as foreign at the end of the colonial period as they were in the beginning - as far as most of rural Africa was concerned.

Yet, it was the countryside that grew the cash-crops and provided the labour that kept systems going. The peasants there knew very little of the supposed 'credits' on the colonial balance sheet. Because even the scanty social services were meant only to facilitate exploitation, they were not given to any Africans whose labour was not directly producing surplus for export to the metropoles. That is to say, none of the wealth of exploited Africans could be deployed for the assistance of their brothers outside the money economy.

The capital that was invested in colonial Africa in later years was a continuation of the colonial capital of the 19th century, along with new influxes from the metropoles. If one enquires closely into the origins of the supposedly new sources, quite a few would have been connected very closely to previous exploitation of non-European people.

It is enough to remember that Europe's greatest source of primary capital accumulation was overseas, and that the profits from African ventures continually outran the capital invested in colonies.

A conservative bourgeois writer on colonial Africa made the following remarks about the South African gold and diamond industries: Apart from the capital subscribed (in the diamond industry), all capital expenditure was provided for out of profits. The industry also yielded large profits to the international firms which dealt in diamonds. These had a peculiar importance, because a considerable portion of the wealth accumulated by diamond firms was later used in the development of the (gold industry) of the Rand.

It defies logic to admit that profits from a given colony in a given year totalled several million dollars and to
affirm nevertheless that the few thousand dollars allocated to social services in that colony was the money of European taxpayers! The true situation can accurately be presented in the following terms: African workers and peasants produced for European capitalism goods and services of a certain value. A small proportion of the fruits of their efforts was retained by them in the form of wages, cash payments and extremely limited social services, such as were essential to the maintenance of colonialism. The rest went to the various beneficiaries of the colonial system.

As colonialism came under heavy criticism during the last decades, more deliberate efforts were made to whitewash it. Both CD&W (Colonial Development & Welfare) and FIDES were part of the public relations propaganda of colonialism, striving to mask and deny its viciousness. Above all, both FIDES and CD&W were born of postwar conditions in Europe, at the time when Western European capitalist nations were desperately falling back on colonies to save them vis-à-vis socialism and even from the competition of the U.S.A. Mr Bevin, a noted British labour leader turned traitor to his class and spokesman for the British capitalism, made the observation that "the other two world Powers, the United States and Soviet Russia, have tremendous resources. If Western Europe is to achieve its balance of payments and to get a world equilibrium, it is essential that (African) resources should be developed, and made available."

Any close study of the operations of CD&W and FIDES reveals clearly that they had nothing to do with African development but a great deal to do with the welfare of capitalist Europe.

In spite of what the metropoles wanted, some local capitalists did emerge in Asia and Latin America. Africa is a significant exception in the sense that, compared with other colonised peoples, far fewer Africans had access even to the middle rungs of the bourgeois ladder in terms of investment.

Taking Africa as a whole, the few African businessmen who were allowed to emerge were at the bottom of the ladder and cannot be considered as 'capitalist' in the true sense. They did not own sufficient capital to invest in large-scale farming, trading, mining or industry. They were dependent both on European-owned capital and on the local capital of minority groups.

That European capitalism should have failed to create African capitalists is perhaps not as striking as its inability to create a working class and to diffuse industrial skills throughout Africa. By its nature, colonialism was pre-occupied with the establishment of industries in Africa, outside of agriculture and the extractive sphere of mining and timber felling. Whenever internal forces seemed to push in the direction of African industrialisation, they were deliberately blocked by the colonial government acting on behalf of the metropolitan industrialists. Groundnut-oil mills were set up in Senegal in 1927 and began exports to France. They were soon placed under restrictions because of protests of oil-millers in France. Similarly in Nigeria, the oil mills set up by Lebanese were discouraged. The oil was sent to Europe as raw material for industry, but European industrialists did not then welcome even the simple stage of processing groundnuts into oil on African soil.

The tiny working class of colonial Africa covered jobs such as agricultural labour and domestic services. Most of it was unskilled, in contrast to the accumulating skills of capitalism proper. When it came to projects requiring technical expertise, Europeans did the supervision - standing around in their helmets and white shorts. The reverse side of the coin was present in Africa: it had been illustrated how the presence of industry in Europe fostered and multiplied scientific techniques. The reverse side of the coin was present in Africa: no industry meant no generation of skills. Even in the mining industry, it was arranged that the most valuable labour should be done outside Africa.

With regard to gold, the financial implications in Europe were enormous, and Africa's gold played its part in the development of the monetary system and of industry and agriculture in the metropoles.

Industrialisation does not only mean factories. Agriculture itself has been industrialised in capitalist and socialist countries by the intensive application of scientific principles to irrigation, fertilizers, tools, crop selection, stock breeding, etc. The most decisive failure of colonialism in Africa was its failure to change the technology of agricultural production. The most convincing evidence as to superficiality of the talk about colonialism having 'modernised' Africa is the fact that the vast majority of Africans went into colonialism with a hoe and came out with a hoe. Some capitalist plantations introduced agricultural machinery, and the odd tractor found its way into the hands of African farmers; but the hoe remained the overwhelmingly dominant agricultural implement.

Capitalism could revolutionise agriculture in Europe, but it could not do the same for Africa. In some districts, capitalism brought about technological backwardness in agriculture. On the reserves of Southern Africa, far too many Africans were crowded on to inadequate land, and were forced to engage in intensive farming, using techniques that were suitable only to shifting cultivation. In practice, that was a form of technical retrogression, because the land yielded less and less and became destroyed in the process. Whenever Africans were hampered in the use of their ancestral lands on a wide-ranging shifting basis, the same negative effect was to be found. Besides, some of the new cash-crops like groundnuts and cotton were very demanding on the soil. In countries like Senegal, Nigeria and Chad, which were already on the edge of the dessert, the steady cultivation led to soil impoverishment and encroachment of the desert.
White racist notions are so deep-rooted within capitalist society that failure of African agriculture to advance was put down to the inherent inferiority of the African. It would be much truer to say that it was due to the white intruders.

Failure to improve agricultural tools and methods on behalf of African peasants was not a matter of a bad decision by colonial policy makers. It was an inescapable feature of colonialism as a whole, based on the understanding that the international division of labour aimed at skills in the metropoles and low-level manpower in the dependencies.

Capitalists under colonialism did not pay for an African to maintain himself and family. This can readily be realised by reflecting on the amounts of money earned by African peasants from cash-crops. The sale of produce by an African cash-crop farmer rarely brought in 200 shillings per year and often it was less than half that amount. Out of that, a peasant had to pay for tools, seeds and transport and he had to repay the loan to the middleman before he could call the remainder his own. Peasants producing coffee and cocoa and collecting palm produce tended to earn more that those dealing in cotton and groundnuts, but even the ordinary Akwapim cocoa farmer or chagga coffee farmer never handled money in quantities sufficient to feed, clothe and shelter his family. Instead, subsistence crops like yams or bananas continued as supplement. That was how the peasant managed to eat, and the few shillings earned went to pay taxes and to buy the increasing number of things which could not be obtained without money in the middle-men's shops - salt, cloth, paraffin, etc.

From an African viewpoint, the first conclusion to be drawn is that the peasant working on African soil was being exploited by the industrialist who used African raw material in Europe or America. Secondly, it is necessary to realise that the African contribution of unskilled labour was valued far less than the European contribution of skilled labour.

All colonial regimes sponsored some scientific research into tropical agriculture. However, the research was almost entirely devoted to cash-crops, it was limited in scope, and it was more easily adaptable by plantations rather than African peasants who had no capital. The pitiable amount devoted to agriculture in Africa during the colonial period contrasts sharply with the increasing huge sums that were devoted to research in Europe over the same period - with enormous benefits to both industry and agriculture in the metropoles.

There is a more sympathetic school of historians of Africa who contend that to see colonialism as completely negative is to underrate the initiative of Africans. Africans, they say, moved boldly into the labour market, into cash-crop farming, into commerce in some instances, into the educational field and into the churches. Yet, those were simply responses (albeit vigorous ones) to the options laid open by the colonialist. True historical initiative by a whole people or by individuals requires that they have the power to decide on the direction in which they want to move. That latter aspect had to await the decade of the 1960s.

Indeed, what was called 'the development of Africa' by the colonialists was a cynical short-hand expression for the 'intensification of colonial exploitation in Africa to develop capitalist Europe'.

During the centuries of pre-colonial trade, some control over social, political and economic life was retained in Africa, in spite of the disadvantageous commerce with Europeans. That little control over internal matters disappeared under colonialism. Colonialism went much further than trade. It meant a tendency towards direct appropriation by Europeans of the social institutions within Africa. Africans ceased to set indigenous cultural goals and standards, and lost full command of training young members of the society. Those were undoubtedly major steps backwards.

What happened to African women under colonialism is that the social, religious, constitutional and political privileges and rights disappeared, while the economic exploitation continued and was often intensified. It was intensified because the division of labour according to sex was frequently disrupted. Traditionally, African men did the heavy labour of felling trees, clearing land, building houses etc., apart from conducting warfare and hunting. When they were required to leave their farms to seek wage work, women remained behind burdened with every task necessary for the survival of themselves, the children and even the men as far as foodstuffs were concerned. Moreover, since men entered the money sector more easily and in greater numbers than women, women's work became greatly inferior to that of men within the new world of colonialism: men's work was 'modern' and women's was 'traditional' and 'backward'.

Some African trade did persist across colonial boundaries. For instance, the centuries-old trade in kola nuts and gold from the forests of West Africa to North Africa never completely ceased. Besides, new forms of African trade developed, notably with regard to supplying foodstuffs to towns or cash-crops areas where there was insufficiency of food. That kind of trade could be entirely within a colony or it could cross colonial boundaries. However, the sum total of energy that went into expansion of inter-African trade was extremely small in comparison with trade that was export-oriented. Since this inter-African trade did not bring benefits to Europeans it was not encouraged by them, and up to the latter part of the colonial period only 10% of Africa's trade was internal.

In North Africa, handicraft industries had made the greatest advances before colonialism, in spheres ranging from brass work to woollens. By the time that political independence was achieved, surviving craftsmanship had been turned towards attracting tourists rather than meeting the real needs of African people. Besides, as was true of the European slave trade, the destruction of technology
under colonialism must be related to the barriers raised in the path of African initiative. The vast majority of Africans drawn into the colonial money economy were simply providing manual labour, which stimulated perspiration rather than scientific initiative. Colonialism induced the African ironworker to abandon the process of extracting iron from the soil and to concentrate instead on working scraps of metal imported from Europe.

Instead of speeding up growth, colonial activities such as mining and cash-crops farming speeded up the decay of ‘traditional’ African life. In many parts of the continent, vital aspects of culture were adversely affected, nothing better was substituted, and only a lifeless shell was left. The capitalist forces behind colonialism were interested in little more than the exploitation of labour.

During the colonial era, many thinly-populated villages appeared in central and southern Africa, comprising women, children and old men. They practised subsistence agriculture which was not productive enough, and colonialists contrasted them with cash-crop areas, which in comparison were flourishing. However, it was precisely the impact of colonialism which left so many villages deserted and starving, because the able-bodied males had gone off to labour elsewhere. Any district deprived of its effective labouring population could not be expected to develop.

In South Africa and Rhodesia, the policy of establishing ‘native reserves’ was openly followed. Inside a reserve, the major means of production was the land. But the quantity and fertility of the land allocated were entirely inadequate to support the numbers of Africans who were driven in. The reserves were reservoirs of cheap labour, and dumping grounds for those who could not be accommodated within the money economy of the racist section of Africa.

In recent times, economists have been recognising in colonial and post-colonial Africa a pattern that has been termed ‘growth without development’. That phrase has now appeared as the title of books on Liberia and Ivory Coast. It means that goods and services of a certain type are on the increase. There may be more rubber and coffee exported; there may be more cars imported with the proceeds, and there may be more petrol stations built to service the cars. But the profits go abroad, and the economy becomes more and more a dependency of the metropole. In no African colony was there economic integration, or any provision for making the economy self-sustained and geared to its own local goals. Therefore, there was growth of the so-called ‘enclave’ import/export sector, but the only things which developed were dependency and underdevelopment.

A further revelation of growth without development under colonialism was the overdependence on one or two exports. The term ‘monoculture’ is used to describe those colonial economies which were centred around a single crop. Liberia (in the agricultural sector) was a monoculture dependent on rubber, Gold Coast on cocoa, Dahomey and South-east Tanganikya on sisal, Uganda on cotton. In Senegal and Gambia groundnuts accounted for 85% to 90% of the money earnings. In effect, two African colonies were told to grow nothing but peanuts! Every farming people have a staple food, plus a variety of other supplements. Historians, agronomists, and botanists have all contributed to showing the great variety of such foods within the pre-colonial African economy. There were numerous crops which were domesticated within the African continent; there were several wild food species (notably fruits) and Africans had shown no conservatism in adopting useful food plants of Asia or American origin. Diversified agriculture was within the African tradition. Monoculture was a colonialist invention.

There was nothing ‘natural’ about monoculture. It was a consequence of imperialist requirements and machinations, extending into areas that were politically independent in name. Monoculture was a characteristic of regions falling under imperialist domination. Certain countries in Latin America such as Costa Rica and Guatemala were forced by United States capitalist firms to concentrate on growing bananas that they were contemptuously known as ‘banana republics’. In Africa, this concentration on one or two cash-crops for sale abroad had many harmful effects. Sometimes, cash-crops were grown to the exclusion of staple foods - thus causing famines. For instance, in Gambia rice-farming was popular before the colonial era, but so much of the best land was transferred to groundnuts that rice had to be imported on a large scale to try and counter the fact that famine was becoming endemic. In Asante, concentration on cocoa raised fears of famine in a region previously famous for yams and other foodstuff.

The factor of dependency made its impact felt in every aspect of the life of the colonies; it can be regarded as the crowning vice among the negative social, political and economic consequences of colonialism in Africa, being primarily responsible for the perpetuation of the colonial relationship into the epoch that is called neo-colonialism.

Finally, attention must be drawn to one of the most important consequences of colonialism on African development, and that is the stunting effect on Africans as a physical species. Colonialism created conditions which led not just to periodic famine, but to chronic undernourishment, malnutrition and deterioration in the physique of the African people. If such a statement sounds wildly extravagant, it is only because bourgeois propaganda has conditioned even Africans to believe that malnutrition and starvation were the natural lot of Africans from time immemorial. A black child with transparent rib-case, huge head, bloated stomach, protruding eyes, and twigs as arms and legs was the favourite poster of the large British charitable operation known as Oxfam. The poster represented a case of Kwashiorkor - extreme malignant malnutrition. Oxfam called upon the people of Europe to save starving African and Asian children from Kwashiorkor and such ills. Oxfam never bothered their consciences by telling them that capitalism and colonialism created
THE SUGAR STORY OF BRITISH GUIANA

Excerpts from book "The Booker Story" by Judy Slinn and Jennifer Tanburn

To the explorers of the late sixteenth century, who sailed round its coast, Guiana, the 'land of many waters', was fabled as the empire in whose hinterland was to be found the golden city of El Dorado. For some, like Sir Walter Raleigh, the search for El Dorado became an obsession.

The Booker story starts in the early years of the nineteenth century when two adventurous young men, Josias Booker and his younger brother George, left Liverpool bound for the West Indies.

Through the nineteenth century the Booker brothers, their descendants and their associates created merchanting businesses in Liverpool and became owners and managers of sugar plantations in British Guiana. The connections they forged with the colony proved to be of exceptional longevity, providing the core of Booker's business for more than 150 years.

At that time the supplies of raw cotton were imported at Liverpool and other Lancashire ports from the West Indian colonies, where the plantation system, using the labour of slaves transported from Africa, had been developed.

In the late eighteenth century many British planters moved to Guiana from the Caribbean islands, which had been settled for a century or more and where the soil was wearing out after many years of intensive cultivation. The planters took their capital and their slaves with them. By 1813, in Demerara, (British Guiana) 95 per cent of the white settlers were British, their plantations concentrated on the coastal strip, which had rich, alluvial clay soil. For two brief and glorious decades, starting in the 1790s, Guiana became the largest cotton-producer in the world, as well as the greatest coffee grower in the British colonies. Coffee production peaked in 1810 and then declined sharply as others, more competitive suppliers, seized the market. Over the next two decades American cotton supplanted that of the West Indies and sugar became the main crop on the plantations of British Guiana.

Until the time of the crusades, sugar was unknown in the western world, and Europeans used honey as their sweetening agent. Their introduction to sugar, which was grown and produced in the Muslim world, soon created a demand for it.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of sugar production has always been its labour-intensive nature. Planting and weeding the canes were operations that did not lend themselves easily to mechanisation; harvesting of the very bulky and heavy canes required many workers. So too did the crushing of the canes, followed by the extraction process which produced the sugar. In the right climate, cane could be grown all year round, with more than one harvest; slave labour, with its instant availability on the plantation, was considered to be essential.

In 1838 the first East Indian immigrants were brought to British Guiana under a scheme initiated by John Gladstone and the Moss family, who were large plantation owners.

The system of indentured labour, seen in time to be as harsh as that of slavery, brought more than 300,000 East Indians into British Guiana before it was ended in 1917. In the short term, particularly in the 1850s and the 1860s, it provided labour for the plantations and heralded a period of relative prosperity for the colony's sugar industry. From this Booker Bros & Co and the founders of the business benefitted in the last decade of their lives.

In the 1850s and early 1860s George Booker spent periods of time at home in Liverpool. He became a director of the Royal Insurance Company. He had new partners to run his business in the colony. In 1846 John McConnell, who had been working in George Booker's Liverpool office since 1837, journeyed to Georgetown to join the business there.

Sugar production was increasing in the colony and with its merchanting and shipping business, wholesaling and retailing operations, co operative and plantations, Booker's business interest in Liverpool and British Guiana were considerable. And members of the second generation of the Booker family, the sons of Josias, were well positioned to carry it on.

The concentration of plantation ownership in fewer hands was a noticeable trend in the last decade of the nineteenth century. The largest group by 1870 was the Colonial Company but by the end of decade they had been overtaken in size by the partnership known under various names at this time and dominated by Quintin Hogg. It was later to be known as Curtis Campbell & Co and became part of Booker in 1939.

Writing from Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), which he was visiting in 1880, Quintin Hogg, founder of the Polytechnic in Regent Street, London, told his brother James that he would much prefer to live in Demerara. A letter written on one of his earlier visits to Georgetown indicates how attractive he found British Guiana

I never can understand how some people speak of Demerara as an ugly place; I always look upon it as one of the loveliest places I have ever seen: there is wealth...
and luxuriance in the natural objects which surround you which more than make up for the absent hills.

The Colonial Bank had been founded in 1837 to operate in the West Indies and, with the British Guiana Bank, which was established in Georgetown in the same year, it represented banking in the colony.

Through the 1890s, a difficult decade for the sugar industry in British Guiana, these two young men ran the business they had inherited in London, Liverpool and Georgetown. In 1900 the three firms were formally merged and private company, Booker Brothers, McConnell & Company was formed. Its capital was £500,000.

The only picture of the business in the year before the outbreak of the First World War covers the financial year which ran from June 1906 to 1907. The papers which survive provide a very detailed breakdown of a year’s trading in British Guiana and were obviously part of a series sent regularly to the offices in London and Liverpool. The detail and the explanations of every change suggest that the home offices ran a tight ship and that neither the distance nor the limited media of communication available diminished their control of the business. From them we can see that in Georgetown there were 12 departments, each dealing with a different activity; the table below, showing the value of their sales in 1906 - 7 (in Guiana dollars) gives some indication of the relative size of the turnover of each department.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>TURNOVER$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Branch store wholesale</td>
<td>176,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal</td>
<td>58,779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branch store retail</td>
<td>92,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandlery</td>
<td>54,057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery wholesale</td>
<td>112,407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estate supplies</td>
<td>395,949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery retail</td>
<td>103,828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lumber</td>
<td>39,294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardware</td>
<td>86,819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugee</td>
<td>54,518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperage</td>
<td>76,061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>126,222</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The company continued to ship supplies of greenheart timber to Liverpool and it had a reasonable business in the sale of rice. The rice industry had always been seen as a competitor by the sugar industry (because it used water and labour, both scarce resources), and attempts to establish rice-growing in Guiana in the mid-nineteenth century had failed. But in the late 1880s and 90s the crop became established and production increased rapidly in the early years of the twentieth century, so that by 1905 the colony was self-sufficient in rice.

Both Josias and George Booker had owned ships plying between Liverpool and Georgetown in the first half of the nineteenth century. Over the second half of the century the firm continued to run the direct service between Liverpool and Georgetown which, from 1867, was known as the Liverpool line.

Evidence from the 1906 - 7 accounts suggests that at that time the company owned one steamship, the SS Walney, which was valued at $6,000. It also owned a number of schooners and barges, which were used along the colony's coast - the sea provided the easiest route between Georgetown and New Amsterdam - and between the islands. Punts were still used on the plantations. In that year, too, a single-screw steamship, named the Imataka, was built for it in Middlesbrough. The following year the company bought the Castillian Prince, a similar-sized steamship built in 1893; it was renamed by the Booker Line as the Amakura. In 1913 the Grenada, built in Glasgow in 1896, was bought and renamed the Arakaka. The Booker Line was run from the company's Liverpool office. Most of the company's product shipments - timber, sugar and rum - went to Liverpool, as well as its passengers.

There was daily liaison between the Liverpool and London offices. London was responsible for selling the produce shipped into Liverpool, as well as for the buying...
of all the merchandise which would be shipped out from the port, ranging from machinery and supplies for the sugar estates to the stocks required for the Georgetown stores. The London office, situated in Mincing Lane, home to Britain's commodity markets, was perhaps the more prestigious of the two offices since it was the base of company chairman Arthur (A J) McConnell.

There were two significant changes in 1917, which were to affect the sugar estates after the war ended. The first of these was the reconstruction of the sugar estates into one company, Booker's Sugar Estates Ltd, which became a wholly owned subsidiary of Booker Bro, McConnell & Co. The second had more far-reaching consequences. Criticism and condemnation of the system of indentured labour, which had brought thousands of Indians across the world, had been growing for years. As national pride grew in India, such a system could no longer be tolerated. In 1917 the government of India passed legislation forbidding the further recruitment of indentured labour and providing for the end of all existing indentures in 1920.

With the end of the war in 1918 came an economic boom, and sugar prices worldwide, like those of other commodities, rose rapidly. Production of sugar dropped in the 1920s, although it continued to be the colony's major export. Writing in 1919, James Rodway posed the question that had existed since the 1818s: "Can we afford to give up the plantations and let Demerara sugar disappear from the world's market?" His answer, hardly surprising from a keen apologist for the industry, was: "This is a question that only admits of an emphatic "No! We can have gold, diamonds, and bauxite, balata (a latex-like sap which could be processed into rubber-like gum), rice and coconuts and encourage these industries in every possible way but we still want our sugar.'

The retailing side of the business in the colony had run a separate drug store business since 1911, when it took over the supply of medicines to hospitals on the sugar estates. All Booker's products were imported and although no record of them has survived, we can safely assume that the range included such stalwarts as aspirin and many indigestion remedies then available. No doubt the stores also sold many popular patent medicines, such as Beecham's pills, liver pills and bile beans. A wide range of medicinal remedies was manufactured and sold without prescription in those days.

One of the most successful products was lime rum, which sold as Limacol and used local ingredients, but others had to be imported. A tonic cough remedy, Ferrol Compound, was very popular and in 1931 Booker acquired the world rights to it outside North America. The company soon found there was a demand for products such as Ferrol and Limacol in other parts of the West Indies and supplying the islands' markets across the Caribbean led to the building of an export business.

Drug manufacturing was not the only part of the Booker business to look outside British Guiana between wars. In 1928 Booker acquired the retailing business of Stephens Ltd and W C Ross & Co in Trinidad. Booker's chief accountant in the colony, E R Boon, was sent to make the acquisition and he stayed on in Trinidad as managing director of Stephens, whose Port of Spain department store was a local landmark.

The problems faced by the industry and the company in British Guiana were common to all the sugar-producing countries of the West Indies. Pressure on the British government from the powerful West India Committee led to the appointment in 1929 of a Commission to investigate once again the West Indies sugar industry.

The commission visited British Guiana in November 1929 and Michael Caine's letter home offer a less than enticing view of the country and the sugar industry at that time. Writing to his wife on 21 November 1929, after visits to sugar estates, he said: "As employers do everywhere, they complain here of shortage of labour because the people don't want to work. In the first place nobody would want to work in the conditions here; in the second, the labourers have to cultivate plots of their own and the women have to do washing etc so they can't work every single day; factories themselves are grossly overmanned. Even I could see lots of things done by hand which machines could do better and cleaner...The Demerara planters are simply living in the slave tradition. They organize their estates and factories on the assumption of abundant labour at no cost and then blame the labourers' laziness when they don't get it. Barbados (already visited by the Commission) was as bad, of course."

In British Guiana in the 1930s, Jock Campbell recalled many years later: "There was a God-given right to be arrogant toward black and brown men, and to run the show, and to get what pickings you could if you were sugar estate manager, or profits if you were an owner."

A small investment in gold concessions in the colony was made and Booker began to work more closely with Curtis Campbell and other sugar producers to spread the costs of providing the limited medical and welfare services that had been running in the company. Twenty years later he wrote: "I was as appalled as I was fascinated by the sugar industry there. Material conditions were bad - very low wages, deplorable housing and no amenities. But as bad - and even more frightening - were the moral
brought together, gave him the idea for the product. He was anxious to find a substitute for bay rum, which was expensive, and he had been asked for a cheap sponging lotion that could be used instead of eau de cologne.

Some months of experiment followed, resulting in the creation and introduction of the lotion 'lime rum'. It was so popular that cheap imitations were soon introduced and the name Limacol was chosen and registered as a Booker trademark to protect Adamson's product and its market. Limacol sold widely across the Caribbean and further afield; in the 1930s it was advertised and on sale in Britain.

The reorganisation and expansion of the Booker business took place in a rapidly changing political context. The development of nationalism in the countries that made up the British empire had led to demands for independence before the war. Indian independence, achieved in 1947 marked the end of the empire while at the same time the concept of the Commonwealth began to develop. In the 1950s and the 1960s, the Commonwealth became the major export market for British manufacturers and was targeted by many businessmen as their most favoured area of investment. Combined with moves towards self-government in British colonial countries in Africa and the West Indies, the Colonial Office, under the direction of Arthur Creech Jones, "followed a bold and vigorous policy of colonial development" in the post-war years. With the encouragement of the Colonial Office and under the direction of Jock Campbell, this was Booker's policy in British Guiana through the 1950s and the 1960s. Combined with the personality, philosophy and commitment of Jock Campbell, it proved to be remarkably successful. The company's reputation, as an exploiter of national resources and people, gave way to one of a benign assistant at the birth and through the infancy of a new nation. At the same time, the company's directors knew that the day would come when they would have to leave British Guiana.

In 1945 Campbell made his first post-war visit to British Guiana. He found that little had improved since the 1930s, except - and it was a significant exception - the price of sugar. "The business was", he said many years later, "in total disarray...Nobody knew what was making a profit or what was making a loss". Management skills were conspicuous by their absence and the running of what was a large and diverse enterprise in the colony was characterised by "total amateurishness". Booker was a "very, very unpopular company inside as well as outside British Guiana" and "even with the colonial authorities". It was a bleak picture. Campbell considered, albeit briefly, whether the company should leave, selling its assets there but, as he later recalled, "...we'd got our staff and we'd got our employees (30,000 of them) and we were almost the only visible means of support of the country at that time. So I came to the conclusion that one really couldn't simply contract out at that stage. And then it seemed that one had got to get it right."

The company also began to recruit new managers. A significant appointment was that of David Powell who joined in 1947. It proved, however, difficult to find and recruit managers who could cope with the diverse business that made up Booker.

It was mainly concerned with exporting greenheart (also called bebeeru, a dark-green durable wood from the lauraceous tree, which grows in tropical climates). The outcome however, was not a success and in 1949 Booker took the opportunity to sell the timber business to the Colonial Development Corporation. To help sell the timber business to the Colonial Development Corporation. In the same year the company bought United Rum Shippers Ltd, merging it with Booker's existing rum distribution business to create United Rum Merchants.

The new Booker organisation, based on the concept of a large number of small subsidiary companies, which were also in time to become profit centres, was formally implemented in January 1951. In the early 1950s there were 54 companies but the number increased as Booker diversified and grew. By 1962 the Booker group was made up of 108 companies, active in 11 countries.

The changes did not, initially at least, result in a proliferation of senior management jobs, since many of the senior managers held such positions in a number of companies. They did result, however, beneficially if not intentionally, in the creation of more responsible managerial jobs in British Guiana. Initially these tended to go to white settlers and expatriates but, following the introduction of management and technical training schemes in 1954, entry to which was by open examination, they were increasingly taken by the people of British Guiana. Eventually, they provided a route for Guianisation of the businesses and much needed training opportunity for the colony. The number of expatriates employed by Booker began to fall in the 1950s, a trend which accelerated in the 1960s.

In the early 1950s most of British's former colonies were putting in place plans for developing self-government, leading to independence. In British Guiana a new constitution was introduced in 1953 and, in
The story of the development of Booker's sugar estates and of the sugar industry in British Guiana over the 20 years 1945 to 1967 falls broadly into three phases. The first part of these was the immediate post-war period, dominated by two imperative objectives: the need to secure more stable and remunerative price for sugar. The Commonwealth Sugar Agreement (CSA), finally settled late 1951, largely achieved the second objective, ensuring that there would be no return to the "cruel and disastrous" years of low prices between the wars. The second period began as the CSA came into effect. By putting a premium on efficient production, it paved the way for more than a decade of investment to increase productivity in cane cultivation and sugar manufacture. All this took place, however, in an environment of political instability in British Guiana which manifested itself in considerable unrest. The use of the strike as a political weapon inevitably had an impact on sugar output, greater in some years than in others. In the third period, from the mid to late 1960s, the political climate became less hostile and more stable. Despite the uncertainty and the difficulties, by the time British Guiana achieved independence in 1966 Booker had created a modernised, efficient and productive sugar industry.

The emergence and continuation of a monocultural system in British Guiana had long been attributed to the dominant and self-perpetuating influence of the sugar planters. It was argued that they had used their influence to block attempts to grow other crops, fearing these would compete for scarce resources, particularly labour and water required for the sugar crop.

Since early in the nineteenth century Booker had owned and run its own ships. These fell into two groups, firstly a small coastal fleet in British Guiana itself and, secondly the ocean-going liners which plied between Liverpool and Georgetown. These took the company's sugar and other products back to Britain and brought out an immense variety of supplies needed both on the sugar estates and by the people living in the colony.

There were three subsidiary companies. The first was Booker Line Ltd, running the cross-Atlantic service to British Guiana, the only shipping line ever to run such a direct service. While the usual cargo from Georgetown to Liverpool consisted of sugar, timber, rum, charcoal, hides and balata, the ships took much more varied cargo from Liverpool to Georgetown. This ranged from heavy machinery for the sugar estates and sulphate of ammonia, used as fertiliser in sugar growing, to anything and everything that a community of 400,000 people, with few local industries, might require. Booker people also travelled on the Booker line, either as short-term visitors or expatriates who travelled home to Britain and back again on more regular leaves in the 1950s than they had enjoyed before the war.

The second subsidiary was Booker Shipping (Demerara) Ltd., the company that owned and ran the group's local coastal shipping fleet. Finally, there was the Booker Shipping and Trading Company Ltd, which acted as a travel agency as well as a forwarding agent. It had offices in Liverpool and London as well as Georgetown and in 1946 took on agencies for three airlines, BOAC, BEA and British South American Airways.

In 1949, in one of its earliest post-war acquisitions, Booker bought United Rum Shippers Ltd (URS), later renamed and better known as United Rum Merchants (URM).

Until the Second World War the sugar industry, including Booker, had feared that any such development would damage its interests, particularly by taking that scarce resource, labour and had therefore opposed the development of other crops and non-agricultural industries.

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There were two main manufacturing units Booker's Manufacturing Drug Company Ltd and the printing business, B G Lithographic Company Ltd.

Early in the nineteenth century the Booker family had established themselves as shopkeepers in British Guiana and, in the first half of the twentieth century, Booker's retailing operations in the Caribbean had not only expanded there but also extended to Trinidad. The merger of Curtis Campbell with Booker McCandless in 1939 brought all these into the group retailing operations in central Africa, spread over two British colonies, North Rhodesia and Nyasaland, as well as merchanting business in London which supplied machinery and general merchandise to countries in Africa, India and the Far East.

In the late 1960s Booker's Sugar Estate in Guyana accounted for 80 percent of the country's sugar production, a significant and highly visible part of the national economy. For Booker, however, the group's assets were similarly at risk - tropical agriculture was hazardous. Slight changes in the weather, disease or pests and the volatility of world commodity prices could individually or in combination reduce profitability. To reduce Booker's dependence on tropical agriculture, therefore, the company looked to invest in businesses in Britain or in the more developed countries of the Commonwealth such as Canada.
At a meeting on 12th February 1976, Michael Caine, by now Booker's vice-chairman and chief executive, and L F S Burnham, Prime Minister of Guyana, agreed that discussions should begin soon on the acquisition by government of all the Booker interests in Guyana. By the terms of the agreement signed on 25 May 1976, the Guyanese government acquired 21 companies (eight sugar companies, 10 non-sugar companies and Booker's shareholdings in Guyana Distilleries Ltd, Demerara Sugar Terminals Ltd and Guyana Stockfeeds Ltd) at a price of $102.5 million. Outstanding liabilities, including the deferred payments of the sugar levy, reduced this to $65 million. Of this $8.5 million was to be paid to Booker in cash on vesting day (26 May), while the balance was to be paid, with interest, over a 20-year period. Four annual payments of $7 million were to be made in the years 1977 to 1980, the remainder to be transferred in annual instalments over the next 16 years. A further and separate payment was agreed for the purchase of two coastal freighters and 15 trawlers from Booker.

By the early 1950s, Booker was looking for opportunities outside the Caribbean and central Africa and turned its attention to Canada and to the UK.

Booker entered food distribution in the UK in 1957 by buying a 75 percent interest in Alfred Button & Sons Limited, wholesale and retail grocers. This was three years after the start of the Canadian venture.

Engineering achievements

In sugar machinery:

- two new cane sugar factories in Tanzania and for the Mumias Sugar Company in Kenya
- a new factory for El Salvador
- shipments of equipment to the Philippines and El Salvador
- projects in Iran, Indonesia and Venezuela.

In fluid handling:

- SPP pumps for oil production platforms in the Brent, Auk and Argyll fields in the North Sea and for installations in the Middle East
- irrigation equipment for Cuba
- water filtration plants for deep-sea oil production rigs by Hero in Brazil for the fast-growing oil, gas and steel industries.

In mechanical handling:

- an ash disposal installation for the Drax power station.
- a materials-handling product for the British Steel Corporation at Redcar.

Engineering businesses bought by Booker

- 1975 = 8
- 1976 = 7
- 1978 = 4
- 1979 = 6
- 1980 = 1
- 1981 = 3
- 1982 = 1

Booker's non-sugar interests in the Caribbean

In Guyana:

- Booker's Store - retail department store in Georgetown (including supermarket and cold store)
- Kodak Colour Processing Laboratory
- Booker's Garage (agents for British Leyland and Mazda)
- Davson's Agencies - consumer goods
- Booker's Wholesale - consumer goods
- Carb Advertising - advertising agency
- Guyana Lithographic - general litho and letterpress printer with a number of...
government contracts

Guyana stockfeeds - animal-foods producer (mainly poultry)

Guyana Seafoods - trawling and shrimp processing.

In Trinidad:

Stephens & Ross - two department stores

Ross Drug - pharmacies

Ross Wholesale - pharmaceutical wholesale

Ross Agencies (from 1975) - consumer goods agencies

Booker-BDH (owned 50 percent Booker, 50 percent Glaxo):

- drug manufacturing in Guyana, Trinidad and Jamaica. By 1976 Jamaica plant closed, Guyana specialised in pharmaceuticals (prescription and over-the-counter), Trinidad specialised in cosmetics manufacturing, including Yardley’s range of products.

Booker moved into health foods and pharmacies in the UK on 1 January 1970 with the purchase of two businesses - Associated Health Foods and Kingswood (Chemists). Both became part of the UK shopkeeping division. The health business were separated from the food distribution division in January 1979 and became the health products trading division.

In April 1979 it comprised Booker Health Foods, with 134 retail outlets, two wholesale depots and three manufacturing units in the UK, plus Newman Turner publishing; Booker Pharmaceutical, with 105 retail outlets, two wholesale depots and one manufacturing unit in the UK; in the USA, American Dietaids, with two manufacturing units in Puerto Rico; and via the minority investment in PLNP, a packing facility in Torrance, California; and finally, Health Supply Centre, with 19 retail outlets in Canada.

By the early 1960s, Booker knew that sooner or later it would have to get out of producing sugar on its own behalf in countries such as Guiana. With its accumulated skills, an obvious option for the future was to develop sugar production on behalf of others. This would obviate the need to make large investments in developing countries - a small shareholding and a management contract was seen as ideal.

The next defining step was taken in 1980, when Booker purchased 45 percent of IBEC, the International Basic Economy Corporation of the US, from the Rockefeller family. Booker’s idea was to create a broadly-based, high-technology agricultural company with roots in the USA and the UK, and an extensive involvement in the developing world. IBEC took Booker into chicken and turkey genetics, as well as strongly into the USA.

Snapshot of the business at the start of 1994

Booker was now overwhelmingly a UK business with nearly two-thirds of 1993’s operating profits of £104.7 million coming from food wholesaling and food service.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1993 Operating profit*</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By region</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other overseas</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By type of business</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food wholesaling</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food service</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK agribusiness</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US agribusiness</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepared food **</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish processing**</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On the day Booker’s Annual Results were published, 25 May 2000, it was announced that Iceland’s plc had made an agreed £324 million all-share bid for Booker. The offer was also described as an £843 million merger of the two businesses. This created a £6 billion buying force in the food business which, in Stuart Rose’s view, gave it the size to order food as cheaply as Tesco and Sainsbury.

The two businesses would buy together, but be run separately. The offer valued Booker shares at 150p. Prior to their recovery, they had languished at 45p.

That was how Booker ended its existence as an independent public company and it is thus the end of this story, which started with the Josias Booker and his brothers in the early nineteenth century. However, the Booker name not only survives in Booker Cash & Carry (greater part of Iceland) but also in Booker Tate (now owned from South Africa, but still developing and managing sugar operations), and the eponymous literary prize. But the legacy and achievements of Booker were much larger than these.

**SUGAR-ESTATE BOY**

*by Peter Lauchmonen Kempadoo*

I was born at Port Mourant, a sugar plantation owned and managed by the British firm of Booker Bros, on the Courantyne Coast of British Guiana; and spent my first twenty years there.

All the hundreds of plantation families lived in two settlement areas. One was called the ‘nigger-yard’ (where obviously African slaves were put to live in days long gone by); the other ‘boundyard’ - where the once-bonded Indian ‘coolies’ lived. (The British estate staff had special houses on a built-up site.)

The sugar-cane fields were about half a mile to the back of the settlement areas. There were wide open trenches (canals) that flowed through the settlement areas: really drainage trenches that led to a pump on the water-side that pumped the excess water into the Atlantic Ocean. And secondary trenches that led into the main drainage trenches.

The only toilet facilities to these wretchedly poor range-houses were latrines: built over the secondary trenches; so all the human faeces found their way through open-and-shut sluice gates into the drainage trenches - with the consequent result that in the heavy rainy season, when these sluices were kept closed to give priority to the drainage of the canefields, the human settlement areas, especially boundyard became severely flooded indeed - with human excreta floating about.

My father was the chaffeur to the manager, earning $7 a week (less than £1.50) which was - even for those days seventy years ago - a paltry amount to up-keep a family of five children!

Of course, Bookers did not provide any schools for the thousands of children of the plantation workers. There were two primary schools run by churches: one by the Anglicans (C of E), the other by the Roman Catholics. But no high schools. So if you wanted to go beyond primary school education you had to pay someone to teach you privately: in an abandoned mule stable which we cleared of the droppings left by the animals, renaming it proudly The Port Mourant High School.

I must have been a fairly precocious child, because at the age of twelve (instead of the usual 15 years those days!) I was ready to have some high school education - with my parents not being able to pay for it!

So on a Friday afternoon, after school, I’d borrow my uncle’s donkey-cart and drive further up the coast to a coconut plantation some seven miles away where there was someone who made coconut oil in good quantities. I would buy a drum of oil in readiness to serve it to customers over the week-end.

This was fairly okay in the dry season; but come the wet season I had to trek through settlement areas, with flood water up to my thighs.

The estate range-houses had their kitchens at ground floor level: and the only way in the rainy season to keep out floating excreta was to have the kitchen doors fully shut. But since customers had to open their kitchen doors for me to deliver their pints of coconut oil, they had to keep their coconut pointer brooms on the ready to sweep out the floating filth from their kitchens.

Such housing arrangements remained for generations - until Cheddie Jagan, a Port Mourant boy - son of a plantation driver - came back to the country - after studying dentistry abroad, and started his political life, agitating to have boundyard closed and people living there moved to other more suitable sites.
But until then, such inhuman conditions had to be endured on our sugar estate! And for quite a few generations of plantation workers before my time in fact!

Incidentally, as a footnote, I would like to mention that in those plantation days, one was not allowed by the British authorities to have your father's surname unless you were baptised into the Christian Church. My father who was registered at birth as Lauchmonen was only allowed to take on his father’s surname and be known as James Kempadoo at his baptism into christianity at the age of 18!

I remember teaching several Indian boys in primary school, with the common name of Isaac. They became registered as Isaac, number 1; Isaac no. 2; Isaac no. 3, and so on - down the line!

Excerpts from:

**WHOSE GOLD? Geest and the Banana Trade**

Latin America Bureau (Research & Action) Ltd.

A major United Nations study shows that for the world banana trade taken as a whole, about 11p of every £1 you pay in shops (in countries in the North) for bananas goes to the countries which grow and export them. The other 89p goes to the foreign companies based in the countries which import them. In 1971, out of total sales valued at US$2,114 millions, the producing countries received approximately US$245 millions.

The basic information from which this calculation is made is incomplete and in some cases inaccurate. However, it is fairly certain that the broad conclusions are correct.

(Adapted from Green Gold: Bananas & Dependency in the Eastern Caribbean, Latin American Bureau, 1987)

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**HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?**

**A Brief History of the Windward Islands**

For thousands of years people have lived on the Windward islands....Dominica, Martinique, St Lucia, St Vincent, The Grenadines, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago. The original inhabitants were the Arawaks who were followed by the Caribs.

In 1492 Christopher Columbus led his soldiers to the Caribbean for the second time to claim the Windward islands for the king of Spain. The Carib people fought hard against the invaders. The Spanish were defeated and moved on to settle in larger islands of the Caribbean.

France and Britain were jealous of Spain for taking gold, tobacco and spices from the Caribbean. They fought between themselves and with the Caribs over the Windward islands. Eventually Britain claimed Dominica, Grenada and St Vincent in 1763, and St Lucia in 1814.

Some surviving Caribs were forced to work on the plantations that the Europeans set up. These large farms produced sugar which was sent to Europe. Although some poor people from Britain and other parts of Europe already worked on the plantations, the owners needed more workers to grow the sugar (canes). They brought millions of Africans to the Caribbean to work as slaves.

The plantation owners and the Europeans traders grew wealthy.

The slaves suffered terrible hardship. Over the years, the slaves fought for their freedom. Some deliberately destroyed the crops so that the Europeans would lose money.

In the end it became too expensive for the plantation owners to continue the system of slavery. Also, many people in Europe thought slavery was cruel and unjust. In the 1830’s slavery was abolished. Most slaves left the plantations and farmed small plots of land.

The plantation owners then brought people from India and China to work on their farms. These people were called "indentured labourers" (impolitely called "coolies").

They agreed to work for a fixed length of time in return for wages or a small piece of land. In many ways they were no better off than the slaves had been.

There’s no visible ball-and-chain but the invisible one weighs just as heavily... The people who worked the plantations were still very poor, Unrest grew.

In the 1930’s there were uprisings, protests and strikes. Trade unions demanded minimum wages, shorter working hours, proper education and an end to colonial government.

Europe had begun to produce its own sugar from sugar beet. This meant it did not need as much sugar from the Caribbean as before. The British government believed the Windward islands needed a new export crop.

Bananas were chosen because most large and small farmers could grow them.
In 1953 a British company Geest was awarded a contract to buy all the bananas grown in the Windward islands. The British government also put a tax on bananas coming into Britain from other countries.

Geest's turnover grew from £4 million in 1950 to £372 million in 1985. Geest could afford to go into new areas, like food processing, and a fleet of lorries and warehouses and ripening centres around Britain.

In 1986 shares in the company were sold on the stock exchange. Previously the company was owned by the Geest family. New investors paid £32 million for their slice of the company. The Geest family still own more than half the shares.

In the 1970's the Windward islands became politically independent of Britain. However life had improved little for most of the people. Unlike Geest, the islands have not made much profit from the banana trade. They are still dependent on bananas.

Geest (in Britain) becomes a public company

In November 1986 Geest advertised the sale of shares in the company. This meant that individuals and organisations could invest money in Geest and share in its profits. In doing this Geest changed from being a private to a public company. In order to attract investors, the company published an Offer for Sale. This described Geest's activities.

Geest and Windward Island Bananas

In the Offer for Sale, Geest described its legal agreements with the Windward Island Banana Growers Associations. These Associations represent the local farmers. The agreements state that Windward bananas can only be exported by Geest. If the Windward Islands grow enough, the company cannot buy and sell bananas from any other countries.

However, if the bananas are not of high quality or if, at any time, not enough grown for the company's needs, Geest are allowed to buy bananas from other countries. This happened after the hurricane in 1980 and Geest lost no profits by importing bananas from elsewhere for 10 months.

Selling Bananas in Britain

The Offer for Sale described the importance of fruit and vegetables:

The Fresh Produce Sector of its business accounted for sales of £338 million in 1985, which was 92% of the company's total turnover.

Over 77% of the Fresh Produce Sector's turnover in 1985 was fresh fruit, salads and exotics (fruit imported from different parts of the world)

Distribution in Britain

The Offer of Sale also explained:

Geest's supply to UK supermarkets. Sales of fresh produce to supermarkets between 1981 and 1985 grew by over 80%. In 1985 sales were worth £75.2 million.

Its marketing and distribution network in Britain. Geest's main marketing and distribution centres are at Spalding in Lincolnshire, Bellshill in Lanarkshire, and Maidstone in Kent. They also have 3 smaller bases in other parts of Britain. The distribution fleet of lorries can transport the produce at fixed temperatures.

Geest Employees in Britain

The table shows the numbers of people employed by Geest in Britain in 1984, 1985 and 1986

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1984</th>
<th>1985</th>
<th>1986</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fresh produce sector</td>
<td>3,047</td>
<td>3,188</td>
<td>3,051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food preparation</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horticulture sector</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other activities</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head office, administration and support staff</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3,797</td>
<td>3,939</td>
<td>4,076</td>
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</table>

source: Geest PLC Offer for Sale, 1986
This table shows the turnover and trading profits of the Geest company in 1984, 1985 and the half of 1986.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geest's turnover and (trading profits) - by sector - £'000</th>
<th>1984</th>
<th>1985</th>
<th>1986 (6 months)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fresh produce sector</td>
<td>302,094</td>
<td>338,471</td>
<td>199,873</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food preparation sector</td>
<td>7,516</td>
<td>8,267</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horticulture sector</td>
<td>9,502</td>
<td>8,882</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other activities</td>
<td>8,968</td>
<td>10,981</td>
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Source: Geest PLC Offer for sale, 1986

A Worker's View

Chris Lee of the Latin America Bureau spoke to one of the people who lost their job at Burnham about what it was like working for Geest, and what happened when the plant was closed.

"I worked for Geest for more than 10 years. I lost my job in 1986 when Geest closed down the ripening plant. 50 people used to work at the ripening centre. We were told that it was no longer profitable to only ripen and distribute bananas from Burnham. We were too small".

Burnham had a very good record though. Production was very good. Four months before the closure a man from high up in Geest came to tell everybody that there were going to be 'changes'.

It was left to the governor at the plant to read out a letter telling everyone about the closure. We weren't given a specific date.

Geest's attitude seemed to be "you're a pair of hands and you're expected to work". They hardly consulted us about anything. They changed the production line 3 times while I was there and never bothered to consult the people who worked on it. The changes didn't even improve things. People at the head office drew up plans and just sent them off to us in Burnham.

We had to fight for 7 years to get a sick scheme going. The office workers had a pension scheme but the hourly paid workers didn't. I was on £88 a week with a productivity bonus. We always got that, otherwise I couldn't have afforded to work there. Production per person was very high.

Very few people were offered jobs elsewhere in the company. As far as I can remember, only two office managers were relocated to Warminster and to Spalding. Most of the workforce lived locally. They offered one of the production workers a job in Luton. He was a banana ripener - very good at his job and had worked for Geest for 20 years. I don't know if he took the job but what with the cost of travelling he'd be really badly off. The closure has hit people hard".

Song of the Banana Man

(These four verses from The Song of the Banana Man, were written in 1952 by Evan Jones, a Jamaican. You will see that Evan has spelled many of the words as he would say them - or in other words, CREOLESE)

Touris, white man, wipin his face,
Met me in Golden Grove market place.

He looked at m'ol'clothes brown wid stain,
And soaked right through wid de Portlan rain

He cas his eye, turned up his nose,
He says, "You're a beggar man, I suppose?"
He says ‘Boy, get some occupation,
Be of some value to your nation.’

I said, ‘By God and dis big right han
You mus recognise a banana man.’

‘I leave m’yard early-morning time
And set m’foot to de mountain climb,
I ben m’back to de hot-sun toil
An m’cutlass rings on de stony soil,
Ploughin and weedin, diggin and plantin
Till Massa sun drop back o John Crow mountain,
Den home again in cool everin time,
Perhaps whistling dis likkle rhyme,
(sung) Praise God and m’big right han,
I will live and die a banana man.

Banana day is my special day
I cut my stems and I’m on m’way,
Load up de donkey, leave de lan,
Head down de hill to banana stan,
When de truck comes roun I take a ride
All de way down to de harbour side
Dat is de night, when you, touris man,
Would change your place wid a banana man,
Yes, by God, and m’big right han,
I will live an die a banana man.

So when you see dese old clothes brown wid stain,
And soaked right through wid de Portlan rain,
Don’t cas your eye nor turn your nose,
Don’t judge a man by his patchy clothes,
I’m a strong man, a proud man, an I am free
Free as dese mountains, free as dis sea,
I know myself, an I know my ways,
An will say wid pride to de end of my days.
(sung) Praise God an m’big right han
I will live an die a banana man.

Interview with:

**A BANANA WORKER IN ST. LUCIA (DEC 03)**

**INT:** Sembridge, My Brother, I want to ask you a few questions about banana growers in St Lucia: how they’re doing.

**BW:** Right now value of the banana in St Lucia really down because our government really have we
down. No matter who plant banana right now you wouldn’t make it because of our Prime Minister. He
really have St. Lucia down. Right now there are many farmers suffering because
each time they have to go and sell two boxes of bananas - they really have to it for 5 dollars. Sometimes we plant three or four acres of bananas and we wouldn't make it. Plenty farmers suffering because the government we have really put our country down. We don't have no power.

We don't have no hope, we have nobody to check for the farmers. The first government we had: he was charge of farmers. When S.L.P with Kenny Anthony, as Prime Minister take over from Ken Compton, then the farmers fell.

Farmers didn't use to suffer too much, but these days things really getting rough. And I say it is because of a Prime Minister.

**INT:** What sort of price they pay for farmers' bananas in St Lucia?

**BW:** Sometimes you get the weight. And even when they send money for you and what you ought to get you wouldn't get it.

**INT:** Why is that?

**BW:** Well, I'll say inside the house where the money does be - something is wrong. So right now farmers are suffering because of our Prime Minister. If you watch at St Lucia right now plenty farmers they running and they leaving all the bananas.

**INT:** So you're not getting the price?

**BW:** No, you wouldn't get the price. Right now there is someone passing out there on the road with a box of bananas which he would be paid $5 a box: this show how bananas get so down. A box of bananas should be $10. But right now somebody would even give $3 for a whole heap of bananas. That is big disrespect for the farmers.

**INT:** So little people don't stand a chance then?

**BW:** Well, the little people lives are suffering. The rich man always have things better. The poor man always have to stay down: the poor don't have nothing. They have plenty farmers that are poor people. They have to go and buy 2 bags of sulphate - on credit on their ticket. But when they think they go have something when they sell their bananas - they get nothing instead.

**INT:** How long do bananas take in the field before you reap?

**BW:** I'll say the banana will take almost 9 months to a year.

### COFFEE & BANANAS

*From Agenda 21 (international environmental organisation) poster:*

"Coffee is produced in tropical areas, mainly in countries of the developing world that tend to lose out in world trade systems.

Because of the domination of large corporations in world markets, farmers and growers are under increasing pressure to produce cash crops (such as coffee) for the industrialised nations

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Every £ you spend on most brands of coffee in the supermarket 50pence goes to the manufacturer, 33 pence to the supermarket, 10 pence to the plantation where the coffee was grown, and 7 pence to the person who picked the coffee bean."

Bananas: "Most of the world bananas - and an increasing proportion of Britain's - are grown on large plantations in Latin America.

The plantations are owned by large, often American, transnational corporations, hence the nickname 'dollar bananas.'

While these bananas are cheap for consumers, they carry huge social and environmental costs ."

*Interview with*

**BAUXITE WORKER IN GUYANA (Dec. 03)**

**INT:** David, you have worked within the Bauxite Industry. What was it like from the workers point of view.

**BW:** Well working within the industry many years ago was quite an achievement. But you see the bauxite Industry slump; so you find working in the industry now is not so challenging. As a matter of fact, the market price slump: the price has gone right down. So it's not a challenge any more. When you go to work you don't know if you're going to get another pay-day because you hear about retrenchment, retrenchment, everyday in the bauxite industry. Right now it is like living on a budget because the salary is so low it can't really do to maintain you for another week. Really to maintain you for another week you have to put in some extra hours - if it is there. And if it is not there you have to find some other ways and means to survive.

**INT:** Do they provide housing and all that kind of social benefits that are adequate for you all?
BW: Well, in the Bauxite Industry they don't provide housing. You see how the area is situated at BERMINE, you have to provide your own housing. Years ago at Kwakwani, they use to use these 'logie' houses. Then they abandon them. So you now have to provide housing for yourself; you have to build your own house. Life is pretty rough right now.

INT: I remember talking to workers in the mining industry in South Africa. They said things were so bad - they could not afford to get home more than once a year.

BW: Well you see in our bauxite industry your work is very close to where you’re living - just about 4 miles away - you can ride a bicycle and go to work or drive. Its only people from say the Courantyne Coast when they come down on the shift, they working, they don't go back home; sometimes till next week. You get somewhere you rent or you stop by some friend and then go back home on your day off.

INT: You earn enough to be able to come home and give your missus something good?

BW: If you travel everyday you cannot give your family something good. That's why you have to live at your friend for the week; because the transportation is so expensive.

INT: I remember talking to these people in South Africa: there were about 4 people living in a small room. But here they don't provide any kind of accommodation; What kind housing can you find in the area?

BW: You get a reasonable housing because you make it up to your own standard - how you want it: 3 - 4 bedroom house. Once you know the money is there!

INT: So you can take your family from town to where you are working?

BW: Yea, yea. You see most people at Everton are more like family men. But then if you're working in the mines area; the mines are so far away; from Everton to Kwakwani is some 140 miles and the transportation is really on the Berbice river by tug and barge. Roughly, you take about 24 hours to go and 24 hours to come back.

INT: I know in South Africa this has led to all sorts of family problems because your family is over there and you are here! Is it the same problem in Guyana?

BW: I don't think it is so much in Guyana with the family problems.

INT: But is the level of earnings high enough for you to keep your family back home in good condition.

BW: Well, not really. You find husbands and wife got to work to maintain the family. If the man alone work you cannot live a reasonable life.

INT: Not very different from South Africa in other words!

Excerpts from:

ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES FOR AFRICA

Coalition For Change (vol. 1) - 1990

Institute For African African Alternatives

Food First To remedy the injustice, and to put poor African countries on the path to economic and environmental rehabilitation and recovery, most aid, most efforts and most facilities should go to the rural people and rural development, with the primary objective of producing food. The objective of producing cash crops must be placed second. A successful return to the villages can only be attained when the quality of life in the rural countryside is better than in the squalid shanty-towns.

Free Market - Free to Destroy Economic and environmental rehabilitation demand stricter measures against the forces of the international 'free market' economy, which in the conditions of poor developing countries leads to destructive, often incalculable harm to life-support systems and social and economic infrastructures, and forces shattering poverty on millions of people particularly in rural areas and suburban shanty-towns.

Basic Needs - People's Needs Poor developing countries must evolve a new system of project evaluation: one that is holistic and forward-looking. Every development project should satisfy people's real economic, social and environmental needs. The poor should benefit from positive discrimination, to redress the negative discrimination they have been experiencing for so many decades.

Holistic development must ensure the means of survival: food, water and shelter, before advancing to higher aspirations. An approach to the environment as a unified, diverse totality must seek to open the eyes of those who destroy the
environment not only mean looking at all aspects of the issue at stake, but also means getting the priorities right. The top priority in Africa now is the need of rural people - especially women - for the means of survival.

Return to Positive Cultural Values A strong element in the conservation of the environment and the improvement of the quality of life of the African people is the preservation of indigenous cultural values. We should be proud of our excellent social and cultural traditions in housing, clothes and food; in self-help, cooperation and solidarity.

A true return to positive traditional values does not entail a nostalgic view of the past, nor an attempt to re-run it. On the contrary, it means catering for real human needs using local materials, tools and manpower.

Amalgamating Modern and Indigenous Education

Everywhere in Africa modern general school education is replacing the traditional indigenous educational systems, rather than supplementing them. The result is literate people who may know how to read books but do not know the ways of nature: people who are alien in their own surroundings, unable to maintain a harmonious relationship with the fauna and flora around them, to respect the balance of give and take. To obtain a modern education, rural children move to rural towns and from there to big towns and cities. By the time they have 'made it' to higher secondary school or colleges, they are so far up the social ladder that they do not want to go back to their villages.

People’s Participation - the Prerequisite for Development

It should be emphasised that the urgency of alleviating mass poverty and of increasing the welfare of the African people is rooted not simply in the humanistic or altruistic aspects of development. It is predicated, above all, on rational propositions that development has to be engineered and sustained by the people themselves through their full and active participation. Development should not be undertaken on behalf of a people; rather it should be the organic outcome of a society’s value system, its perceptions, its concerns and its endeavours. As such, to achieve and sustain development, it is necessary to ensure the education and training, health, well-being and vitality of the people so that they can participate fully and effectively in the development process.

Footnote by PLK:

I remember the heading of the very first article I wrote and published in the Daily Argosy, in Guiana - 1948 - that carried my by-line. It was entitled “Stopping The Exodus From The Countryside”; based on papers presented at a UNESCO conference in Brazil. Unfortunately, in spite of such warnings and pleadings over the years, very little attention has been given to improving noticeably rural life in most Third World countries - so the exodus continues till today!