The Problems of Africa
The Need for Ideological Reappraisal

Chief Obafemi Awolowo
(Chancellor, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria)
Contents

Welcome Statement by the Vice-Chancellor vi
Short Biography of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah ix
Inauguration Address by the Head of State xii

First Lecture: The Pre-Colonial Period 1
Second Lecture: The Period of Foreign Rule and Decolonization 17
Third Lecture: The Period of Independence and the Need for Reappraisal 35
Fourth Lecture: Ideological Reappraisal 52

Curriculum Vitae of Chief Obafemi Awolowo 73
Notes 76
THIRD LECTURE

The Period of Independence and Need for Reappraisal

I PERIOD OF INDEPENDENCE

A consideration of the fourth epoch of Africa's problems comes under what we have designated as 'The Period of Independence'. It is a momentous and exalting period, but it is also a most challenging period.

The attainment of independence from alien rule has always been, in all ages, an occasion of great fulfilment and rejoicing. It marks an end to political oppression, economic exploitation and human degradation, which are the essential characteristics of alien rule. It is a historical landmark which succeeding generations celebrate, year-in, year-out, without ceasing, as long as their country exists. Whilst the attainment of independence is an occasion of great fulfilment and rejoicing, it also presents an unparalleled challenge for self-reliance and greater fulfilsments. In the particular case of Africa, this unique challenge bears an overtone of imperativeness and urgency, and imports a multitude of new and complex problems which also demand urgent solutions.

During their campaign for independence, African leaders had made promises which had raised high hopes and expectations. They had pledged that, on the attainment of independence and sovereignty, they would be in a position:

1) to put an end to oligarchic oppression and capitalist exploitation;
2) to elevate the African from the morass of humiliation and indignity into which more that five hundred years of slavery and colonialism had kept him;
3) to usher in, for the masses of the people, a new era which would guarantee to them basic freedoms and the full enjoyment of the fruits that come from the products of their lands and labour.
The vast majority of the people to whom these promises were made were disease and ignorance ridden, lived in squalor and below subsistence level. They believed and trusted their leaders' words and the expectation of brighter days to come sustained their loyalty and patriotism throughout the pre-independence campaigns.

Whilst they lasted, the campaigns were not without opposition. Apart from the rear-guard activities of the Colonial Powers to frustrate agitation for self-government, there were strong and influential elements among Africans who were opposed to the immediate grant of independence. They, quite genuinely, held the view that Africans were not yet ready for the exertions which self-rule ipso facto imposed; they needed more time under tutelage to enable them to develop the qualities of life and the public sense of responsibility which the new dispensation would demand. In short, this class of Africans, together with their Colonial mentors, believed that the immediate grant of independence would only mean an exchange of foreign oppression for native tyranny. In reply the protagonists of immediate independence had argued, quite rightly, that freedom from foreign rule was man's natural, inherent and inalienable right, and was, therefore, not a negotiable issue; and that, in any case, borrowing the words of Indian leaders in a similar situation, bad self-rule was to be preferred to good alien rule.

In the circumstances, African leaders are, for a number of reasons, under obligation to fulfil promises which they voluntarily and solemnly made to the people, and to do so with a sense of urgency. Firstly, the opponents of the immediate grant of independence do not cease, after independence, to vent their spleen on the new African rulers. They lie in wait for such acts of commission or omission as would discredit African leaders, and justify their original opposition. Secondly, the masses who had participated in the operation of Positive Action have no knowledge, nor are they conscious, of the problems involved in bringing about the era of abundance and progress promised them by their leaders. They had hoped for quick results, and are impatient of any seeming delay. Thirdly, more and more of the masses are, as time marches swiftly on, becoming increasingly articulate as they become more and more educated and come closer and closer to the events occurring in other parts of the world. Fourthly, it is obvious for everyone to see that the African leadership class lost no time in giving themselves access to the enjoyment of all the good things of this life – affluence, personal advancement, power and all. The succession of African leaders to the power and privileges hitherto wielded and enjoyed by the agents of Colonial Powers is automatic. The indigenisation of posts in the public service, formerly held by Colonial Officers, was carried out with diligent dispatch. In the economic sector, the bulk of the activities hitherto engaged in by White men are rapidly passing into the hands of well-to-do Africans. The picture which emerges prominently after independence is that of a change of guards between the Colonial Powers and the new African rulers and their collaborators. In the face of all this, it is imperative and urgent that the leaders should initiate steps to redeem their promises, and make the masses of the people partake of some of the good things which are bestowed on the country on the advent of independence.

There can be no doubt at all that African leaders got their priority absolutely right when they insisted on immediate independence. Unless they were undisputed masters in their homes, they would never be in a position to determine the pattern and direction of their domestic and external affairs for the benefit of their own people. But, on the attainment of independence, a number of avoidable errors have been committed, hopes have been dashed and expectations have been dimmed.

In the first place, African leaders fail to make the most of some of the good parts of Africa's colonial heritage.

Since the dissolution of Ghana and other African Empires, an ethnic or multi-ethnic (that is a nation or multi-nation) State was an unknown political set-up in Africa until the Continent came under Colonial Rule. With the exception of the northern parts, every State in Africa today is a multi-ethnic or multi-nation entity. This is a useful colonial heritage. But to keep a State of this kind politically stable and its diverse peoples harmoniously united, a constitutional structure, entirely different in concept from that under which it was previously administered by the Colonial Power concerned, must be devised. But, from the interminable wrangling over constitution-making in practically all parts of Africa, it is clear that African leaders have failed to appreciate the essential peculiarities of this part of Africa's colonial heritage.

Regional organisations in different parts of Africa established for the purpose of cooperation in the fields of agriculture, transportation, currency, defence and the like, are some of the good things which Africa inherits from the Colonial Powers. But these organisations either have been completely dismantled in some parts of Africa since independence, or are only kept feebly alive in other parts. In doing this, African leaders have wantonly destroyed healthy and productive nuclei for rapid economic progress through inter-state cooperation. In this respect, African leaders may be likened to a person who wants to increase the length of a chain but begins by disengaging the existing strong links and breaking them.

In the second place, African leaders fail to appreciate the compulsive
role which heredity-and environment play in a man's unconscious motivations, tendencies and habits, be they physical or mental. So far as one can see, there is nothing in their actions to suggest that they have at any time taken the trouble to analyse and ascertain with objectivity the components of their heredity and the true nature of their environment. On the contrary, there is strong evidence that they feel ashamed of their past and are unreasonably sensitive about any reference to it.

But whether we like it or not, the truth is that Africans of today are creatures of unusual heredity and environment. For, in all the wide world, no Continent, no people, have been subjected to brutalisation and dehumanisation for so long and on such a terrible scale as Africa and her people had been. In any effort, therefore, to identify Africa's problems and to devise solutions for them, we must bear in mind the peculiar type of inhuman and degrading experiences to which our ancestors had been subjected for many centuries, and the genetic effects of these experiences on their successors.

Heredity is an acquired predisposition which is transmitted by the parents to their offspring. It can be controlled and sublimated; so can environmental influences. To control and sublimate them, they must be candidly recognised and acknowledged. But if they are not recognised, controlled and sublimated, man becomes an unconscious playing in the hands of blind psychological forces. It is because of African leaders' failure in this regard that they are so prone to a number of antics, rationalisations and projections, and to many public postures which are not defensible on objective rational grounds. For instance, as a result of suppressed feelings of inferiority they indulge in exhibitionism and a nauseating aping of the White man, especially in things that do not matter. Similarly they unconsciously project their own weaknesses and shortcomings to Africa's erstwhile colonial rulers by accusing them of non-colonialism, oblivious, in the process of their projection, of Lenin's dictum that 'there can be no exploiters if there are no exploitables'. Furthermore, they vie with one another in building new palaces, which they call state houses, for their personal aggrandisement, and embark on projects which are big and prestigious in all respects, but are uneconomic and unbenevolent to the people at large. Above all, they surround themselves with all the myth and paraphernalia of a divine potentate. They do all this in order to demonstrate to our former rulers that the Africans have at last arrived and can make it.

In the third place, the basic freedoms which had been denied Africans for upwards of five hundred years by the White people, and which African leaders have been promising to restore to their fellow men since the dawn of this century, are ruthlessly suppressed. The principles of democracy and the edifice of democratic practices, which had been solemnly enshrined and neatly erected in the various independence constitutions, are promptly demolished. Besides, as soon as an African leader accedes to power with the support of the people, he develops a superior but false estimation of himself. He views himself as Godsent, and as the wisest man in the land who must, as long as he lives, remain in power in order to ensure that heaven and hell do not collapse over the heads of the people of his country, by allowing any other of his countrymen, who are now considered by him as lesser than and inferior to himself, to succeed him. Even the elementary freedom of dissent, which was employed by the African leaders against the colonialists with devastating effect during the agitation for independence, is stifled. By means of all these acts of self-delusion and repression, substance is exchanged for glittering shadow, and the morale, the will and the enthusiasm of the people for great national endeavours are seriously eroded.

In the fourth place, African leaders also fail to appreciate the full impact of their affluent and extravagant living, and of the demonstration effects of happenings in other parts of the world, on the generality of their own people. The freedom, abundance and comforts which the latter had been made to believe would come to them with independence have been absent. Instead, a vast majority of them continue to toil and hew stones and wood with the self-same tools which were fashioned by their ancestors about 600 years B.C. As a result, the peasant classes remain as abject and impoverished as ever, and, in consequence, the whole of the economy suffers from secular stagnation.

These errors on the part of African leaders are enormous enough, and are readily exploited by Africa's enemies. But they are aggravated by events which were set in motion immediately before and after the attainment of independence. Independence normally means exposure to international politics, diplomacy and intrigue. Independent African States cannot, therefore, escape the inevitable concomitants of their new status. But, for them, independence has meant exposure to a good deal of international intrigue designed to subvert them and keep them in permanent economic bondage.

In this connection, it is apposite to emphasise that since their intercourse with Africa either as traders in slaves and other commodities, or as rulers, the White people had only one over-riding objective: to explore and exploit the natural, mineral and human resources of the Continent for their own exclusive benefit. If this could be done without colonisation, and without the establishment of military outposts, it would be so done. But since the motive forces which took them all the
way to Africa were greed and national self-interest, it became necessary, at a certain stage, for each of the competing groups to have exclusive control of a defined territory in Africa which could be explored and exploited without interference by other competitors and without threat of disturbance by the Africans themselves. It was to this end that Africa was carved and shared out among the Colonial Powers; it was to this same end that the Colonial Powers set up governments in areas assigned to their respective jurisdiction. If, however, economic exploitation of Africa could be pursued in some guise after its attainment of independence, it is better so. That would, as the saying goes, be plucking the goose with as little squawking as possible.

As we all know, World War II ended in 1945. Two years thereafter, India became independent. From the moment of that historic event, it became clear to all Colonial Powers that the game of holding down colonial territories was up. Nevertheless, if the Colonial Powers could act in concert, in a kind of joint economic venture, in the exploitation of Africa and other colonial territories, they would achieve the same objective as before, without incurring the odium of being stigmatised as colonialist oppressors and exploiters, and without the inevitable expense and labour which go with colonisation.

It is therefore significant that in 1948, a year after India's independence, two powerful White organisations emerged. They are the Organisation of American States and the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation. It is also significant that immediately after its formation, the latter received, from the United States, aid worth $11,000 million.

It would be wrong to maintain that the OEEC was formed by the sixteen European countries concerned with the sole purpose of embarking on joint exploitation of under-developed territories. At the close of World War II, Europe was almost prostrate economically, and the introduction of measures for quick recovery was a matter of urgent necessity. Nonetheless, it would be equally wrong to insist that a joint exploitation of African and other underdeveloped territories was not part of the incidental aim of the new organisation. In this respect, it is more a matter of passing interest that whilst the United States came quickly to the aid of Western Europe in its joint economic venture, through the Marshall Plan and other means, it did nothing to aid Russia which was its supreme ally during the War, but was an unrelenting critic of colonialism and capitalist exploitation. Nor was anything done, with the same sense of urgency, to aid the Colonial Territories who also made heavy sacrifices to win their masters' war. But of course, it is explicit in the Marshall Plan that European economic recovery was regarded as the only avenue to recovery and prosperity for Colonial peoples. Let us, in this connection, hear what George Marshall himself had to say on the point in a speech at Harvard on 5 June, 1947:

'It is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace. Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos . It would be neither fitting nor efficacious for this government to draw up unilaterally a program designed to place Europe on its feet economically. That is the business of the Europeans. The initiative, I think, must come from Europe. The role of this country should consist of friendly aid in the drafting of a European program and of later support of such a program so far as it may be practical for us to do so. The program should be a joint one, agreed to by a number of, if not all, European nations.'

A number of joint ventures similar to OEEC were formed between 1952 and 1961. Among them are:

1) European Coal and Steel Community in 1952;
2) European Free Trade Area in 1956;
3) European Economic Community in 1958;

The aims and objects of two of these organisations may be mentioned by way of illustration. The OEEC had sixteen foundation members, namely: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and the U.K. Western Germany and Spain joined later, whilst Canada and the United States were associate members. The aim of the OEEC was 'to coordinate the economies of countries receiving aid under the Marshall Plan.' The OECD, on the other hand, came into existence in 1961 and replaced the OEEC. There are eighteen foundation members, comprising the sixteen foundation members of the OEEC plus Canada and the United States. The aims and objects of the OECD are ostensibly wider than those of the OEEC. They are:

1) to encourage and coordinate the economic policies of member countries;
2) to contribute to the expansion of countries in a state of development, whether members or not;
3) to facilitate the development of world trade and settle trade problems.

The extent to which, and the faithfulness with which, the OEEC and its direct successor, the OECD, have contributed to the expansion of non-member countries in a state of development, and have facilitated the development of world trade, since 1948, are reflected in the following revealing figures. The percentage share of underdeveloped countries in the world export trade in 1950 was 30.9 per cent; it was 21 per cent in 1960 and 17.4 per cent in 1970. As against this, the developed countries had a share of 60.9 per cent in 1950, 67 per cent in 1960 and 72 per cent in 1970. In other words, whilst the share of poor countries, including Africa, in world export trade was on the decline, that of the rich countries which had, since 1948, embarked on the various joint ventures already mentioned, was on the increase.

The position of under-developed countries in international finance is equally bad. In this respect, the following passage from a special article on Kenya in African Development of May 1976 is of interest:

'The world debt situation is alarming. The debt of the non-oil-producing countries was only $15 billion in 1972. Today it is about $120 billion (about half of this is development assistance interest and capital and about half owed to private firms and banks). Of this total 40 per cent is owed by the poorest of the poor, those countries officially designated as the MSA (most seriously affected) by the recent crises.

According to GATT the combined deficit of the oil importing developing countries increased in 1975 to reach $45 billion, despite the fact that these countries had drastically cut back on imports for the first time since 1958. While the average prices of primary products (other than petrol) had fallen in 1975 compared with 1974, the developing countries had been faced with increased import prices of between 10 per cent and 15 per cent on manufactured goods.

The real rate of growth of the poorest countries, which was 2 per cent before the oil crisis, is now - 0.8 per cent when allowance is made for population growth of 2.8 per cent.'

In spite of the veiled but statistically apparent motives of these organisations towards Africa, and of the plain incidental dangers to the economic interests of Africans, many African countries succumbed to the advances of the European Economic Community (EEC), by agreeing to be associated members of the latter. Whether this association has been baneful or beneficial can be seen from the figures of world export trade and world finance already given, and from the following passage from an article contributed to Africa South of the Sahara, 1975, by Timothy Curtin:

'The statistics in Table 2 on imports by the EEC from the Yaounde Associates yield the surprising result that the share of the associates in the total imports of the EEC actually fell from 3.5 per cent in 1959 to 2.3 per cent in 1969. However, the share in the EEC's imports of all less developed countries also fell sharply, from 27.4 per cent to 19.6 per cent. The associates nevertheless experienced a slower rate of growth in the absolute level of their exports to the EEC than other less developed countries: over the ten years to 1969, associates' exports to the EEC increased by 101 per cent, while exports to the EEC of less developed countries as a whole increased by 122 per cent.'

Two important common features about the five organisations we have mentioned are worthy of note. Firstly, they came into existence in rapid succession at a time when Colonial Territories in Africa were also attaining independence in rapid succession. Secondly, the primary aim of each and every one of them is to promote the economic prosperity of the member countries. Whenever they appear to make efforts to benefit African territories, their dual aim is to guarantee their sources of supply of raw materials and to expand markets for their final products. Both ways, they see to it that they alone are the gainers, economically.

In the face of all these groupings and combines by White nations, Kwame Nkrumah was more convinced than ever before that the salvation of Africa lay in Pan-African solidarity. To this end, he conceived that a Pan-African organisation comprising independent African States should be established as a matter of the utmost urgency, whose immediate aims would be:

1) to liberate without delay the rest of Africa still in colonial bondage;
2) to put the whole of the Continent on a firm basis of rapid development and economic self-reliance.

Nkrumah had never regarded the attainment of independence by Ghana as the end of his political ambition. Indeed, he made his position crystal clear in his autobiography:

'I have never regarded the struggle for the Independence of the Gold Coast as an isolated objective but always as a part of a general
world historical pattern. The African in every territory of this vast continent has been awakened and the struggle for freedom will go on. It is our duty as the vanguard force to offer what assistance we can to those now engaged in the battles that we ourselves have fought and won. Our task is not done and our own safety is not assured until the last vestiges of colonialism have been swept from Africa.4

This was his stand; and so, after Ghana’s independence, he took the initiative to promote the establishment of an organisation to unite self-governing African States for the purposes which we have just previously mentioned. As a result, ‘in November 1958, Ghana and Guinea (later joined by Mali) drafted a Charter which was to form the basis of a Union of African States’. But on getting wind of Nkrumah’s move, the European and American Powers, acting in concert, went into action to frustrate his plan. They succeeded to a considerable extent. African leaders were divided among themselves and the outcome of this division was the Casablanca Conference and the Monrovia Conference.

The countries that met in Casablanca in January 1961, known to history as the Casablanca Powers, were radically different in their approach to contemporary African problems from those which met at Monrovia, later known as the Monrovia Powers, in May 1961. The Casablanca Powers took two major decisions at their first meeting, namely: to set up an African High Command for the liberation of the rest of Africa, and to establish an African Common Market, as well as, according to Vernon McKay:

‘... an African Consultative Assembly and Committees for political, economic, military and cultural Pan-Africanism. Six months later, on 17 July 1961, the Casablanca five met in Conakry to establish their economic arrangements. They decided on a progressive reduction of customs duties and trade quotas among themselves over a five-year period beginning January 1, 1962. Also considered were a wide range of other economic activities, including the possibility of establishing an airline, a shipping company, a bank for African development, a payments union, and a Permanent Council of African Economic Unity.5'

As for the Monrovia Powers, apart from setting up ‘an economic group to discuss a possible customs union, a development fund, the amalgamation of existing airlines, and other economic matters’, the keynote of their first and second meetings in Monrovia and Lagos respectively, was deepseated suspicion of the Casablanca Powers: And so, when the then Governor-General of Nigeria, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, in apparent reference to Nkrumah and King Hassan of Morocco, criticised ‘those who would rather pay lip service to the Charter of the United Nations whilst secretly they nurse expansionist ambition against weaker neighbours’, he was given ‘enthusiastic applause’ by Olympio of Togo and Ould Daddah of Mauritania.

The Casablanca Powers comprised five countries: Ghana, the United Arab Republic, Morocco, Guinea and Mali. The Monrovia Powers, on the other hand, had nineteen member-countries as follows: Nigeria, Liberia, Togo, Mauritania, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Dahomey (now Benin), Ethiopia, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Malagasy Republic, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tunisia, Upper Volta and Congo Brazzaville.

The two groups operated for two years without achieving any of their objectives. They merely talked and talked. In the end, a compromise was reached between them, and the Organisation of African Unity was born at Addis Ababa on 26 May, 1963.

Article II of its Charter sets out its aims and purposes as follows:

1) to promote unity and solidarity among African States;
2) to co-ordinate and intensify their efforts to improve living standards in Africa;
3) to defend their sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence;
4) to eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa;
5) to promote international cooperation, having due regard to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

A quick look at the activities of the OAU, during its thirteen years of existence, will reveal that it has achieved noteworthy successes in the first, third and fourth of its five aims and purposes: it is certainly promoting the unity and solidarity of Africa. Though it has failed to set up an African High Command, yet it has never once been found remiss in its verbal defence of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of African States, and, with the demise of Ian-Smithism in Zimbabwe and Vorsterism in Namibia now only a matter of months and absolute certainty, the eradication of all forms of colonialism from Africa is all but complete. Apartheid is the last enemy that Africa will have to destroy to redeem its full Continental integrity. But after the liberation of Zimbabwe and Namibia, it will be possible for African
leaders to concentrate undivided attention on the extermination of this evil and, thereafter, its end cannot be long delayed.

In regard to the fifth aim, the best that can be said in favour of the OAU is that it has scored a partial success. It has, undoubtedly, done all in its power to promote international cooperation. But, equally undoubtedly, in prosecuting this fifth aim the member-States of the OAU have paid scant or no regard at all to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The facts in support of this assertion are too concrete, Africa-wide, and notorious to require any proof.

Concerning its second aim and purpose, the OAU is a total failure. So far as can be seen, apart from occasional uncouth statements, the OAU has done practically nothing to co-ordinate and intensify the efforts of member-States to improve the living standards of the people of Africa. Here, then, is the rub. Today Africa is, paradoxically, the poorest Continent in the world. It has always been the poorest, but, apart from the United States and the Soviet Union, it is richer in natural and mineral resources than any Continent or sub-Continent. There is, therefore, no excuse whatsoever for its poverty. It will, I think, be generally agreed that independence and poverty go ill together, be it for the individual or for a country. A person who is poor, and has no definite independent self-sustaining plan for an early termination of his poverty, will surely fall easy prey to anyone who appears capable of relieving his penury. So it is with African nations. For the independence of any country to be real, it must have a solid and impregnable substratum of economic and technological self-determination to uphold it against the enemy's assault and subversion. It is because the White people recognise the essentiality of a strong economic and technological substratum to the survival of their countries as independent political entities that they attach crucial importance to the OEEC, EEC, OECD and such-like organisations.

I hasten to correct any impression that may be created that I am suggesting that 'independence' should be equated with 'absolute independence'. No country can be absolutely independent. Indeed I accept Mahatma Ghandi's dictum that independence, in a functional sense, really means 'voluntary inter-dependence'. To my understanding, 'voluntary inter-dependence' means a state of affairs:

1) in which each of the countries concerned is capable, if need be, of standing completely on its own economically, without coming to any harm or grief as a result; and

2) in which such countries voluntarily choose inter-dependence in order that each of them may reap the comparative advantages which accrue from international division of labour; but not

3) in which one country feels obliged by force of adverse economic circumstances to depend on another country for survival.

In this sense, no African country can be said to be truly independent. Indeed, the independence which we vaunt, and celebrate with pomp and pageantry every year, will remain an illusion, until African leaders are able to devise correct and effective solutions to the Continent's crucial and pressing problems.

II NEED FOR REAPPRAISAL

When we considered the third epoch of Africa's problems in the second lecture, we identified two new problems: one is the problem of political subjection and the other of economic exploitation. For reasons which we have noted, African leaders effectively tackled the former, and deliberately postponed the solution to the latter till after independence had been won. Since independence, however, they have only nibbled at the economic problem, and are still very far from finding the correct solution to it.

In the course of these lectures, we have thus far identified many problems which have confronted Africa, from epoch to epoch, from Africa's prehistory to the present day. Some of these problems, like those of slavery, depopulation, destruction of agriculture, vertical immobility and colonisation have been solved. But others which have not been solved have been brought forward, and still remain with us. It is not necessary to recapitulate in detail all these problems. But it is important, at the closing stage of this third lecture, to summarise these outstanding problems, and offer some reasons as to why they remain unsolved. The summary will be done under four broad heads.

The first is the problem of under-development. 'This problem is multifaceted.

ONE There is the problem of economic under-development with all its myriad ramifications and the multifarious frictional impacts to which they are susceptible. Secondary and tertiary industries are still infant and in their inchoate stages. Social amenities are few, inefficient and limited mainly to urban areas. Communications are exceedingly inadequate and inefficient. Due to demonstration effects from within and outside the Continent and conspicuous consumption on the part of African leaders in the public and private sectors, the masses of the people are impatient for a change for the better in their standards of living. During the campaigns for independence, they had been taught how to employ the weapons of articulated dissent, of
boycott, of socio-political pressure, of strikes and other industrial actions, and of occasional outbursts of violence against the alien rulers. After independence, they now seek to employ these same weapons to win economic, social and political advantages for themselves. Organised labour movements which had emerged in urban areas and had been very useful during the pre-independence agitation, are now uncompromising in their demands for a better deal from their own governments. The Press too is not to be left behind in espousing the fundamental rights of the people. All of these are complicated and aggravated by other factors such as:

1) internally and externally generated inflation;
2) unemployment and under-employment;
3) malutilisation and misdirection of resources; and
4) the inter-play of ideological conflicts.

In order to satisfy the crying but legitimate needs of the people, and to demonstrate to the former Colonialists that we can cope and are coping successfully with our problems, measures are sometimes hurriedly adopted which are ill-considered and, therefore, to the chagrin and frustration of the people, ill-fated.

Agriculture remains as primitive and neglected as ever. African peasants still use farming tools - the hoe and the cutlass - the shapes of which were fashioned in different parts of Africa between the eighth and fifth centuries B.C. The majority of our people still live at, or below, subsistence level: they are extremely poor, ill-nourished, ill-sheltered and ill-clad.

TWO The masses of Africans are victims of many diseases, some of which are endemic. Because their health is poor, they suffer from physical and mental inertia, and loss of enthusiasm for life.

THREE Economic exploitation of the under-privileged by alien and native exploiters continues apace in various guises. In international trade and finance, and in the supply of expert management and technical know-how, the terms are consistently loaded heavily against Africa which is terribly short of expertise in many vital areas of development.

FOUR The subjective phase of the minds of a large majority of Africans is under-developed. More than 84 per cent of adults in Africa are illiterate, as compared with 3.5 per cent in Europe and the USA. Only a small percentage of the literate population can be said to be educated and only a smaller percentage of the latter can be described as well-educated. For the avoidance of misunderstanding, I would like to pause briefly, at this point, to explain what I mean by the expression 'under-developed subjective phase of the mind'.

There are two levels of a man's mind: the subconscious, or what some psychologists term the unconscious, level (hereinafter referred to as the 'subconscious mind'), and the conscious level (hereinafter referred to as the 'conscious mind'). If you are a theist, you will agree that the subconscious mind is the indwelling God; if you are a psychologist, you will admit that the subconscious mind is the seat of Supreme Intelligence, and of Memory, whose resources can be tapped for man's own good and well-being through certain techniques including autosuggestion; if you are a Hegelian, you will assert that is a segment of the all-pervading Idea; if you are a Marxian, you will hold that it is the fountain of refined thought-processes and of the reflective interpretation of the conflict of material forces; if you are a biologist, you will declare that it is the autonomic controller and regulator of all the involuntary functions of the body. The subconscious mind is complete and self-sufficient at birth; it cannot be educated nor can its performance be improved. But the effects of its operations can be impaired by negative reactions by the subjective phase of the mind.

The conscious mind has two phases: the objective and the subjective phase (hereinafter referred to as the objective mind and subjective mind, respectively). The objective mind consists of the perceptive organs: that is our five faculties of seeing, hearing, tasting, touching and smelling. The subjective phase of the mind is what Locke terms tabula rasa. It is completely blank at birth. But as time goes on, if the new-born babe lives, the subjective mind acquires manifold information through the five sense faculties. The subjective mind is the only educable part of the human mind. It performs all the voluntary functions of man including the functions of: 1) interpretation; 2) recollection; 3) conception; 4) imagination; 5) inductive and deductive reasoning; 6) volition; 7) cognition; 8) conation; 9) affection; 10) aspiration.

A man's educational or intellectual standing depends on the level of the development of his subjective mind. The artist's discerning eye for colour, form and proportion; the pianist's deft fingers on the keyboard in translating into melodious sounds a complicated musical composition; the technologist's and technician's superb skills in designing, fashioning and employing the exquisite instruments of modern production; the historian's rare ability to recollect, reconstruct and interpret the past; the philosopher's profundity in understanding and interpreting the universe; the economist's exceptional capability to so master present trends as to be able to forecast future economic performances, subject to the concurrence of certain conditions; the administrator's and executive's exceeding proficiency in formulating and executing policies in all sectors of human endeavours and activity; the scientist's
Mrica truly united. What has so far imparted a cementing or uniting force to African States is the need to decolonise the rest of Mrica and to eradicate apartheid from South Mrica. When these problems are solved, as they will surely be solved, the present cohesive factor will disappear. And when that happens, we shall need many new and powerful organs of economic development other than the African Development Bank to keep the Continent united.

* * *

These four then are, broadly, the problems which African leaders are now called upon to solve, but have so far failed to solve. They have failed to solve these problems, not because they lack competence or dedication. Indeed, many African leaders are highly competent and dedicated patriots. Nevertheless they have failed, for obvious reasons. First, they more often than not get their project priorities wrong; second, due to lack of penetrating insight, they often pursue glittering shadows to the neglect of substance which is outwardly dull but effulgent beneath its surface; third, once in office, they cultivate the desire to remain there as long as they live; fourth, because of the latter, they spend a good deal of their time in rigging the affairs of State, playing up one or more groups against the others, and working out and executing plans to stifle any budding or full-fledged opposition to their excesses and tenacity of office; and, above all, and this is the crux of the matter, they have never really made enough effort to discern and reach the heart, the core and the roots of the four problems adumbrated above. Consequently, even if the causes of failure just mentioned, other than the last one, are eliminated, the problems will still remain unsolved.

It has been said, time and again, and quite truthfully, that Africa is a Continent in a hurry to catch up in matters of development with the other Continents of the world. It follows, therefore, that there is an urgent need to fathom and probe, by theoretical and empirical processes, what we have described as the heart, the core and the roots of Africa’s problems, reappraise them, and proffer new solutions to them. This is the task to which I shall endeavour to address myself, in the next and last lecture.

Delivered 17 November, 1976, at the Great Hall, University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana.
I IDEOLOGICAL REAPPRAISAL

Between the two wars, there were three competing politico-economic systems: capitalist, communist or socialist and fascist. Of these three only two have survived to this day. Fascism, as a practical ideology, was fatally wounded by the end of World War II, but did not quite die with Mussolini, Hitler and Admiral Tojo. It lingered miserably on, until it was finally dead and buried with Franco.

These two systems, or ideologies as they are popularly called, are diametrically opposed. Each of them occupies, without hope of compromise, each of the opposite ends of the politico-economic pole, and is regarded by its devotees as the system which alone is capable of solving mankind’s politico-economic problems, especially the economic part of the problems. The result is that the greater part of the world is now divided into two ideological Blocs: the capitalist or Western Bloc and the communist or Eastern Bloc. Between the two ends of the pole there are a number of hodge-podge nondescript positions whose occupants believe that a judicious mixture of the two systems is the ideal for solving their peculiar politico-economic problems.

In these circumstances it is essential that the basic concepts underlying the ideologies of capitalism and communism or socialism, and the techniques for translating these concepts into policies and actions, should be examined with a view to determining whether either (and if so which) or none of them is efficacious for curing Africa’s politico-economic maladies. Before proceeding with this examination, however, I would like to state and expound, briefly, three fundamental propositions which I would like us to bear in mind when we actually come to

FIRST  Man is the sole creative and purposive dynamic in nature: everything else by comparison is in a state of inertia.

‘Dynamics’ and ‘inertia’ have been scientifically defined. Dynamics is the branch of science which is concerned with the motions of bodies and the ways in which these motions are influenced by applied forces. Newton’s Law of Inertia states that every body perseveres in its state of rest, or of moving uniformly in a straight line, except insofar as it is compelled by impressed forces to change its state.

The word ‘body’ which occurs in the two definitions contains, in a scientific sense, a quantity of matter called mass.

Now, when force is purposively applied to body, mass or matter in a state of rest, it sets the body in motion in the purposed direction. The greater the applied force, the faster the motion towards the required direction. If the body, mass or matter is already in motion, the applied force may bring it to purposed rest, or shift it from pursuing a straight line to infinity towards a purposed direction. Again, the greater the force, the bigger the effect.

From the foregoing, three phenomena call for special attention. They are: applied force, body, mass or matter, and purposed direction or rest. Of these three, applied force is the dynamic active causative agent and purposed direction, or purposed rest, the effect.

If we extend this analogy to the realm of economics, as we are perfectly entitled to do, then we find that man alone is the dynamic active causative agent; land, as defined by economists, which is the same as body, mass or matter, is the recipient passive agent; and output, which consists of capital plus consumption goods, the effect. Other things being equal, and barring frictions, it can be said, without fear of contradiction, that a man who is healthier and stronger physically, who is more developed in his subjective mind and who is more purposeful psychologically, will economically be a better dynamic active causative agent, and achieve more quantitative and more qualitative effect, than any other man who does not have these attributes.

In other words, man, with his inherent forces of body, brain and mind, is the only dynamic causative creative and purposive factor in all productive activities, whilst land is the passive inert recipient factor. The effect of the impact of the former factor on the latter is output of goods. The primary object of production of goods is consumption. Man needs food, shelter and clothing to enable him to keep alive and
continue to play his role as productive agent. But, as we have seen, he needs tools and other equipment, otherwise known as capital, to make production at all possible, to facilitate it, and improve its quantum and quality. On the other hand, the secondary object of production is to keep part of the goods produced to assist him in future production. Man is, therefore, the initiator, the distributor and the consumer of all goods produced by him.

The sum and substance of what we have said under this first proposition is that man is the prime mover in every economy. Cocoa plantations, oil wells, rubber, oil palm produce, copper, groundnuts, timber, iron and steel, etc., are not. All these things in their natural states are either passive, inert and in a state of rest, or purposeless when in motion. Their induced rest in any place, or motion or acceleration towards any direction, depends on man alone.

Thus far we have been looking at man as a purely terrestrial materialistic being, an animated mixture of earth and minerals inflated by water into beautiful or ugly proportions, as the case may be, who is worth far less than the apparels with which he covers his body. Looked at even in this undifying way alone, man emerges as the sole determinant of all economic activities: initiator, innovator, accelerator, investor, prime mover, producer, distributor, exchanger and consumer.

But as we have seen in the third lecture, and here I know I am treading on controversial ground, man is not just an animated lump of earth mixed with water. He is more than this. He is dual in nature: part animal, part God; part conscious, part subconscious; part body, part mind. He is infinitely superior to all other living beings in the animal kingdom. According to Christian ontology, God breathed into his nostrils and man became a living Soul. The living Soul is housed in the shell called body and this Soul can only be the same in kind and quality, though not in degree, as the Soul or Infinite Intelligence which pervades the universe and animates man. Looked at in this edifying way, every man, without exception, is a potential genius.

* * *

SECOND The central problem of man is economic: all other problems whatsoever are ancillary.

As an individual, man wants, above everything else, food, shelter and clothing. After securing these necessities, he wants some comforts and then, some luxuries as well. These are the main pursuits of his life, either as a member of a family, of a community, of a State, or of a religious body. His first loyalty is to his economic interests and his secondary loyalty will be given to any organisation or institution which serves to promote these interests. In other words, he is not loyal to a community or State for its own sake and he serves God mainly because he believes that his economic problems may, by religious devotion, be more easily and more quickly solved. If he does not carry his economic motivation beyond the grave, it is because he is now taught and believes that there is no need for food, shelter, clothing, marriage or work in Heaven - it is all comfort and bliss there. All the three organs of State - the legislature, the executive and the judiciary, as well as all social institutions, are designed by him to ensure a congenial atmosphere for his economic advancement and prosperity and to regulate economic relations and intercourse between him and his fellow men within the community or State.

In support of these points of view, I would like to invoke the authority of Plato, the master-mind, who, about 2400 years ago, said in The Republic:

'A State . . . arises out of the needs of mankind; no-one is self­sufficing, but all of us have many wants . . . Then as we have many wants, and many persons are needed to supply them, one takes a helper for one purpose and another for another; and when the helpers and partners are gathered together in one habitation the body of inhabitants is termed a State. And they exchange with one another, and one gives, and another receives, under the idea that the exchange will be for their good.'

He then declared, rightly and unassailably in my view, that:

'. . . the true creator of a State is necessity, which is the mother of our invention. The first and greatest of necessities is food . . . the second is dwelling, and the third clothing and that sort of thing.'

It only remains for me to emphasise that the sole justification of a State is the economic advantages which division of labour and exchange of goods and services can confer on the inhabitants of the State. Families do not aggregate and unite in one community or State just for the love of one another. The compelling motivation is economic. Take away this motivation and the natural legitimacy or justification, as well as the autocratic and self-sustaining cohesion, of the State disappears.

Happily for the continued existence of the State as a corporate entity, man is instinctively susceptible to economic motivation. And the more progress he makes in realising his economic aspirations, the stronger his motivation. This assertion is exemplified by the emergence, in the advanced countries of Europe, of economic confederacies like the OECD and EEC whose objects, as we have seen, are to coordinate the economic
policies of member-States, to protect their economic interests generally and in relation to other countries, and to procure larger and larger shares of the wealth of this world for their people. The European Parliament is a complementary institution. Its aim is to create the right political atmosphere for the smooth operations of the European economic organisations. In addition, it is envisaged that there will be a European Confederal Government in the future to serve the same purposes as, but more effectively than, the European Parliament.

* * *

THIRD Every multi-ethnic or multi-nation state that has come into existence has done so as a result of coercion by one of the constituent ethnic units, or by the act of a colonising power, and not as a result of voluntary agreement for a union on the part of the constituent ethnic or national units.

There are many examples to illustrate this proposition. The whole of Black Africa is a case in point. China is another. India is yet another, and the USSR yet another. Every multi-ethnic State in Black Africa today is the creation of one Colonial Power or another. The whole of China was unified in 221 B.C. by a Chinese Emperor who hailed from the majority ethnic group – that is, the Han ethnic group, which constitutes 94 per cent of the entire Chinese population. The remaining 6 per cent consists of ‘some 60 nationalities’, and these had, some time or other, been subjugated by the Han ethnic group. The latest to be brought under subjection is Tibet. India owed its emergence as a multi-ethnic State to the military prowess of Asoka, Emperor of India from circa 274 to 232 B.C. He greatly extended the boundaries of the empire which he had inherited from his father and grandfather. The USSR is also a creature of a series of conquests and subjugation of minority groups by Russia, which is the majority ethnic group. The Russians now constitute 55 per cent of the entire population of the USSR.

It will be seen that in all these four examples – Black Africa, China, India and the USSR – the voluntary consent of the constituent ethnic groups was neither sought nor obtained. It is necessary to point out that China and India have been in existence as corporate States for over 2000 years and, with the exception of a few minor territorial gains, what is now known as the USSR has been in existence for upwards of 600 years.

The third proposition has been formulated to direct attention to the peculiar problem of constitution-making in the newly emergent multi-ethnic States in Africa. As we shall see later, the experiences of China, India and the USSR, as contrasted with those of some other countries, demonstrate that in making a Constitution for a multi-ethnic State, special regard must be paid to ethnic or linguistic affinities and to the interests of minority ethnic groups, in order to guarantee harmony among the diverse ethnic groups and political stability within the State.

* * *

We had promised, earlier on, to examine the basic concepts of capitalism and communism or socialism, and the techniques for translating them into policies and actions. We will now deal with capitalism and then with communism or socialism.

Capitalism has four basic concepts and a number of characteristics which are peculiar to it.

The first of the concepts is that of private property. Under this concept, the right of the individual to own and control as many economic goods as he can successfully lay claim to, and can appropriate to himself, according to the rules of the game, is recognised and protected by law. On the face of it this concept is fair and unexceptionable. If a man works hard to produce certain goods, he surely should have the right to keep them as his own. But economic forces, when they are uncontrolled and unregulated, hardly operate with fairness and equity. The laws of supply and demand and the margin are a case in point. These laws operate blindly and arbitrarily, and are, by their very nature, not concerned about relative efforts, fairness or equity. In other words, they are not concerned about the actual quantitative or relative contributions of each of the agents of production. Consequently, in the matter of exchange of goods and services, and of distribution of wealth among the factors which have taken part in producing it, they have always operated harshly, ruthlessly and iniquitously against that agent whose supply is abundant and inelastic. In this connection we should remember that capitalism attributes production to three main factors, land, capital and labour. A fourth is sometimes added and it is called Organisation or Entrepreneurship. Each of these agents is entitled to a reward under capitalism. But, by the operation of the law of the market and of the margin, the weakest agent in the ensuing bargain for the distribution of wealth is labour, or man in whom labour is inseparably inerites. Since the so-called entrepreneur more often than not is also the land-owner and supplier of capital, and since the supplies of land, capital and entrepreneurship are scarce relative to the supply of labour, the laws of supply and demand and marginal productivity see to it that labour gets the worst of the bargain. The result is that, whilst the owner or owners
of the other agents flourish fabulously, labour, which is the prime contributor, remains impoverished. The labourer never has enough to enable him to acquire property and, therefore, has none to keep.

* * *

The second is the concept of choice. It is assumed that each person has complete freedom of choice. 'He may use his energy and property as he thinks fit', subject only to such restraint as may be imposed upon him by law.

The hollowness of this concept is palpable. What choice of economic activity or of employment is there open to the labourer, the working-class or the peasant in the use of his energy anywhere in the world? None, as far as one can see. As for property, the peasants of Africa, who are about 80 per cent of the African population, have none to use, except the land which they till in order to eke out a meagre subsistence.

* * *

The third concept is equality. Here it is posited that everyone 'may work, live and freely contract on the basis of equality with others and with the same opportunity as his fellows'.

We all know that this concept is utterly false. We know that it is utterly false, because labour and the peasantry have never been, and will never under capitalism be, able to contract on the basis of equality with the owners of land and capital.

* * *

The fourth is the concept of what I have chosen to term egoistic altruism. This concept speaks loudly and eloquently in its own condemnation, because, under it, it is claimed that, by pursuing his economic self-interest, every individual unconsciously promotes at the same time the economic interests of others. The intention of the individual is not generally to promote public interest but his own security and gain. In the process, however, he is led by an 'invisible hand' to promote an end which was not part of his original intention. By deliberately promoting his own selfish interest, he promotes that of society more effectively than when he tries more consciously to promote it.

That was Adam Smith, the father of capitalist economics, speaking and his words still hold good and weighty for the capitalists of today as they did for their ancestors since 1776 - exactly 200 years ago - when he wrote his famous book An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations.

* * *

Of the many characteristics of capitalism, there are only two which are relevant to our discussion and deserve emphasis.

The first characteristic is that capitalism is an incurably exploitative and corruptive system. It helped to destroy feudalism and slavery and, as a result, the serfs were released and the slaves became free. But it continues, under various subtle guises, to exploit the masses of the people in the same way as the feudal lords and the slave owners had done. In the exploitation of labour and the peasantry, capitalism has neither compunction nor mercy. As we have seen, in its early stages, it saw nothing wrong in exploiting the labour of children under nine years of age. When this was forbidden, it made children of between nine and sixteen work for twelve hours a day! Persons of sixteen and above, both male and female, continued to work almost round the clock. All the workers were poorly housed, wretchedly clad, and were paid just enough wages to enable them to withstand the rigours of their allotted jobs. Under the system, everything was done to keep workers in stark ignorance, save that in some cases it was absolutely necessary to give them a smattering of education to enable them to improve their skills and become more productive. Today, and indeed since about the end of the nineteenth century, as a result of collective and militant bargaining on the part of workers, and their participation in government, this kind of blatant exploitation has ceased. But it has ceased only in its blatant and open character. It continues unabated under various cunning and subtle devices.

By means of monopolies, oligopolies, monopsonies and oligopsonies, the capitalists are able to rig and subvert the economy of any State to promote their self-interest and to damnify the interests of the vast majority of the people. In addition, in order to achieve their selfish ends, they do not hesitate to bribe those in authority, as well as members of the business community.

In all their nefarious activities, the capitalists are formidable. There are only a few of them in the entire world. But, over the years, they and their forebears have accumulated vast capital resources through the employment of slaves on their plantations and of sweated labour in their factories. As a result, they are able to maintain a close and well-knit cabal which can operate with swift, concerted, and satanic efficiency against dissenting governments and individuals.

In the face of all this, the peculiarity in the supply of labour, its quickly perishable nature, the impossibility of storing it and keeping it back from the market if need be, and its relative immobility, perforce expose it, under capitalism, to continued heartless exploitation and oppression.
The second characteristic of capitalism is that it is an incorrigibly planless system. What planning can there be in a community or State where the rule is that every person or group of persons should pursue their own self-interests in order more effectively to promote the interests of others? Norman Angell has aptly described this kind of arrangement as the economics of cannibalism.

However, as a result of planlessness, the system is plagued with interminable crises. Because everyone is always pursuing his own self-interest as dictated by his personal greed, and because of the resultant lack of coordination among producers inter se, and between producers on the one hand and consumers on the other, the capitalist system, under the guidance of the 'invisible hand' in Adam Smith's theory, is always either breaking down or threatening to break down. There is an incessant alternation between boom and depression, expansion and recession, prosperity and slump, plenty and scarcity. And all available evidence is to the effect that these crises will continue to recur again and again as long as planlessness remains the quintessence of the capitalist system.

Furthermore, the system, by its very nature, promotes fierce division and fosters the law of the jungle among men. The rights of men are trampled underfoot in the name of competition. This, of course, is how it should be under the system. For, when two men set out to eat each other and go into the arena to settle the issue, neither can ever succeed in effectively promoting the survival of the other! On the contrary, what will surely happen is that the stronger and the more cunning of the two will come out alive, with the best part of the corpus of the other safe in his stomach!

* * *

The techniques for translating capitalism into policies and actions are deeply rooted in its concept of egoistic altruism, in its characteristic of planlessness and unfettered freedom of enterprise, and in whatever appears to the capitalist to be right and proper for promoting his self-interest. In these circumstances, governments exist only to act as umpires for the capitalist cannibals in their cut-throat duels. Economic priorities are dictated by individual self-interest and not by what will redound to the best interests of the entire populace. Business ventures are embarked upon and investments are made from selfish motives alone. In the result the few are enriched and the masses remain permanently impoverished.

* * *

From all that we have said about capitalism as an ideology and as a system, we can, I think, confidently infer that neither its concepts nor its techniques are suitable for mankind in general. For Africa, in particular, the adoption of capitalism can only perpetuate, albeit in subtle disguises, the dehumanisation, heartless exploitation and division into antagonistic camps, which Africans had suffered during the periods of slavery and colonisation.

* * *

In the case of communism or socialism, we can discern three basic concepts and three characteristics. But before we proceed to discuss these concepts and characteristics I would like to draw a distinction between communism and socialism.

According to Marx and Engels, socialism is an intermediate stage between capitalism and communism. Under socialism, the proletariat, who have wrested State power from the bourgeoisie (that is the capitalist) in a revolution, will continue to retain and wield that power until the capitalists have been completely exterminated. When this is done a state of social perfection will be reached and communism will be attained. When this happens the dictatorship of the proletariat will come to an end and the 'State' everywhere will be replaced by 'Community'. In the views of Marx and Engels, the State and freedom are antithetic. Under the bourgeoisie a State is an instrument of arbitrary coercion and oppression and its executive is but a committee for managing the affairs of the whole bourgeoisie in their ruthless exploitation of the working-class. Under the proletariat, the State becomes the instrument for holding down its adversaries, the bourgeoisie.

Says Engels in Letter to Bebel: 'It is pure nonsense to talk of a free people's State.' But when communism is attained and the 'State' everywhere is replaced by 'Community' each individual would then have 'the means of cultivating his gift in all directions', and would acquire the non-specific all-embracing communist technology which would make it possible for him 'to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticise after dinner, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic'. 'Only in a Community, therefore,' declare Marx and Engels, 'is personal freedom possible.' The motto of socialism is 'from each according to his ability and to each according to his deed', whilst that of communism is 'from each according to his ability and to each according to his need'.

From the foregoing it is clear not only that communism and socialism are not synonymous, but also that, from all accounts, communism is not yet being practised anywhere in the world. What they have in the USSR, China and other so-called communist countries is socialism.
with its dictatorship of the proletariat, and its enforced derogation of personal freedom.

Henceforth in the course of this lecture I will confine my references to socialism. I have hitherto spoken of ‘communism or socialism’ in mere deference to the general usage and understanding of the two words.

I will now proceed to deal with the concepts and characteristics of socialism.

* * *

The first concept of socialism is the oneness of man. The dichotomy of ‘man’ into classes began when economic circumstances made it necessary for families or clans to live together in one community. Then classes began to emerge and, in the words of the Communist Manifesto, we have ‘freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, ... oppressor and oppressed, (who) stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open, fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstruction of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes’.

After the abolition of feudalism and slavery, in long-drawn struggles which lasted many centuries, a new dichotomy of man into capitalist and worker emerged. It is this new division into exploiting and exploited classes, with its attendant fierce and ever-escalating struggle, that socialism is out to abolish.

* * *

The second concept of socialism is the public ownership of land and of the means of production.

The first part of this concept is not difficult to understand. Land is the gift of Nature, pure and simple. At no time did Nature decree that a piece of land should belong to one family or individual to the exclusion of others. Originally, a piece of land was appropriated by a family for agricultural, pastoral and housing purposes, either as the first-comers or by force of arms against the first-comers. If every family kept just as much land as it needed, there would be enough to go round. The trouble, however, is that historically a minority of families and individuals have always striven to keep in their ownership all or most of the land in a given area to the exclusion of the vast majority of the people living in such area. If their descendants succeed in retaining ownership of such area until the original appropriation is out of living memory, the law declares them the true owners in perpetuity. The social injustice perpetrated by this arrangement is clear. Whereas in ancient times a family could have found a vacant piece of land to appropriate to itself, or failing that could expropriate a former occupant of a piece of land by force, in these days there is no unoccupied piece of land to be appropriated by a first-comer, nor does the Law allow anyone to effect forcible expropriation of existing occupants.

The second part of this concept is also not difficult to understand, if we follow the reasoning of Marx and Engels on the point. This reasoning is contained in Karl Marx’s Das Kapital and in the Communist Manifesto. Because I consider it sound, I have no hesitation in adopting it.

Karl Marx recognises two factors of production: land (which is natural resources) and labour (which is human resources). He regards natural resources as the subject of labour. To be able to produce anything worthwhile at all, man must fashion tools and equipment. In parenthesis, in the course of these lectures, we already saw man in the Stone Age and in the Iron Age making tools to improve his productivity and subsistence. This he did by applying his human power to natural resources, and producing thereby what we now call capital. With the aid of capital, labour is able to convert natural resources into raw materials.

In modern society, it requires a large number of men to combine and organise their physical and mental resources to produce capital and raw materials. In the words of the Communist Manifesto, ‘Capital is a collective product, and only by the united action of many members, nay, in the last resort by the united action of all members of society, can it be set in motion.’ That is to say, ‘set in motion’ by the dynamic labour of man, employing raw materials and the facilities of social and economic infrastructures provided at public expense, to produce consumption goods and additional capital.

Now, in Marx’s equation, raw materials plus capital are equal to means of production. If this is so, and if, in the last resort, these means of production are the results of the combined efforts of society, then their social character should be emphasised by bringing them under social control.

In other words, it is fraud on society at large, and in particular on those who have directly combined to produce them, to leave the means of production in private hands as private property.

* * *

The third concept of socialism is epitomised in its motto: from each according to his ability and to each according to his deed. This concept is exceedingly far-reaching in its operational implications.

A man can contribute to the development of society according to his ability only if he is in a fit position physically and mentally to do so.
Besides, since each member of society is going to benefit from the resultant development according to his deed, that is according to his contribution to the social pool, it is essential that he should have equal opportunity like his fellows to make the utmost contribution which his ability allows.

Socialism recognises differences in innate talents or latent ability. It never claimed equality of talents for all men, nor has it ever demanded that it is possible to make all men equal as to their respective abilities. What socialism does claim, quite firmly and unflinchingly, can be spelt out in the following terms.

ONE All men have innate talents or latent ability. What those talents are, and how many they are, we do not know until all of them are given equal opportunity to develop. It will be neither just nor equitable to give opportunity to a person with four talents to develop them to the full, whilst a man with eight has no opportunity to develop any of his own, or has opportunity to develop only two of those eight. When this kind of discrimination in the provision of opportunity occurs the individual discriminated against is unable to contribute to social development according to his ability and his share from the social pool is proportionately diminished.

TWO Even when all the talents have been developed to the fullest limits possible, each one must be given equal opportunity to contribute to social development. Since his share of the total development will depend on his contribution, it will be unjust and inequitable to deny one this opportunity and provide it for another.

THREE When all talents in society are not fully developed it is not the individuals that are adversely affected alone who suffer; the society as a whole also suffers. For the economic, social and political development of society itself is absolutely a function of the aggregate efforts of the entire members of the society.

The techniques of socialism are planning and social discipline. These two are explicit from the concepts of socialism.

It is not difficult to effect public ownership of the means of production. But it requires meticulous planning to operate them efficiently. It also requires meticulous planning to control and direct the forces of supply and demand, to provide equal opportunity for all members of society for the full development and full employment of their talents, and to ensure that all those who have contributed to social and economic development get their just and equitable shares. It is superfluous to add that, both in its formulation and execution, planning demands discipline on the part of the entire populace.

We have already commented on these matters and do not need to say more about them, but, in the context of Africa, one important question calls for answer. Are these characteristics, as portrayed by Marx and Engels, inseparable concomittants of socialism? For contemporary Black Africa, the answer is, emphatically, No!

For the time being, Black Africa has no emperors, no absolute monarchs, no opulent aristocrats, no big land-owners, no war lords and no capitalists with vast financial empires, whose positions, wealth and excessive acts can provoke extremities of violent reaction from the masses of the people, and who will fight to the last ditch to defend those positions and wealth. Not only do we not have such men now, they are not even likely to emerge in the near future. But such men existed in the USSR, Eastern Europe and China, and for these countries the characteristics mentioned were justifiable.

For Africa, therefore, socialism can be introduced by democratic processes and the excesses of the budding African capitalists as well as the social control of the means of production can respectively be checked and brought about by laws enacted by the people's elected parliaments.

The three characteristics of socialism are civil war, the dictatorship of the proletariat and the extermination of the bourgeoisie. Marx and Engels do not mince words about the inevitability of these events. In his book Political Theory, Andrew Hacker sums Marx and Engels up on the point as follows:

"Every real revolution is a social one, in that it brings a new class to power and allows it to remodel society in its own image."

"... The old ruling class will not give up its power peacefully or voluntarily, especially when it knows that it will have no privi-
offering effective solutions to them. Towards the close of the third
lecture we identified these problems as:

1) the problem of underdevelopment;
2) the problem of individual freedom;
3) the problem of constitution-making;
4) the problem of African unity.

Africa is number one on the list of the under-developed areas of the
world. But whenever we think of the development of Africa, our minds
turn at once to the building of factories and hotels, the construction of
roads, the establishment of mercantile marines and airlines, and so on
and so forth. All of these, which are eminently desirable things in them­selves, are development symbols, but not the real development itself.

Many eminent economists, including Leibenstein, Rostow, Mount­
joy, Meier and Baldwin, and Lewis, to mention only a few, have
devoted a good deal of time to the study of the economics of under­
development. From their writings we can garner all the characteristics
of an under-developed economy, which we sum up as follows:

1) ignorance;
2) illiteracy;
3) disease;
4) calorie deficiency;
5) dependence on subsistence agriculture and excessive under­
employment of the rural population;
6) deficiency in techniques, organisation and capital.

These characteristics have been demonstrated in statistical terms. In
under-developed economies the rate of illiteracy for those aged ten
years and above ranges between 32 per cent in Sri Lanka and 92 per
cent in Indonesia. The percentage for Africa is 84. As against this, the
rate of illiteracy in developed economies is below 5 per cent. In regard
to agriculture, between 67 per cent and 80 per cent of the people in
under-developed economies engage in subsistence farming, as com­
pared with between 5 per cent and 19 per cent in developed economies,
who are engaged in lucrative agriculture. The productivity of one
farmer in the latter economies is assessed to be equal to that of between
ten and twenty farmers in under-developed economies.

As regards calorie intake, Leibenstein, who has done considerable
research in the matter, has this to say:

'In general it is believed that in the underdeveloped areas calorie
intake per day is around 2100, that in a group of middle per capita
income countries the calorie intake is between 2200 and 2800;
and that only in the advanced countries is it above 3000 calories
per day. What this implies is that if at the outset an employer
pays a wage that is sufficient only to enable his workers to obtain
a diet of no more than 2140 calories, the employer can approxi­
mately double his effective work force by paying a wage that would
enable the workers to purchase a diet yielding 2460 calories . . .
But of the greater interest for our purposes is that a 21 per cent
increase in total calorie intake results in an almost 50 per cent rise
in output.'

In 1951 a United Nation's team of experts did a study on Measures for
the Development of Under-developed Countries, and reported in part as
follows:

'It is theoretically possible that a country be poor because its
resources are poor, and in spite of the resources which it has being
as fully developed as current knowledge permits. We have been
able to ignore this theoretical difficulty because we do not believe
that there are such countries . . . On the other hand we believe
that, whatever their resources may be, all countries are currently
in a position where their national incomes could be greatly in­
creased by better utilisation of what they have.'

In other words, a country is economically under-developed not be­
cause it is deficient in natural resources, but because such resources as
it has are, in the words of Meier and Baldwin, 'unutilised, under­
utilised or misutilised'.

The sum and substance of all we have been saying on this point is
this. Economic under-development in Africa arises not from any
deficiency in natural resources in any African country, but from:

1) under-development of the subjective mind, typified by ignor­
ance, illiteracy and deficiency in techniques and organisation;
2) under-development of the body, typified by disease, calorie
deficiency, bad water, bad housing, and filthy environment;
3) under-development of agriculture and excessive under­
employment of the rural population, typified by lack of savings
and of capital formation.

The solutions to the problem of under-development in Africa are,
therefore, clear. They consist in full development and full employment
of every African - man or woman, child or adolescent.

We have already depicted man as the sole creative dynamic in
nature and as the only active causative agent of production. Whatever
ideology African leaders choose to adopt, it is imperative that they
make full development and full employment of every African their first and topmost priority, and the cornerstone of all their development plans. Full development and full employment of man are inseparably complementary. To pursue one without the other is not only not to achieve the objective of rapid economic development, but also to do wanton social injustice and inequity to every African who is discriminated against in the process.

What does all this mean in concrete terms? Since only a very small minority of African families can cater for the full development of their members and use their positions in society to secure full employment for those members, it follows that the State must accept full responsibility for the provision:

1) of education at all levels and health facilities free of charge;
2) of employment for every African without discrimination.

Health facilities do not consist in the provision of hospitals alone. They embrace the whole compass of preventive medical facilities, good food, good water, decent housing and a clean and wholesome environment.

There are those who will still argue against the provision of free education at all levels for all, on the ground that, because of the long period of gestation - some sixteen to twenty-five years - investment in education is not as profitable as investment in cement works or textile mills for instance.

In answer to this argument, one need only to refer to the examples of the USA, Japan and the USSR. Edward F. Denison, who did a study of actual economic growth in the USA during the period 1909-1957 and made a projection of such growth into 1960-1980, came to the conclusion that the contribution of capital input is 15 per cent, of increased education 23 per cent, and of advance of knowledge 20 per cent; that is, 43 per cent contribution by education. We all know that Japan owes its phenomenal growth as an industrial and world power to education. Meiji, that enlightened Emperor of Japan, attached such a crucial importance to education as an instrument of development that he decreed education compulsory and fee-paying, before it became free and compulsory. As for the USSR, it is on record that within the space of twenty-five years it mounted from the status of under-developed country, with the vast majority of its people living below subsistence level, to that of a developed economy and super-power, mainly on the wings of education.

If African leaders apply the solutions here proposed to our development problem, they will find themselves irresistibly drawn to the periphery of an agrarian revolution. In any African development plan, attention must be focused, as a matter of urgency, on the African peasantry who constitute 80 per cent of Africa's population. In this connection and to effect a true agrarian revolution, agriculture just has to be mechanised and substantial aids, in financial subsidies and in the provision of technical know-how, must be provided for the African farmers.

There are those who will object to mechanisation on the ground that it displaces farmers from the land and increases the unemployed population. It does the one, but not necessarily the other.

It must be understood that the aim of agrarian revolution is to reduce the number of farmers and absorb those released from farming in other categories of economic activities. Indeed, the measure of progress is that fewer and fewer people engage in primary activities until a minimum-optimum number of farmers are left on the farms. This view is supported by some of the statistics to which we have already referred, and by the view of Colin Clark who rightly says, in his book *The Conditions of Economic Progress*, that development implies changing emphasis within an economy, and it is evidenced by the shifting distribution of labour among the primary, secondary and tertiary categories of productive activities.14

I can hear the usual excuse being made loud and clear: that Africa would wish to embark on all these things, but hasn't the money to do so, and cannot quickly raise the required funds from savings and taxes. In my view money, except for foreign payments, is not the problem. The first step to take in these matters is to plan carefully and scientifically for increased total output in the three categories of productive activities. Once this is done, subject to the availability of foreign exchange for the overseas contents of the programme, the next thing to do is for the Governments concerned to create enough money in addition to savings and taxes.

To those who may fear the inflationary effect of this procedure, I would like to invoke the authority of Maynard Keynes, the great economist. Says he: "... inflation exists only when a further increase in the quantity of money produces no further increase in output and entirely spends itself on an increase in the cost unit fully proportionate to the increase in effective demand." In other words, there can be no inflation when a further increase in the quantity of money is matched by an increase in the output of goods and services.

In this regard, it must be borne in mind that Africa's natural resources are still very largely unutilised, underutilised and misutilised. In such circumstances it would be an admission of utter incompetence on the part of African planners and leaders to refrain from
embarking on a programme of full development and full employment of Africa's human resources, for fear of inflation.

* * *

The solution to the problem of individual freedom is for all the Governments of Africa to take early steps to liberalise and democratise themselves, to acknowledge and defer to the sovereignty of the people, and to restore to the people and the press all the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which African States have subscribed.

With one or two exceptions, I think it is correct to say that today African States are guilty of acts of tyranny and oppression towards the masses of Africans in the same way as the Colonial Powers were. Indeed, it can be said that the African States concerned are guilttier. For under colonial rule, the voice of dissent was allowed to be raised, and was not silenced or forbidden as now; political activities were permitted and there was no indefinite state of emergency such as is now the common feature all over Africa.

However, what African leaders must bear in mind is this. Tyranny and oppression cannot be more tolerable simply because they wear native garbs. The apparent calm which pervades Africa today is unnatural; unnatural because it has been induced by fear and suppressed resentment, and not by any kind of voluntary acquiescence, conformity or approval, on the part of the people. Furthermore, fear inhibits initiative and, no matter what we do, neither full development nor full employment of our human resources can properly take place under the abnormal circumstances in which the vast majority of Africans now live.

It follows, therefore, that the sooner we terminate the existing human deprivations and state of widespread fear and latent instability, and allow the people to choose their rulers in a free and fair election, in short, the sooner we restore to the people their inherent civil rights and liberties, the better for the material progress and spiritual well-being of all the peoples of Africa, and for the enhancement of Africa's self-respect as a civilised Continent in the comity of nations.

* * *

Constitution-making has, since independence, become a pastime in all parts of Africa. As soon as a new set of people accede to power, they find some pretext for introducing a new Constitution.

Be that as it may. The point I wish to make here is that none of the Constitutions operating in Africa today are likely to endure beyond the tenure of those who make them and hand them down to the people, because they are fundamentally unsuitable in character for a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual or multi-national State.

I have made a long and careful study of the problems involved in constitution-making and, as a result, I have certain definite principles. Time does not permit me, in this lecture, to set out the theoretical and empirical bases for the principles which I am going to state presently. But, if I may say so, without appearing immodest, I would refer those who are interested to two of my books entitled Thoughts on Nigerian Constitution and The People's Republic which contain a full exposition of the said principles.

Of all the 189 countries in the world, twenty have Federal Constitutions and the remaining 169 have Unitary Constitutions. The twenty Federal States have a population of 2400 million, that is approximately two-thirds of the entire population of the world and as far as is known, in spite of occasional social upheavals in some of them, the character of their Constitutions, together with the basic provisions thereof, has endured because it is suitable for their respective peculiar conditions.

I will now state the principles which I have evolved and relate each of them, as appropriate, to the twenty Federal countries and to other multi-lingual States with Unitary Constitutions. They are as follows.

1) If a country is uni-lingual and uni-national, the constitution must be Unitary. Examples are: France, Italy, Portugal, Poland and Greece, among others, which have always had Unitary Constitutions.

2) If a country is uni-lingual or bi-lingual or multi-lingual, and also consists of communities which, though belonging to the same nation or linguistic group, have, over a period of years, developed some important cultural divergences as well as autonomous geographical separateness, the constitution must be Federal, and the constituent States must be organised on the dual basis of language and geographical separateness. Examples are: USA, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Indonesia, the Federation of South Arabia, Australia, Austria, the two Germanies and Switzerland.

3) If a country is bi-lingual or multi-lingual, the constitution must be Federal, and the constituent States must be organised on a linguistic basis. Examples are: Canada, Mexico, Burma, China, India, Malaysia, Czechoslovakia, the USSR and Yugoslavia.

4) Any experiment with a Unitary constitution in a bi-lingual or multi-lingual country must fail, in the long run. Examples are:
the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Belgium, Spain, Sri Lanka and Cyprus, all of which have for some time been experiencing incessant turmoil and violence because, though they are either bi-lingual or multi-lingual, yet they stubbornly insist on operating a Unitary Constitution.

If the vast majority of mankind, among them the USA, the USSR, China - the three super-powers - and India - the harbinger of freedom from colonial rule - if all these countries, for what I sincerely think are very sound reasons, consider a certain form of Constitution suitable for some specified set of circumstances and adopt such a form of Constitution, African leaders would do well to learn from them and not to follow the erring ways of Britain, Spain and others who have refused to learn, and are right now suffering the agonies of their errors. But before proceeding to learn, African leaders should endeavour to appreciate the true meanings of terms like Clan, Tribe and Ethnic or Linguistic or National Group, and the difference between tribalism and ethnicism. For it is not in a chemical laboratory alone that wrong labelling could lead to serious disaster and death. It could do so too in politics. The only difference is that in the former case the disaster is instant, whilst in the latter, it tends to be insidious and delayed.

If our leaders and all of us observe the principles enunciated above, it will be the easiest thing for us to fashion, for Africa's multi-lingual States, a Constitution which will endure in its character, and eliminate ab initio the tendency to future secessionist agitation, because it preserves the pre-colonial co-eval status of each of the constituent ethnic or linguistic units, and allays the fears of minority groups.

* * *

We had already, in the third lecture, assessed the achievements of the OAU, and had noted that in the handling of Africa's economic problems the OAU was impotent and that unless it succeeded in this regard, it would not be able to preserve African unity after apartheid would have been exterminated. We maintain these assertions because, as has been stated, the central problem of man is economic. However, to be able to formulate and execute plans which will help in effectively tackling Africa's economic problems, the member-States of the OAU must have an ideological concensus, like the member-States of the OECD and EEC.

We have already discussed the two ideologies prevailing in the world today. It should be clear from its concepts and techniques, and from our expositions, that, for Africa, socialism is to be preferred to capitalism.

Some African leaders believe in socialism and are already striving to practise it in their States; some others pay lip-service to it; whilst some others still believe in capitalism or in mixed economy. It is strongly urged that those who believe in socialism should get together to begin a nucleus of an economic organisation, in the same way as the original six Common Market countries did in Europe.

It has been said that for Africa socialism is a foreign ideology, and that, therefore, Africa should evolve its own ideology. As far as I can judge, there is nothing foreign in the socialist concepts already considered. Besides, after reading all the books, articles and speeches on this issue that have come my way, I have formed the opinion that those who advocate a rejection of socialism as a foreign ideology have need to give deeper study and thought to the principles and concepts underlying the system.
Curriculum Vitae of Chief Obafemi Awolowo

Born on 6 March, 1909, in Ikenne, Ijebu Remo, in the former Western State of Nigeria, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Barrister-at-Law, author and politician, is the current Chancellor of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria. His ambition of becoming a journalist, lawyer and politician began to materialise when, in 1934, he joined the staff of the Daily Times as a Reporter-in-Training. On leaving the Daily Times, he became a freelance journalist and it was during this period that he passed the Bachelor of Commerce Degree of London University as an external candidate. He also passed the LLB Degree of the same University in 1946 and was called to the Bar by the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple on 18 November, 1946.

He returned to Nigeria in 1947 and became a Legal Practitioner. In 1949 he started the Nigerian Tribune, a daily paper which later became the organ of his party, the Action Group of Nigeria, which was inaugurated as a political party on 28 April, 1951. He was elected the party’s first President. That same year he was elected into the then Western House of Assembly. In 1952 he became the Leader of Government Business and Minister of Local Government. Two years later he assumed office as the first Premier of the Western Region and Minister of Finance. In 1956 he was re-appointed Premier, but in 1959 he gave up that office when he became the Leader of the Opposition in the Federal Parliament. This was followed by a spell in the political wilderness which began in 1962, which he faced with courage and defiance until 1966, when he was recalled and invited to play the leading role of Commissioner for Finance and Vice-Chairman of the Federal Executive Council during the most trying period in the life of his country. He served with characteristic dedication and industry in that office and when normalcy returned once more to the country, Chief Awolowo, a man who always bowed out of the stage while the applause was still going on, voluntarily resigned and returned to his private legal practice.

Chief Obafemi Awolowo is a brilliant scholar, an unswerving and irrepressible upholder of the principles of democracy and the rule of law, and an unshakable believer in the unity of Nigeria. He has published many works including Path to Nigerian Freedom, Awo – an autobiography, Thoughts on Nigerian Constitution, The People’s Republic and The Strategy and Tactics of the People’s Republic of Nigeria.

Chief Awolowo has been a pace-setter in many ways in the political life of his country. Among his achievements are the introduction in the then Western Region of a minimum wage at a time when this was unknown in Nigeria, the introduction of free primary education and the foundation by his Government of the University of Ife, of which he was the Chancellor until his recent appointment as Chancellor of the Ahmadu Bello University.
Notes

FIRST LECTURE

12. Ibid. p.48.

SECOND LECTURE

5. Afer, Antonius Gvilemus Amo, Inaugural Philosophical Dissertation, Martin Luther University, Halle – Wittenberg, Halle (Saale) 1968, pp.78 & 79.
9. Ibid. p.103.

THIRD LECTURE

FOURTH LECTURE


3. Ibid. p.194.


7. Marx and Engels: Communist Manifesto, op. cit., p.120.

8. Ibid. p.137.


