
Editorial

Why imperialism? This issue of the *IDS Bulletin* is largely about the impact of the central capitalist countries of Western Europe and North America upon the Third World. Sometimes this is talked of in terms of the 'dependence' of the latter upon the former. 'Dependence', however, connotes a certain passivity or want of will. Whereas imperialism conveys more clearly that this dependence has been imposed; and further that present dependence is historically linked to past domination.

And new tactics? A deliberate ambiguity: both new tactics and forms of domination, and new tactics, new room for manoeuvre against it.

Such are the concerns which run through these essays. Osvaldo Sunkel's account of *The Development of Development Thinking* is in the best traditions of the sociology of knowledge, arguing that a crisis has arisen in development thinking precisely because it has neglected issues of the kind that we raise in this *Bulletin*. Enrique Oteiza complements this with a conspectus of the recent history of the social sciences in Latin America, arguing for increased collaboration among social scientists within and between the main regions of the Third World. The remainder of the *Bulletin* documents various forms of external influence. Rita Cruise O'Brien discusses the transmission of external cultural influence through the broadcasting media and its relation to professionalism and state control. She has also assembled extracts from resolutions on the New Information Order adopted at the recent Conference of Non-Aligned Nations matching these with Western press reactions.

Martin Godfrey discusses the flow of skilled manpower in the other direction—from the Third World to the central countries. With Manfred Bienefeld he also analyses the effects of the internationalisation of production on labour markets in both central and developing countries; and the prospects for international collaboration among trades unions to control the effects of this process on unemployment, wages and conditions of work.

Armed force is a critical condition of the ability of the central countries to secure their dominance at the periphery. I have used my editorial privilege—editorial imperialism?—to print an unusually long article by myself. This examines

the factors encouraging military expansion and the export of arms to the Third World and their implications for the world-wide hegemony of the advanced industrial countries. I hope the length is justified by the subject's critical importance and by its relative neglect in this and other development journals in the past. Military influence is often closely linked to intelligence and espionage, the implications (and limitations) of which are discussed in Dudley Seers' review of Agee's *CIA Diary*, made all the more interesting by Agee's imminent expulsion from Britain for engaging in activities "harmful to the security of the United Kingdom."

Any treatment of the influence of the major capitalist countries upon the Third World would be incomplete without a discussion of the transnational corporation. Although we have not attempted to treat this subject fully, Reg Green's review of the Lonhro Report gives us useful insights into the difficulties of obtaining satisfactory information about the transnationals and of controlling their activities within the framework of metropolitan—especially British—company law (assuming the governments of the central countries really *want* to exercise such control: his comments on Lonhro and Rhodesian sanctions-breaking are particularly pertinent).

Connecting all these articles together is a series of dilemmas, both about how to analyse and evaluate the international forces moulding the fate of countries in the Third World and about how to deal with them. I shall devote the remainder of this editorial to picking out some of these connecting themes.

Development, Underdevelopment or Dependent Capitalist Development? In recent years there has been much (often futile) debate about whether penetration by the capital, armaments, knowledge and cultural influence of the advanced countries brings about the development or the underdevelopment of the countries of the Third World. While the contributors to this *Bulletin* provide numerous examples of the adverse effects—irrelevant social science, misleading information, professional skills that are poorly adapted to local circumstances, excessive arms burdens, the destabilisation of regimes and evasion of economic control by transnationals—they would

all argue that they have to be established empirically and not by definition. Further, they imply a much more differentiated view both as to the specific indicators of development one uses (see *IDS Bulletin* Vol 7 No. 3: The Neutrality of Numbers? and Dudley Seers' comments below on the implications of the CIA for development indicators); and as regards the historical and structural patterns one is talking about. Osvaldo Sunkel suggests that when many economists talk about development what they really mean is capitalist development. Robin Luckham argues that while military expansion may actually favour certain *kinds* of dependent capitalist development, it precludes alternative uses of resources and is often used to prevent the establishment of political and structural *alternatives*. And Manfred Bienefeld and Martin Godfrey show that trades union strategies for the problem of runaway industries will vary according to their evaluation of the likely effect of the internationalisation of capital and of the type of development with which it is associated.

Analysis of the whole—or of parts? Osvaldo Sunkel argues that one cannot take a fragmented or partial view of the development process: taking the point of view of a single discipline without regard to the contributions of other disciplines; studying a single sector without understanding how it fits into the national economy or society; or analysing the development experience of a particular nation state without understanding the dynamics of the world system of which it is a part. The more uncritical exponents of the 'dependency' approach have tended to interpret this—to the satisfaction of their critics—as absolution from responsibility for detailed analysis of real historical occurrences, institutions or countries. The contributors to this *Bulletin*, however, treat real issues—broadcasting in Algeria and Senegal, transfers of military technology and arms sales, the brain drain, trades unions and labour relations, the CIA, Lonhro—in an empirical fashion. Nevertheless all would still insist that a global perspective is needed to sort out the important problems from the unimportant and to determine how they are to be analysed.

System or Power? Development problems are all too often treated as if they were merely matters of the *mechanics* of the particular world or national systems we live in. Things would be a lot simpler if they were: if planning were just a matter of discovering the right product mix and capital output ratios; if commodity agreements could be limited to the control of price fluctuations without regard to

price levels and the international distribution of resources and welfare; if communications policy could be treated as simply a matter of increasing the penetration of the mass media in developing countries, regardless of who controls them; if preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons were just a matter of discovering the appropriate technical and legal formula for inclusion in arms limitation agreements; if the regulation of transnational corporations were just a matter of better exchange control and company law.

But the fact is that behind all these things lie struggles for control: between the major world powers; between rich and poor countries; between social classes. Development is an intensely political problem. It is impossible to say what it is about, still less to propose action, without articulating what kind of development and for whom. But once again this does not remove the responsibility for analysis. The best kind of political economy is that which shows how the operation of the economic and social system itself creates concentrations of resources and power, conflicts of interest and struggles for political control. Martin Godfrey for example, suggests that measures to deal with the brain drain from poor to rich countries would come up against not only the forces at work in the international market for professional skills, but also the international power and influence of professional groups created by that market. What is at issue is not merely how capital and skills move across international boundaries; but also the relations of dominance and dependence created by their internationalisation.

Legacies or Links? The impact of the advanced countries can be thought of in terms of two (inter-related) aspects: the historical legacy created by past domination; and the ongoing links establishing present penetration and control. Rita Cruise O'Brien analyses, for example, both the influence of the models of broadcasting organisation and professionalism inherited by former colonies; and the ongoing import of news, programmes and technology. Failure to observe this distinction results all too often in a rather muddled pursuit of national authenticity. However exhilarating it would be to reverse the course of history and be rid in one fell swoop of such unprecedented phenomena as transistor radios, pop songs, books, doctors, factories and infantry battalions, it would hardly be realistic to do so.

But this does not mean that the institutional legacies of the past should escape re-examination. Some of them—though by no means all—create the conditions for the continuing penetration of

the Third World by the capital, markets and influence of the central countries. Robin Luckham, for example, explains how military organisations based on metropolitan models create a demand for and are kept in operation by the military technology of the advanced industrial powers; and Martin Godfrey how the organisation of the professions and their high power and status increase international flows of skilled professional men from the developing countries. Altering the extent and pattern of present external dependence is all the more difficult because it requires changes in institutional patterns established by centuries of past domination.

Pathos or Practice? Faced with international forces over which national governments, still less groups trying to influence or to overthrow them, have limited control, the temptation is to throw hands up in despair and proclaim the inevitability of dependence and underdevelopment. The contributors to this *Bulletin* (except the editor!) have between them considerable experience in practical affairs, as a glance at the *Notes on Contributors* will confirm. Osvaldo Sunkel points out that the new trends in development thinking first emerged precisely because economists and social scientists directly involved in planning Latin American (and other Third World) economies found their best laid plans brought to nothing by political infighting, class struggles and the operation of international forces.

Yet pointing out the constraints and distortions created by the internationalisation of the capital and power of the central countries does not mean one should sit down and do nothing. Most of the articles in this *Bulletin* discuss practical proposals—new tactics—such as collaboration between social scientists in the Third World to develop analyses that are more relevant to the global situation of their countries (Sunkel; Oteiza); measures to deal with imbalances in the international flow of information (O'Brien); possibilities for and obstacles to arms limitation (Luckham); measures to reduce the international negotiability of professional qualifications (Godfrey); collaboration between trades unions to expose and limit the international exploitation of labour (Bienefeld and Godfrey); controlling the activities of the CIA (Seers) and of transnational corporations (Green). The main difference between these proposals and those conventionally made by development experts is that they are as much directed at governments, interest groups and the organised representatives of social classes in the rich countries as in the

poor; and that they suggest ways the latter may collaborate to overcome their exploitation by the former.

Contradictions or Seamless Web? The pathos of dependence is enhanced by the power of metaphors like 'the global system', 'international forces', 'the transnational corporation'. Fortunately reality is more complex. Even the CIA, as Dudley Seers points out, is not all-powerful, being constrained not only by the forces at work internationally and the realities of power nationally, but also by its sheer inability to understand them. (Stupidity has its uses!) The internationalisation of capital, of labour, of mass communications, of force, *itself* generates contradictions which tend to surface both in the periphery and in the central countries. Manfred Bienefeld and Martin Godfrey discuss, for example, the dislocations in labour markets and tendency towards economic crisis inherent in the internationalisation of production, which provide a potential basis for common action by trade unionists of both rich and poor countries; Robin Luckham discusses the growing conflict between the economic and the political reasons for the sale of arms to developing countries. The concern expressed by Osvaldo Sunkel that development and underdevelopment be studied historically as a dialectically unfolding process is not just of theoretical relevance. For it is the contradictions which develop in the process of change which create the room in which those who oppose the growing dominance of the transnational corporations, the CIA, the military and the international communications industry can manoeuvre.

Politics or Policy? Development experts are rightly concerned that their knowledge be applied to practical problems. But this does not necessarily mean they should restrict themselves to the implementation of goals and policies decided by national governments or international bodies composed of such governments. Enrique Oteiza talks of a growing division in Latin America between the technobureaucrats concerned with the narrow implementation of policy and subservient to authoritarian governments and the more critical social scientists who take a broader view of things and are exposed to government repression. The concerns of development are political concerns arising from the interests of those that espouse them, be they representatives of ruling groups controlling governments, or trade union leaders, peasant organisations, or guerrilla movements. The article by Manfred Bienefeld and Martin Godfrey faces up to this most directly. Does one look at the problem of

runaway industries from the point of view of the men in the boardroom; the men on the shop-floor in the central countries; those on the shop-floor of the peripheral countries where runaway industries are being relocated, or of some coalition between members of these different groups?

So long as 'development' was something that could be brought about by the right set of government policies, development experts were at a premium. But if it is too important to be left to planners and Institutes of Development Studies, they must play a more humble role. Yet our own profession cannot be expected to welcome a devaluation of the international negotiability of its expertise (towards the barefoot economist?) any more than any other group of specialists.

Shared or Disputed Objectives? The goals and material benefits of development are disputed between rich and poor countries internationally and by exploiting and exploited classes within nations. There remain to be sure, many areas of common concern. But elaborate initiatives in international collaboration such as attempted at UNCTAD IV (see *IDS Bulletin* Vol. 7 No. 4), in the context of the New International Economic Order or the North-South dialogue are all too often based on an assumption of greater common interests than in fact exist. Such an assumption might be defended on political grounds—that the shared concerns are those which it is most important to bring to light and to build on. But when the analysis of the situation on which international negotiation is based fails to diagnose the main forces *creating* the division between rich and poor, the result is cynicism and disarray rather than genuine international collaboration.

The same goes for collaboration between the peripheral countries when pursuing their collective interests in negotiations and confrontations with rich countries. One needs to be reasonably precise about which objectives and interests are shared or disputed and by whom. Enrique Oteiza discusses the real potential for inter-regional cooperation between social scientists, but also the obstacles created by language, social perspectives and links with different metropolitan influences; Rita Cruise O'Brien the differences in the way countries with commercial and statist traditions of broadcasting approach international media links; Robin Luckham the tensions between oil-rich countries with large foreign exchange surpluses to devote to arms spending and their less well-endowed neighbours; Manfred Bienefeld and Martin Godfrey the disparity between the relatively small number of develop-

ing countries in which runaway industrial production has been relocated and those where the manufacturing sector is not expanding, as well as the potential conflicts of interests and shared concerns of trades unionists in the developing and the rich countries. The latter underline, furthermore, that trades unionists in the rich countries, in developing countries with expanding industrial sectors and in those with stagnant industrial sectors respectively, will (or will not) perceive their common interests according to the factors they see as responsible for their present situation. The scope for joint action is shaped both positively and negatively by which *analysis* of patterns of international exploitation is accepted.

Nationalism or Internationalism? The most immediate answer to external dominance is disengagement, or conceived more positively, a strategy of national self-reliance. But who would put such a strategy into effect? Dudley Seers points out that national governments, the very centre of any country's decision making, can sometimes themselves be directly penetrated by external agencies like the CIA (or in a more subtle way, one might add, by the IMF or the World Bank). He questions whether in such circumstances it is appropriate to talk of a *national* government at all. This is perhaps rather extreme. But the other contributions contain several other (less dramatic) examples of external penetration of major national institutions: broadcasting engineers who advise the purchase of equipment more appropriate to European than to local circumstances (sometimes against the advice of metropolitan experts!); doctors who support an organisation of medical practice which maintains the international negotiability of their skills rather than ensuring their appropriateness for the health needs of their own country; soldiers who stage coups 'in the national interest' against governments which attempt to cut back military spending and its foreign exchange burden.

What is the use of calling for 'national reintegration' around a national centre that is itself a foil for diverse forms of international penetration?

Disengagement, furthermore, may cut countries in the Third World from more positive influences: those which support less exploitative patterns of development as well as those which create dependence. Rather than isolation, then, we need new forms of collective self-reliance—but self-reliance of who and with whom? The representatives of the Non-Aligned countries whose resolutions on the New Information Order are presented by Rita Cruise O'Brien

evidently see the decolonisation of the media as requiring greater state control and collaboration between *governments*. But is this a view of things that would be appreciated by a left-wing journalist (or indeed a right-wing lawyer: repression makes strange cell-fellows) who has experienced the censoring and banning of newspapers by the government of Mrs Gandhi in India or still less by that of General Videla in Argentina?¹

Conversely, Enrique Oteiza discusses how regional collaboration between social scientists may help to protect their independence of authoritarian governments. But why should they be exempt from government measures to ensure their skills are used for the purposes of 'national development' in the way the government defines it? How far is the whole idea of the critical, socially-conscious academic a by-product of the international transfer of prestigious academic roles to the peripheral countries? Is it not easier for an academic to escape repression than his trades union colleague precisely because he can find someone in Paris or New York to make a fuss on his behalf? Such questions cannot be glossed over; though no doubt it would still be preferable that academic prestige should arise

¹ Just before this edition of the *Bulletin* went to press Mrs Gandhi announced the relaxation of censorship and release of political detainees, underscoring real differences between the two regimes. Nevertheless the basic dilemmas over who controls information and for what purposes remain.

from the appreciation of intellectual skills exercised relevantly in the Latin American context; and that gaoled intellectuals be supported by colleagues in Accra or Bogota rather than in the cafés and pubs of Europe.

Nor is the best strategy necessarily collective self-reliance *within* the Third World alone. Manfred Bienefeld and Martin Godfrey assess the potential for collaboration between trades unions in the Third World and those in central capitalist countries. Robin Luckham discusses the importance of military assistance from the socialist countries in creating the breathing space for Third World disengagement. He calls attention at the same time, however, to some of the paradoxes raised by such assistance: Russian weapons for Amin, for example, as well as to the Indian government or to the MPLA in Angola.

The point of discussing the difficulties tucked away behind strategies of disengagement or collective self-reliance is not to say that such strategies are not necessary or desirable in themselves. Rather it is to urge that they require a clear sense of political direction, as well as a well articulated analysis: both of the international economic forces, class alignments and political interests called into being by imperialism; and of those which can be mobilised against it.

R. L.