
Editorial

It is by now generally agreed that economic growth is by no means a sufficient condition for ending the unholy trinity of unemployment, inequality and poverty. In recent years, as readers of the **IDS Annual Reports** will know, a great deal of work has been done at the Institute on the theoretical and practical problems of egalitarian, poverty-oriented, development strategies.

IDS economists who had taken part in the ILO Employment missions to Colombia, Sri Lanka and Kenya had been feeling the need to explore the technical possibilities of incorporating distributional objectives in growth models, and quantifying policy options. Starting from a slightly different position, several staff economists of the World Bank had become aware of the same need. Conferences were arranged; papers were prepared; a writing group was established; **Redistribution with Growth** (RwG) was published.¹

This issue of the **Bulletin** starts with a trenchant criticism of this book by Colin Leys, essentially questioning its political realism—and innocence. This is followed by two vigorous rebuttals, one by Richard Jolly and the other written jointly by the other four authors of RwG,² and some suggestions for further reading.

The next paper by Brian Easton shows how difficult it is to measure the distribution of income, even in New Zealand, where the basic statistics are very good, and how sensitive the measures are to variations in both definition and treatment. Of course in countries where a high proportion of the population is engaged in agriculture, and other rural occupations, for which there are practically no income data, the problems are very much greater. Part of the difficulty of analysing changes in distribution or incorporating them in planning models is that a great deal depends on how one measures distribution, how one defines income, and whether there are comprehensive sources of data, such as declarations for income tax. (The whole question of the adequacy of statistics to support new lines of thinking in the development field will be the focus of the next issue of the **Bulletin**).

The case studies in RwG examined the experience of various countries—with a variety of government ideologies—within its framework of analysis (very largely economic) to see what light they threw on the possibility of reconciling G with R. The next two articles here are studies of Tanzania

and China where the leadership see (in different ways) these objectives as subsumed within the reshaping of the socio-economic structure, in ways which will unleash social incentives. Indirectly, they both emphasize aspects underlined by Colin Leys, and one common feature which is notable in the context of this controversy is that both refer to the fears of the leadership that the inequalities considered inevitable in a transition period will be perpetuated through property ownership and political power.

The paper on Tanzania, by Reginald Green, is an interesting amplification of his country study in RwG. That by John Gittings draws on two new sources (speeches by Chairman Mao and the documents of the National People's Congress held earlier this year) and it ends with a useful bibliography of work on China which is particularly relevant for those working in the development field.

These are followed by two reviews by IDS Fellows of recently published works on leading topics in RwG—employment policy and the choice of technique. The first review is by Hans Singer, who has been himself one of the leading innovators in this field (as in a number of others). In fact I believe he invented the term RwG while working on the ILO mission to Kenya (led by himself and Richard Jolly), a mission whose empirical fieldwork led to the reconsideration of many basic concepts and theories in the development process.

In fact, Hans' review brings out, of course indirectly, how influential the Kenya report has been in the 'revisionism' in the development field, which has affected attitudes even in the citadels of economic power and theoretical orthodoxy. His criticism is explicitly of the theoretical approach which was common at the end of the 1960s, when the Pearson report and the Second Development Decade documents were issued. This seems a long time ago, though the approach lingers on: the

¹ Oxford University Press, 1974. Readers unfamiliar with it should turn to the second section of Richard Jolly's paper, where its main themes are summarized. A technical innovation in this book which is not discussed directly in this issue, but may have far-reaching effects, because it will immediately strike the planning official as relevant, is the demonstration that the welfare implications of any growth in income depends upon how one weights the increase in the income of different income groups.

² Clive Bell, although a Fellow of IDS, has been working temporarily at the Bank, and joined the three Bank authors in preparing their reply.

book under review was published this year by the ILO.

The second review, by Fred Bienefeld, is of two other works issued as part of the ILO's World Employment Programme, one, by two members of IDS, dealing with the role of second-hand machinery, and the other with applications of cost-benefit analysis in road construction. Fred is particularly severe on the latter, essentially over its failure to emphasize sufficiently the wider implications of the choice of technique, and its expectation that a significant impact will be made on employment merely by increasing the labour-intensity of output. There is an echo here of the Colin Leys' attack on 'incrementalism', which had also been criticized by Reg Green.

This issue discusses, in fact, from several points of view, and drawing on experience in a number of fields and various countries, the possibility of solving social problems in a peaceful and rational way (RwG could also stand for 'Revolution without Grief'³).

The following review, by Edmundo Fuenzalida, a Visiting Fellow at IDS, is on a somewhat but not entirely different subject, essentially the redistribution of world income. The object of Edmundo's criticism is 'only' an article, but it is written by Daniel Moynihan who has exerted a considerable influence in the Nixon-Ford administration, and was recently appointed US Ambassador to the United Nations. Just as we can understand current US foreign policy better if we study Henry Kissinger's academic work (especially of course, on Machiavelli), we need to look rather closely at the published views of someone who will doubtless do much to shape the US position in international meetings, especially the string of major conferences that are looming up ahead—New Economic Order, Habitat, Employment and UNCTAD IV. (One might cite Adlai Stevenson as an example of the limited influence of even a powerful intellect in this post, but that was in a very different sort of Administration).

Since the United States is still a major force in the United Nations system, the implications of Moynihan's call for his country to become a sort of permanent opposition (like, one supposes, the conservatives in the Swedish parliament) are somewhat bleak. So his views, which are not unrepresentative, need careful analysis. His attribution of the nationalist and egalitarian trends in international conferences to Fabian Socialism is perhaps flattering to Britain, but unrealistic, as Edmundo shows. Incidentally, Leys would doubtless agree with Moynihan in taking a poor view of the Fabian influence—but from a

rather different viewpoint.

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One aspect which surfaces continually in this number is that of people's attitudes. John Gittings refers to Chairman Mao's criticism of Stalin for ignoring the 'superstructure', including 'codes and conventions'. (This was an issue discussed more directly in our last **Bulletin**, on 'Cultural Dependence').

If such cultural issues are important (and though this is often denied implicitly, especially in the work of economists, few are brave enough to commit themselves to their irrelevance), then development studies are a wider field than is usually assumed. People's attitudes to their society, to work, to education are, after all, not only among the subject matter of the social sciences but, also, and more particularly, of novelists, poets, film directors and the like.

One way of describing social change is quantitatively—with data on employment and incomes, etc., complemented by sample surveys on opinions and beliefs. Another way is by fictionalizing the changing interactions between people. It is fruitless to argue which is superior. The point is that they are both respectable ways of making statements about social dynamics. Some types of statement are best made by the rigorous researcher, others by the intuition and imagination of the creative artist. They complement each: neither way of looking at change is complete in itself.

This **Bulletin** rashly takes a step into the field of film criticism. Our point of view, as social scientists, is of course very limited. We are not primarily concerned with a film's technique (its montage, composition, etc.) but with the analysable statements it makes about society. This is in a way unfair, because its director could well argue that if he had felt able to make verbal statements he would have done so and not made films. Nevertheless, some films clearly do have important things to say, in their own way, about development—think of 'State of Siege'—and it is worth (*inter alia*) trying to translate these statements into a form where we can study their implications for our own work.

There are other links between films and development that justify their analysis. The social statements embodied in a film tell us a good deal about the film maker: about his perception of

³ The next issue of our **Bulletin** will return to what is the leading political case study of the 1970s, Chile (return because the last **Bulletin** contained an article by Carlos Fortin on the nationalization of copper there). Radomiro Tomic, one of Allende's rivals in the 1970 Presidential election, will give his interpretation of the fall of the UP government.

change—just as a book by a social scientist tells us something not merely about some aspect of society but about the writer himself, his attitudes and values. Indirectly they provide further clues to the attitudes of the intelligentsia, often the bell-wethers of social change.

Finally films are watched by large fractions of the population (especially if one allows for TV showings), not merely in their own countries, and mould attitudes, as well as interpreting them. They are an important influence on social and economic development.

This **Bulletin** closes with a review by Roy Laishley, a research officer at IDS, of Satyajit

Ray's **Distant Thunder**, about the Bengal famine of 1943 (a disaster comparable, in terms of human suffering and loss, with the World War which straddled it in time). The approach of the famine, together with the arrival of a Brahmin couple, is used by Ray to make statements about the social structure of a Bengali village, and its attitudes to change. These statements are identified and analysed by the reviewer, who ends, as Richard Jolly does, by criticizing the impotence of those who believe a far-reaching social solution will somehow occur, without mapping the route through to it. Only connect, as Forster once said.

D.S.