

which develops the critique of women's studies in Tanzania, and Africa as a whole.

The positions taken by the authors are not necessarily shared by the special editors of this issue. It is our expectation that this collection of articles, and views, will stimulate more debate on the many substantive questions posed.

We have appreciated the positive response we received to the invitation for submissions to this special issue. It is unfortunate that we could not include more of the articles submitted. We hope, however, that this collection will inspire women and men to consider the issues raised and to contribute relevant articles to later issues of the journal. It is also expected that this will be the first of many special issues on 'the question' in *The African Review*.

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Foreign Aid and the Question of Women's Liberation

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INTRODUCTION

As women in Third World countries remain deprived, starved, overworked, exploited and oppressed, national governments and international organisations, including UN organs, multilateral aid agencies and NGOs, claim to be concerned with the plight of women in the rural areas and urban slums. Individual governments have established ministries, departments or commissions to be in charge of 'Women's Affairs', while international organisations have created institutions and structures to assist and support women's activities and protect their rights. The United Nations, for instance, from its inception symbolically recognised the existence of the women's question by including in its charter a phrase condemning all forms of discrimination on the basis of religion, race and sex as well as a principle of human equality.¹ In 1946, the UN's Economic and Social Council established a Commission of Women, and in 1952 the General Assembly adopted the Convention on Political Rights of Women. Twenty-three years later, the General Assembly announced the International Year of Women which was followed by a declaration of the United Nation's Decade for Women (1976—1985). Part of the World Plan of Action for the decade constituted ninety-nine projects designed mainly to support poor women in the rural and urban sectors. Seminars, congresses and workshops were organised at national and international level to review, assess and evaluate programmes planned for the decade. Responding to the UN's World Plan for Action, African states included in the Lagos Plan of Action for the Development of Africa 1980—2000 a section recommending measures to improve women's contributions to the development process. This section covered such aspects as agriculture, nutrition, handicrafts, small-scale industries, employment, education and training, science and technology, natural resources, water supply, energy, health and family life. It was further recommended that steps should be taken to involve women at higher administrative and policy-making levels alongside attempts to lessen the domestic burden of rural women. Training was proposed to enable women to perform their multiple roles as *wives, mothers, workers and citizens*.² Studies have shown that women, especially in rural Africa and urban slums, are extremely overworked. Every minute of their lives are spent on a variety of domestic chores such as walking long distances for firewood and water, carrying fodder for cattle where land shortage has made cattle grazing impossible; and in the fields tilling, weeding or harvesting the land with the hoe. Food production, processing and preserving for domestic consumption is a major occupation of these women,³ while they are also responsible for reproducing and maintaining a

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future labour force.⁴ It is proposed here that the material basis of women's oppression is the exploitative relations of production that have existed in any given society. The process of primitive accumulation of capital in the pre-colonial societies, for instance, subjected some women to extreme forms of exploitation by denying them the right to own property and the right to inherit wealth and power. The colonial process, however, intensified this state of oppression, creating conditions which later made aid to women a political necessity.

WHY AID WOMEN?

The role of women in food production, preservation and processing and their role in reproducing and maintaining the future labour force, has made them victims of aid packages which have been manipulated by specific interests external to women, the supposed beneficiaries of aid. Such aid packages have their origins in the colonial process. The introduction of a cash crop economy, exploitation in the mining industry and the principle of 'divide-and-rule' by the colonial powers created conditions which made it possible for aid to be used by both state and international capital as a political instrument. Both cash crop production and the mining industry diverted part of the family labour used for the subsistence of the family units. In most cases, the male members of the family migrated to urban areas for wage employment or else sought seasonal employment on the settlers' farms or in mining. Since the wage earned was just enough to enable the individual to meet his taxation obligations and to subsist, the workload of the women who were left behind to head the family had to increase. In the Kilimanjaro region of Tanzania, for example, the coffee plots were too small to earn sufficient family income for the maintenance of the family as well as payment of taxation during the colonial period. Coffee therefore, was, grown on the land traditionally used for food production and grazing. Although bananas, the staple food crop, were grown on the coffee plot, the production did not provide enough food for an average family. Shortage of land for grazing greatly reduced the amount of cattle owned per household and this in turn reduced the amount of meat and milk for domestic consumption. Traditionally, cattle grazing was considered a male domain and when the majority of men migrated to urban areas for wage employment women not only had then to perform all the domestic chores, weed the coffee farm, but also to attend to the care and feeding of the cattle while still working on the family food crop plot normally far from the homestead. Consequently, the production of food in this region declined during the colonial period, specifically in the production of milk.⁵ It is ironic that in Kilimanjaro region, which contributed greatly to government revenue during and after the colonial period through its cash crop production,⁶ the lives of the majority of children and women in this region have been constantly threatened by starvation and malnutrition. The poor peasant women who constitute the majority of the rural labour force are perpetually physically and mentally exhausted. During the colonial period, when the land

problem was not so acute, the number of landless unemployed had not reached the present astonishing levels, and when the labour of women in producing food and maintaining the family unit could still make life tolerably manageable, the colonial government did not see the necessity for any 'special assistance' to women. The present food crisis, the growing number of landless unemployed who must be fed and maintained, the ever-decreasing size of the family plot due to patterns of inheritance, and the virtual disappearance of land for food cultivation in the mountain valleys has created a crisis which no state can afford to ignore. During the colonial period peasants openly resisted colonial control over cash crop production; some withdrew their labour, others organised themselves into growers' and marketing associations, while some resisted by destroying the actual crops. The colonial state recognised the 'power' of the growers and attempted to destroy it or control it by the gun, through legal machinery or by controlling the associations. In some instance, selected peasants were provided with token incentives, minor price increases or credit facilities. Today, the 'nationalist' state which is so dependent on the revenue accrued from cash crop production and on food production for the maintenance of the bureaucracy, has similarly recognised this 'power' of the producers and their ability to resist any form of control in refusing to grow cash crop, or deliberately neglecting their cash crop farms or by refusing to sell their surplus food to the state-owned institutions. The state, in collaboration with international capital, has invariably employed similar tactics in attempting to control the production of both food crops and cash crops. As women constitute the majority of rural labour force in most African countries, they have been, therefore, the major victims of these manipulative tactics which include the use of force.

The mining industry affected women in the same way as did the cash crop economy. Although the South African racist regime provides the most extreme form of institutionalised oppression in its subjection of South African black women in various forms of exploitation, it exposed the work of the many aid agencies which claim to be charitable and non-political. One does not understand why such an oppressive social system has allowed the so-called 'charitable' organisations, such as the Red Cross, UNICEF, UNESCO, to 'assist' the very victims of state oppression. If the state is responsible for breaking-up the families of the miners, it is ironic that the same state allows these families to be 'assisted'. The racist regime has, for instance, instituted special rules which forces black South African men to leave their families and work as migrant labourers in the mining industry. Living as prisoners on the reserves, they are not allowed to live with their families on the logical understanding that, given the low level of wages, migrant workers could not maintain a family unit. Thus 'aiding' agencies are allowed to 'assist' women to engage in income generating activities so that they can maintain the families as well as perform their role of reproducing the future labour force without extra cost to capital.⁷ The South African case is an extreme but not isolated case of an institutionalised oppressive social system where the oppressor state allows 'charitable' organisations to assist victims of state oppression. It is this hypocrisy which exposes other social economic systems and helps to distinguish rhetoric

expressions in national constitutions and aid contracts from actual social practice.

Finally, colonial policy was based on the cardinal principle of divide-and-rule on the basis of social classes, races, tribes, religion and sex. Sexual discrimination was reflected in the employment patterns, administrative structures, and educational systems. During the German colonial period in Tanzania, for instance, there were no girls enrolled in the sixty established village primary schools or in the central vocational schools.⁸ When girls' schools were finally opened, including those run by religious organisations, they were given a separate curriculum which included domestic science and homecraft, while a very small fraction trained as nurses, midwives and primary school teachers. Education for girls was aimed at making them better 'wives' of the urban elite or for specific, traditionally feminine jobs such as nursing. The essence of this division, however, was to reduce the strength of the workers as it was clearly understood by the colonial state that if equal numbers of women were given equal learning opportunities it would create a stronger political awareness and family units would then become the basis of political activities against the colonial power. Inequality in access to educational opportunities partly explains why there was a smaller proportion of women in professional and managerial jobs and in positions of political influence during the post-independence period.

The decolonisation process did not lead to immediate power transfer from the colonial state to the newly-independent state for, while the flags and political leadership changed, the economy was still controlled by international capital. Since the leadership in the newly-independent state had no direct control over the resources, it was hindered from pursuing policies which would lead to the improvement of the general welfare of the masses, even where desired. The leadership was thus faced with two alternatives to survive. The first was to pursue the independence struggle to its logical end; i.e. to carry out a revolutionary struggle against international capital and completely destroy the colonial relations of production. Alternatively, the leadership could have sought alliance with international capital through a variety of contracts, including aid packages or shareholding; an alliance which would finally lead to new forms of mass exploitation. Unfortunately, the second alternative was more attractive as costing the leadership less. Having opted for an alliance with international capital against the masses, the leadership was immediately preoccupied with power struggles. The immediate issues, were, who was to be what? What criterion was to be employed in distributing power? Should age, sex, religion, race or ethnicity determine patterns of power distribution? What organ would be more powerful, the party or central government? In the central government, what would be the locus of power, Parliament or Executive? Which of the party organs would be more powerful, the Central Committee or National Executive? The masses, however, had totally different aspirations; they were preoccupied with issues of survival. Women toiled on the land with a hoe; those who for generations had survived carrying firewood and buckets of water on their heads and babies on their backs; whose lives were being threatened by starvation, communicable disease, pre-natal and post-natal complications; who were

perpetually seeing their babies dying from starvation and malnutrition; women who never delivered under the care of a village 'trained' midwife and who never dreamt of seeing a medical specialist: to the majority of the masses, it did not make any real difference whether it was a black or a white, a man or a woman, young or old who was handed power. Their main concern was not who was doing what, to the women in particular it did not matter whether the extension field officers, the doctors, teachers, engineers, administrators, policemen were men or women. It did not matter who was driving the heavy trucks, the tractors, building the hospitals, schools and universities. For, in reality, what actually mattered was *who was benefiting from such services*. If peasant women were taking care of the family units, if they were tilling the land with the hoe and still carrying firewood on their heads, the men were forced into economic activities which did not contribute to their own general welfare or that of their families. The cities and the towns were full of men who were carrying bricks, driving heavy trucks, constructing roads, but living in deplorable conditions. These who were building the consultant hospitals were not the ones who were being attended by medical specialists. Those who were building comfortable houses were living in slums without consideration of any hygienic conditions. From the above the contradiction between the aspirations of the masses and that of the petty bourgeoisie is obvious. Such contradictions are also expressed that of the petty bourgeoisie is obvious. Such contradictions are also expressed in the women's question.

The question of women was conceived by petty-bourgeois women as an issue of sexual inequality *per se*. Petty-bourgeois women started challenging inequality based on sex in several spheres such as the distribution of administrative positions including ministerial posts, and inequality in the access to educational facilities including technical and university education. This demand for equal distribution of power among sexes within the context of inequality did not basically threaten the interests of international capital and its local counterparts. It is within this context that aid packages were negotiated to enable capital to increase the rate of profit at the same time as they enabled the petty-bourgeoisie to maintain its power position. Three types of aid packages, educational aid, income generating and aid for social services, will be examined in the rest of this paper to show how women became the victims of these manipulative tactics.

AID PACKAGES

Educational Aid

Inequality in access to educational opportunities has been considered as one major cause of inequality in job distribution, social mobility and inability to utilise scientific knowledge and technological innovations. Studies have shown that in most of post-primary school learning institutions, including universities, the ratio of females: males is extremely small and drop-out rates at all stages is greater for females than for males.⁹ Similar works have also shown that less

women specialise in technical and science subjects. Because of this inequality in access to educational opportunities and imbalance in subject combinations, some governments have enacted laws which prohibit discriminative educational policies, have requested aid for girls' schools including conversion of boys' schools into co-educational, or have pursued policies which seem to favour girls in pursuing higher studies and technical subjects as a way of balancing the ratio of boys to girls at all levels.¹⁰ Some donor agencies have offered women fellowships in pursuing higher studies including specialised fields. Educational aid packages for women have thus ranged from literacy programmes to university education. Educational support to women, however, has been based on similar Assumptions as those governing general educational support in Third World countries. Immediately after Independence the majority of Third World countries, following the advice of World Bank, pursued educational policies which were 'manpower oriented'. This implied expansion of secondary and higher levels of learning to prepare the required 'skilled' personnel.¹¹ Further, the majority of the people were not to be incorporated within the formal learning system. In Tanzania, for instance, the World Bank recommended four year primary schooling for the majority of its child population on the grounds that, financially, Tanzania was not capable of offering formal education for more than four years and, moreover, it argued that given the nature of economy and the level of the growth of productive forces, Tanzania did not need to offer more than four-years of primary education.¹² Neither mass adult education programmes nor universal primary education were considered as a priority. With this type of development, educational support for women was needed only to balance the number of females to males in entering the few secondary schools and higher levels of learning, including the University. As this balancing could not be done overnight because of the colonial educational institutions inherited, the question of balancing the few available opportunities has preoccupied petty-bourgeois politics throughout the post-independence era.

Educational aid packages during the first decade of independence in Tanzania were mainly directed in the construction and building of new institutions for higher learning as well as provision of skilled personnel to train the required local personnel as well as provision of expertise knowledge. A decade after independence, however, this educational strategy, and indeed the whole development strategy, was being criticized by both petty-bourgeoisie and international organisations as being too elitist and irrelevant to the majority of the people. Accordingly, the modern sector never had a 'spill-over' effect into the traditional sector. Thus, the educated few acquired an elitist arrogance that alienated them from the masses who had subsidised their education. The development strategies, and specifically the elitist educational models, had to be abandoned and replaced with more egalitarian models which would incorporate the majority of the people into the development process. Ironically, the very institutions and states which had recommended 'elitist' educational models were now condemning them. By the 1970s, not only the World Bank but the majority of donor agencies were prepared to support what they had earlier considered as 'non-physical components' of education, i.e. financing of educational planning, curriculum development, production of reading material, mobile units, village libraries. With this new trend in educational support, it seemed as if donor

agencies were now willing to support a seemingly egalitarian educational system which included literacy campaigns, Adult Education Programmes and Universal Primary Education (UPE) under the package of basic service strategy. Within the context of basic service strategy, women were to be given special assistance which would enable them to perform more effectively their multiple roles as *wives, mothers, citizens and workers*.¹³ This strategy, however, had its roots in the contradictions which the newly-independent states were confronted with during the first decade of independence.

Internally, the majority of the states were confronted with power struggles within the petty-bourgeoisie and between petty-bourgeoisie and the masses. This struggle was reflected in the series of military coup d'etats, civil wars and border clashes which characterised the first decade of independence in Africa. Both materials resources and energy had to be spent in strengthening the military, creating such 'symbols' of power as new capitals, international airports, highways, and 'national' universities with conspicuous sky-scrapers. Development, as Nyerere lamented, meant developing things and not people.¹⁴ This type of development had specific implication for the masses in general, and women in particular. Firstly, it meant a drain on the rural labour force required for food production to the construction industry, i.e. manual labourers were drawn from the rural sector. It further resulted in an increase in that percentage of the population not self-sufficient in food. This created demand for increases in food and cash crop production in order to raise the foreign exchange necessary for the import of foods and other requirements demanded by the urban elite. For the rural women, this brought about an increase in the already heavy workload. It was being assumed that, if rural masses were to acquire 'basic' 'usable' or 'functional' knowledge, then they could cope with the situation. Since women constituted a greater percentage of this rural labour force, it was logical that women had to be given special attention. The main emphasis was to make women better tools of production, and this had nothing to do with their liberation. Various donor agencies were prepared to support educational programmes to facilitate the improvement of domestic gadgets so as to release the untapped talents of women from the kitchen to what was to be considered as more productive activities in the economy. Educational aid to the masses, and to women in particular, was to be carried out within the context of the already established educational pyramid. The majority were to be offered a 'minimum learning package' and the minority a 'maximum' package. Economically, the minimum package would enable the majority of producers to acquire 'usable' knowledge to make them better tools of production. Ideologically, it would arrest the growing awareness by the masses of the gap between increased knowledge and technological capacity and the increase in degree of illiteracy. It was particularly significant for women to acquire 'functional' basic education because of their central position in production, reproduction and in maintaining the future labour force. Educational packages for women included such aspects as child care, a variety of crafts, food and nutrition and food preservation techniques. Educational aid packages, therefore, have been directed to retaining the educational pyramid at both international and national level. It has made it possible for few states to control the scientific resources such as research

institutions, communication facilities and technological innovations: Those who control educational resources internationally are capable of using educational aid to wield influence over the sovereignty of the poor states by offering only small doses to a very small fraction of their population. At national level, it enables that minority which forms alliances with international capital to have power over the masses.

Income Generating Projects

Aid has been sought and provided to assist women in initiating projects which would enable them to generate income. Tailoring, dyeing clothes, pottery work, poultry and other farming activities, beer stores and hotels, small business activities and co-operative ventures are some of the enterprises undertaken. Supporting women income generating activities had been based on the assumption that women, as the most oppressed and exploited individuals, have been leading marginalised lives because they have mainly engaged in non-income generating activities, specifically unpaid domestic duties. Since men are employed in the wage-earning sector and have control over their income from employment or cash crops production and as women have no means of earning an income, this has contributed to women's inability to contribute to family incomes and explains the poor condition of women and children. Studies have shown, however, that the struggle for survival in the majority of Third World countries has occupied the lives of the exploited masses - both men and women.¹⁵ The present international crisis is a threat to peaceful exploitation of the world's absolute poor. The rising cost-of-living in the Third World countries, for instance has made it impossible for the peasants, and specifically women, to bear the cost of reproducing the future labour force let alone maintaining it. Aid, especially for income-generating projects, has been used by international capital as one means of enabling women to bear the cost of reproducing and maintaining the labour force without cost to capital. Such aid packages have also been used to minimise international conflict and tensions which would otherwise result because of the difference between mass starvation in the Third World countries and high levels of consumption and wastages in the 'developed' countries to manage the Contradiction between the needs and aspirations of the petty-bourgeoisie and the needs of the masses, the Contradiction between the conspicuous luxurious life patterns and consumption of petty-bourgeoisie and the struggle for subsistence of the masses. Thus, the wages of workers in real terms have been declining as the cost-of-living rises, and whereas the price of raw materials has remained low as the price of manufactured goods has risen sharply, so the future of the toiling masses seems bleak and the struggle for survival becomes a real battle. Although the food produced by women and the money earned by men can no longer permit the family unit to subsist, it is assumed that women in the majority of Third World countries have enough capability to endure and persevere through hardship and are capable of shouldering mult-duties; that, given some modicum of assistance, they can generate extra income for the family. Thus, the present unequal international situation will be continued with low prices of raw materials and higher rising

prices of manufactured goods. The politics of 'aid' is, therefore, the politics of the status quo! Aid is directed to maintain the present levels of inequality at both national and international levels. Aid mystified the real problems by elevating secondary contradictions into primary contradictions as it ignores totally the primary contradiction. Most income-generating projects, for instance, have almost invariably been imposed upon the masses as a deal between aid agencies/governments and the governments in the recipient countries. In almost all cases, the needs of the masses have been identified either by a donor agency/government or else by government of the recipient or groups of individuals with power and influence in the recipient countries.

An example of this was the Manyoni tailoring project in Tanzania which was sponsored by Canadian Universities Overseas Services (CUSO). It was first initiated by CUSO and Small Scale Industries Development Organisation (SIDO) officers who first identified the need to engage class-seven leavers in income-generating activities. Since some were already undertaking sewing the two 'officers' thought that it would be an a plausible idea to provide the girls with sewing machines. As a result, a report was written by the two parties, an agreement signed and sewing machines made available. On the arrival of the sewing machines, however, the old group had disintegrated and a new group was founded, this time by UWT. The project failed to take-off as the sewing machines were electrical but there was no electricity in Manyoni.¹⁶ The failure of the project created tensions between CUSO and SIDO and the beneficiaries as well as UWT which was claiming to represent women's interests! The Manyoni project is not an isolated case peculiar to the specific donor recipient interaction. Most of the income-generating activities have had almost similar problems. In most cases, the beneficiaries of the project have not participated in the identification planning or evaluating of the project. The needy have been considered as passive actors in the process of development. Their needs are always taken for granted, and the way of resolving their problems has never been considered as their concern. This has not only under-rated the intellectual capacities of the producers but has also presumed a level of their awareness of their own environment. It is assumed, for instance, that women will need to learn 'modern' cookery; therefore gas cookers or electrical cookers have been provided as part of aid packages. The real life of women in the villages is confined, however, to the traditional fire place which uses fuelwood. Participation has merely been paid lip service and has never been part of the aid process. Funds have been embezzled by the smarter women; or the income generated has benefited only a few individual women and just contributed to increasing inequalities. As the most needy soon realise that they are being exploited, they withdraw their labour input and the projects die with time. Cases of successful aid projects are isolated phenomenon.¹⁷ Mass-poverty, starvation, high degree of infant mortality and the general welfare of the people cannot be removed or improved by aid packages that perpetuate the present inequalities which exist internationally and nationally.

big hospitals; at village level, several villages are served by a rural medical aid. As a result of this pattern of distribution peasant women deliver in crowded maternity rooms with minimum facilities under a village midwife; while the petty-bourgeois women deliver in well-equipped consultant hospitals or regional/district hospitals under the care of a gynecologist. While aid is granted for the training of rural medical aid and village midwives, aid is also negotiated and given to train gynecologists and nurses and midwives. The amount spent in training a medical specialist is more than ten times the amount needed to train a rural aid worker.

Whereas, distribution and utilisation of aid packages reflect fundamental contradictions both internationally and at national level, the amount of resources available reflects this fundamental contradiction. If the global resources were to be assessed and compared to general needs, it would be found that, given the level of scientific knowledge and technology available, no single soul would starve for lack of food, no-one would die because of lack of facilities and nobody would be imprisoned by total ignorance. A comparison of the amount of resources being used for destruction in armaments with amount of aid to social services²⁰ shows how energy, resources and time is being spent on power struggles among nations and within nations and how little attention is being given to the welfare of the people. It is not by accident that there is more knowledge for self-destruction than for sustaining life. It is no wonder that there are more research institutions devising new military technology than researching on food production preservation and distribution. Whereas, there are already instruments enough to destroy the globe in a matter of seconds their lives slightly more comfortable! The question of moral obligation is assisting the masses in Third World countries on the part of those who have a monopoly of science and technology does not exist; for the resources are available and the capacity exists but there is no such commitment to use even a small proportion of these resources to manage the problems let alone eradicating them. Neither is there a genuine political commitment on the part of petty-bourgeoisie in the majority of Third World countries to solving the above problems. Expenditure patterns show how much energy and resources are being utilised in maintaining the positions of those in power.²¹ The poverty of the rural sector and the relative affluence of the urban elite does not reflect a political commitment to resolving such problems. There is no basis to believe that the plethora of problems facing more than three-fourth of the world's population living in the Third World countries can be resolved by aid packages.

CONCLUSION

If aid is taken to mean transfer of 'real' resources from those who have to those who do not have, then whatever resources have been transferred from capitalist countries and institutions directed to 'aid' the most needy women in the rural sector and slum dwellings, have not constituted 'real' resource transfer and therefore, have not, benefited the supposed beneficiaries. Exploiting the

Aid for Social Services

Specific aid packages have been offered with the intention of improving the health status of women and children. This has included, in Tanzania, the establishment of Maternal and Child Health Services (MCH), supporting seminars and short courses in nutrition and child care services, provision of clean tap water, and improving domestic gadgets. A number of international organisations such as USAID, UNICEF, WHO, FAO, CUSO, and SIDA, have supported these services. This type of aid package has been based upon similar assumptions as those governing other aid packages which support women; as such, they have suffered a similar fate and similar impact. Problems related to the health condition of women, specifically poor peasant women and women living in the urban slums, have been considered as technical problems which can be technically resolved.¹⁸ The donor agencies and governments have thus been convinced that problems of communicable diseases, malnutrition, conditions of early infancy, maternal mortality rates, pre-natal and post-natal problems, stem from the unbreakable vicious cycle of poverty, ignorance, poor environmental sanitation, lack of equipment, lack of trained personnel, lack of clean water and a chain of other factors.¹⁹ In resolving these problems recipient governments have requested and donors have agreed to provide such supplies as hospital equipment, tablets, vaccines, vehicles, water pipes and building material. Funds have also been made available to assist in the training of personnel to render such services as MCH aid, rural medical aid, field extension officers. A study carried out by the author, for example, showed how a specific aid project, MCH, was being manipulated to maintain the existing power hierarchies and perpetuating a state of dependency. Observing the distribution of these facilities, for instance, one immediately notes an obvious contradiction. The MCH services were supposed to have, among other things, motor vehicles. Out of the 126 vehicles provided for the services of MCH, more than 9 were being used at the Ministry headquarters by sectional heads while some districts did not have any. A few district of workers MCH co-ordinators were provided with vehicles while MCH rural aid were given bicycles. If one was to rationalise the needs of the masses the motor vehicles would be needed by the villagers, district co-ordinators, bicycles and headquarters not more than one vehicle. In this example, the vehicles which had been granted for the services of MCH were not being used for this service. Various sectional heads at the headquarters were using the vehicles for other purposes. At district level, for instance, if the District Development Director or other 'top officials' at district level did not have vehicles assigned to them, normally they used the MCH vehicles. But if the District Medical Officer insisted on using the vehicle for MCH services then, in most cases, fuel would not be allocated to the vehicle nor would funds be available for its maintenance. This pattern of distribution is not a phenomenon peculiar to the MCH services only. The Health programme as a whole and its services are urban-centred. Although the majority of the people live in the villages, where diseases are rampant, the biggest consultancy hospitals are located in the large towns, each district headquarter having at least one district hospital and each region a regional hospital. Where regional and district headquarters combine, then there are two

needs of the masses, and specifically the needs of the oppressed women, international capital and the petty-bourgeoisie have manipulated aid packages to women to penetrate and exploit the masses and strengthen their power positions. On the other hand, the exploited masses, and indeed the exploited women, have not remained passive instruments of these manipulations. Some 'failure' of aid projects can directly be related to resistances by masses who are being manipulated. There are cases where the masses refused to offer their labour power and as a result, such projects even fail take off.²² In some other cases, participation in a project has been determined by what the individual participants gain, after which the individuals withdraw from the project; in such cases both donor agency or government and recipient record a failure to achieve aid objectives. What then constitutes real aid to the exploited and oppressed masses? Aid which enables the masses to comprehend the forces that perpetually oppress them. Aid that provide some intellectual guidance to the masses to enable them to understand their rights as human beings and their own actual and potential ability to bring about real change that will once and for all liberate them from oppression and exploitation.

FOOTNOTES

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