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Book Reviews

Agricultural Development in Southern Africa: Farm Household Economics and the Food Crisis, Allan Low, James Currey, London, 1986 (217 pp, £19.50).

This book has been promoted as 'another landmark in the literature on African development'. It is undoubtedly an important contribution, drawing on 10 years work in rural agricultural development. Low presents a perspective on the causes of the poor agricultural productivity of farm households in the Southern African Region. Farm households are often not solely or primarily farmers, especially where wage employment and other non farm opportunities exist. In the absence of any landless households farm production suffers due to out-migration. For reasons of social security and the benefits of cheap non-market production in rural areas, overall household welfare is maximised by maintaining a rural base even though it may be associated with reduced farm production. The persistent food crisis in the region is explained by the inherent tendency for food production per person to decline under this system.

The book is structured in three parts. Low starts by developing a conceptual model of household economics in the Southern African context. Part two makes an analysis of evidence from the region, focusing on a number of contemporary development concerns, and part three concludes by drawing out some of the major implications for policy and research.

Low claims that his decision making model of the indigenous farm household provides a better explanation than conventional theory and analysis of the (non) development experience in the rural areas of the region. To those not initiated in the short-hand of algebraic utility functions, resource and income constraints and the impact of changing a log-log labour return curve to a sigmoid one, parts of the book will be obscure! Many may simply balk at the two critical chapters 2 and 4, which present the theory and elaboration of the model. Beyond any air of mystification, Low's book needs to be critically located as 'a perspective' within what is an open debate on the nature, dynamics and consequences of both planned and broader socioeconomic change in the rural economy of the Southern African region.

The model is based on an extension of neoclassical paradigms of the farm household as a decision making unit. His adaptation of the new household-economics theory of consumer choice to the indigenous farm household in the region, includes an account of both non-market production and of cyclical demographic processes. Based on results which Low himself freely recognises "cannot be said to be conclusive", the model none-the-less rejects the assumption of decreasing returns to labour on the family farm for an alternate assumption which is assumed to be universally applicable!

In the absence of an adequate data-base the model is not tested nor analysed rigorously (in an econometric sense) but is used to explore a number of issues affecting development. Evidence supporting the broad propositions of the model is selectively drawn from numerous reports and surveys of Swaziland and relevant documentation elsewhere in the region. Low's interpretation of issues such as the adoption of improved crop technology, non-market benefits of land-use rights and cattle ownership, labour migration and the broader aggregate implications of these and other features for development initiatives, are then explored at the household level through an elaboration of the relationship *between* market and non-market production.

This methodological approach includes three broad levels. The first is the level of the paradigm, the second concerns the details of the assumptions of the model itself and the third involves the choice of statistics and types of quantitative analyses used in support of the broad argument.

At the level of the paradigm - decision making models of indigenous farm households - the spotlight is on *decisions* at the household level. These tend to take place in a (less precisely specified) 'context' which none-the-less gives rise to certain constraints and opportunities. Despite the six page chapter on 'Historical developments re-examined and other historical references, the perspective is such that one aggregates up from farm household surveys. In this process a dangerous reversal of cause and effect can take place. The 'context' is seen as the aggregation of all (free?) decision making at the micro level rather than vice versa - ie the historically structured context being determinant in constrained household decision making. In this regard, the 'realities' of the Labour Reserves - land expropriations, forced location into ecologically marginal areas, and discriminatory labour laws etc, as portrayed in the political economy perspectives of white settler colonialism - are replaced with a rural household version of 'economic man' in the 1980s.

Secondly, modelling implies an analytical reduction of the immense diversity of reality into the 'typical' or by definition 'model' farm. Both conceptually and analytically the facts of a socially and economically differentiated rural economy tend to be eliminated from investigation or compressed into averages. It is perhaps not surprising therefore that Low convincingly presents the similarities in economic opportunities and constraints faced by households across the region. His narrow typological approach to variations in household structure, and emphasis on the integrity of the household as a decision making unit tend to imply a greater homogeneity of material circumstances than is actually the case. Furthermore, there is no attempt to identify any clearly divergent gender or class-based interests, through analysis of relations *between* and *within* households.

Thirdly, while Low's analysis is richly illustrated with detailed disaggregated breakdowns of information, especially for Swaziland, the *ceteris paribus* proviso needs to be more loudly signalled (where 'evidence' is applied universally to the entire region. The use elsewhere of survey research tables (which present arithmetic means for broad groupings within relatively small samples) further contributes to the impression of homogeneous types of households and situations. It is now widely recognised that the very same evidence grouped and analysed differently might well suggest and support alternative hypotheses.

It would be truly surprising to find no linkages between economic and cyclical demographic processes within rural households in Southern Africa. Low's review of the literature and analysis is more than adequate proof that this broadly recognised phenomenon exists in the region. While one can sympathise with his reaction to the worst types of stultifying rural class analysis, understanding the basis of socioeconomic differentiation is not, as he infers, solely a function of 'ideological imperatives' and 'political leanings'. Low seems happy with the economic differentiation found in the indigenous rural sectors of Southern Africa. Some 'residual' inequalities are acknowledged but not considered worth explaining.

While purporting to be scientific, neutral and non political or ideological, Low ends up being precisely the opposite. His analysis clearly abstracts itself from examining many of the 'concrete' aspects of socioeconomic differentiation and thereby takes on more of an 'ideological' than 'scientific' value! He ends up implicitly affirming that in the social sciences the value free approach is at its very core value-laden, and reactionary at that. One wonders firstly, what degree of residual inequalities might attract his attention as being worthy of some alternative explanation, and secondly, whether he is willing to acknowledge that the cyclical basis of economic mobility, on which he places so much emphasis, is in part methodologically derived?

Clearly the demographic and socioeconomic dimensions of mobility interact - a point recognised by most scholars of Southern African studies. For those looking for a creative analysis of the dynamic relations between gender, socioeconomic differentiation, structural processes at the macro level, and at the level of household organisation and development cycle, the book falls short. The challenge of

separating out the causes and effects of these different dimensions of differentiation are not addressed. Not until Part III of the book does Low begin to hint at this dynamic. Specifically he advocates a broader implementation of farming systems research which would more fully account for gender and on and off-farm activities in assessment of the production and distribution impacts of technological developments.

Reviewed by Jeremy Jackson, Department of Rural and Urban Planning, University of Zimbabwe, Harare.

Popular Participation in Planning for Basic Needs. Concepts, Methods and Practices. Franklyn Lisk (ed), (ILO-WEP), Gower Publishing, Aldershot, 1985 (277pp, no price quoted).

Those readers familiar with the Basic Needs Approach (BNS) to development will be aware of the fact that this approach divides basic human needs into such categories as consumption goods, service goods, employment and mass participation. Thus the Basic Needs Approach to development, as endorsed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO)'s World Employment Conference held in Geneva in 1976, assigns a key role to popular participation as a means of action for improving the human condition. This book is about the concept of popular participation within the general context of the Basic Needs Approach as endorsed by the International Labour Organisation. The publication is the outcome of a World Employment Programme (WEP) project and is based on research undertaken within the framework of the ILO - a major proponent of the idea.

The book is in three parts. Part one looks at definitions, concepts and typology. Judging by the tone of the book, there is no doubting that the authors are very much in favour of popular participation as a tool for development. Hence they argue, for instance, that popular participation is an important condition for achieving sustained economic growth and social progress and a fundamental goal of development in its own right. Thus, in a sense, they see popular participation not only as a means to an end but as an end in itself. As the authors put it, "Popular participation is therefore an end goal of development as well as a means of attaining more equitable development" (p17).

In this section of the book attempts are made to define various relevant words - terms salient in people-oriented development endeavours. The concept of participation is defined, as are other concepts such as employment, consultation, self reliance, decentralised planning, and decision making, to name the major ones. The concept of cooperation is also mentioned, and on this score the authors argue that popular participation can include cooperation between decision-makers and those affected by their actions, without any formal surrender of power to participants, although they may be allowed to modify decisions in order to retain their cooperation.

Part 2 of the publication is entitled 'Participatory Development: National Experiences' and it looks at specific country experiences in terms of efforts to incorporate popular participation in development activities. Countries looked at include China, Tanzania and Kenya, in that order. The China case study attempts, *inter alia*, to show how popular participation can be used to promote economic and social development among the entire population and how the Chinese government actually makes use of mass participation to achieve basic needs and other related socioeconomic objectives of development. The authors maintain that popular participation must be complemented by the provision of an appropriate institutional/administrative structure as well as a political system and socioeconomic framework that allows for the active involvement of the people in the decision-making process at all levels (p97).

Tanzania serves as an appropriate example since aspects of its experience are borrowed from the Chinese model. In Kenya, the Harambee (Self Help) movement is looked at, and provides some very useful lessons. The Kenyan experience, in a nutshell, shows that when there is a mismatch between the wider political system on the one hand and the administrative and institutional structures of the planning system on the other, serious problems are bound to occur.

What is interesting about the choice of case studies is that they represent, broadly speaking, two different political persuasions, with China and Tanzania (socialist) on the one extreme and Kenya (capitalist) on the other. The authors seem to suggest that the political ideology of a country is important for popular participation to be successfully effected. For the overall development process, the political dimension of popular participation is equally important for facilitating the attainment of socioeconomic objectives (p16). However, if the examples looked at are anything to go by, then it might not be far fetched to suggest that the application of popular participation as a method transcends political ideologies. What should be viewed as paramount is the government's commitment to the idea.

Part 3 addresses the topic 'Participatory Practice: Local-level Experiences'. This is concerned with attempts to translate the concept of popular participation into practice focusing on the participation of disadvantaged groups in specific development programmes and projects as a means of improving their well-being. In this section, experiences from different corners of the world, particularly Latin America and Asia are highlighted. Perhaps an interesting lesson to emerge from the Latin American case study is that the desire and demand for participation by disadvantaged and oppressed groups could unfortunately eventually be expressed in rather violent forms, especially when confronted with fierce opposition by the elite who dominate the decision-making structures.

Another case study is that of China. In this case study, participation of Chinese women in the development process is looked at. One of the main conclusions drawn from the case is that women in China had to struggle to overcome discrimination based on traditional biases and prescriptive behavioural norms in order to defend their rights.

Finally, participation is looked at *vis-a-vis* planning, and Bangladesh is used as a case study. A self-help canal digging project is selected for scrutiny and the experience here seems to show that without a significant degree of popular influence on decision-making it becomes extremely difficult to motivate the poor to take an interest in such projects. Indeed, the poor, naturally, want to know what is in it for them before they can be 'lured' into participating in such projects as canal digging.

Perhaps the greatest contribution of the book is that it defines quite clearly not only the roles of the state, the politicians and the administrators (and other technocrats) in effective mass participation but that of the prospective beneficiaries, the peasantry, as well. On this score, the book urges that vertically meaningful consultations be held between national, regional and local authorities and that horizontal communication takes place between communities with regard to the identification of basic needs, particularly where needs and interests might coincide. This will allow for the coordination of development efforts with implications for the saving of scarce resources.

This book is a must for those interested in the topic of popular participation, empowerment and capacity building among underprivileged groups. It is a well-thought out, focused, informative and fairly well-balanced work. It is good value for money.

Reviewed by R S Mupedziswa, School of Social Work, Harare.

Five Hundred Million Children. Poverty and Child Welfare in the Third World, Stewart MacPherson, Wheatsheaf Books, Sussex, 1987 (226pp, £32.50 hbk).

"Four comma three million African children die every year", with little hope for improvement over the next decade; "98% of the deaths of children under five are in the poorest countries"; "99% of all maternal deaths are in developing countries"; "there are between 100 and 200 million abandoned and street children in the world".

These and other statistics abound in Stewart MacPherson's book, *Five Hundred Million Children*. Not that the book is a statistical dossier, but that such statistics constitute a question to which there are

no easy answers. Why is child welfare not such a topical issue in today's world? Politicians, economists and social scientists spend their time discussing nuclear weapons, the Third World debt and AIDS. Granted that these are all important issues in human existence, it is hard to understand why disproportionately little international effort is being directed towards alleviating the living conditions of the majority of children across the globe.

MacPherson's book lays bare some startling facts about child welfare in the Third World. It examines a broad spectrum of the main negative socioeconomic factors which are at play in the life of the average child in the developing world, without pretending that there are easy solutions. The book relies mainly on empirical experiences in developing countries in Asia and Latin America to put forward its case, with minimal reference to the African experience.

Traditional approaches to child welfare are strongly challenged. They are generally seen as alien and western, urban-biased, expensive and therefore unable to provide a realistic answer in the cash-starved societies of the developing world. Strategies which seek to build on what communities already know and have have a greater chance to succeed, he argues.

MacPherson's book, while undoubtedly depressing, shows that it is possible, even in poor countries, to improve the living conditions of the poorest. Tanzania, regarded as one of the world's poorest countries, has been able to achieve what no other African nation has done in terms of bringing social services to its population, thanks to government policy. But Tanzania is now experiencing its worst economic crisis in history, resulting in the loss of some social gains. It is not clear whether there is any relationship between the deteriorating economic conditions and the egalitarian policies of the past.

It is a pity that MacPherson does not attempt to look at the political and military context in which some Third World children live. This is particularly relevant in Southern Africa where apartheid has devastating consequences on the lives of millions of children, especially over the last decade. Coming at a time when common sense seems to be breaking out throughout the world, this book raises issues which deserve to be put in the forefront, on the agenda, of a more peaceful world. MacPherson's book need not be another voice in the wilderness.

Lay people, academics, child welfare activists, and all people interested in advancing one of the most legitimate causes of the twentieth century will find this book both refreshing and stimulating.

Reviewed by Allan Masomere, Harare.

Development Psychiatry: Mental Health and Primary Health Care in Botswana, David Ben-Tovim, Tavistock, London, 1987 (233pp, £12.95 pbk).

This book can be seen as a milestone in the literature of mental health in Africa, describing, with considerable empathy, skill and conciseness, the results of the author's experience in the integration of primary health care and psychiatric services in rural areas, and as a lone psychiatrist with the Botswana Ministry of Health. Until the late 1970s Botswana's only psychiatric facility was an isolated mental hospital, which had become grossly overcrowded. After collaborative work with the WHO and other international agencies, Botswana embarked on a programme of integration of psychiatric care with existing primary health care services. *Development Psychiatry* places this bold experiment in a clear perspective in a national, African and international context.

It should, however, be said at the outset that although the work describes how a psychiatric system can move from a curative and institutional health service to a wider service that incorporates primary health care, it does so from an overt commitment to the physical disease model of mental disorders. "It is my view that none [of the models] have been found to have a wider range of applicability than the [physical] disease model", and, Ben-Tovim goes on to say, that "treating psychiatric disorders as

diseases entities, if not completely secure, is at least a widely recognised working hypothesis, and it is one that will be adopted here" (p9). Unfortunately it becomes clear later in the book that the disease model is not really a working hypothesis to be proved effective or otherwise by the author, but rather the model is assumed effective and this assumption remains unchallenged throughout the book. Not only is the physical disease model the preferred theory, but drug therapy seems the preferred practice: "Once a depressive disorder had been identified by whatever means, our standard treatment was the prescription of the tricyclic anti-depressant Amitriptyline in the dose 125-175 mg daily. Treatment often seemed effective (sic)" (1987:134).

Ben-Tovim offers a taxonomy of psychiatric conditions that are echoed in his chapter titles: emergencies and alcohol; epilepsy, schizophrenia and depression; and what he calls "headaches and heartaches", the symptoms relating to "non-psychotic distress". Although he admits that "non-psychiatric distress" is the one most amenable to non-drug therapy it proved difficult for the author to offer non-medical treatment or help. In fact rarely do interventions described in the book refer to helpers other than nurses or doctors. Social workers are mentioned in passing four times and psychologists twice, and even then without any description of an interventive role.

With the caveat, then, that this book is a fairly explicit description of a purely medical approach to diagnoses and treatments, it is a valuable pioneer work in a field that badly needs indigenous literature.

Reviewed by Joe Hampson SJ, Harare.

Sex Roles, Population and Development in West Africa, Christine Oppong (ed), Heinemann, London 1987 (242pp, £25hbk).

This book is a collection of thirteen diverse and highly informative studies of women in development. The common theme focuses on the crucial roles women play in both the informal and formal sectors, and the contributions emphasise that, for effective development planning in general, women's existing roles, their needs and their potential must be central considerations.

The papers are presented under four headings: Women's Work (two studies, of Muslim women in Nigeria, and women in Bamaka, capital of Mali); Fertility, Parenthood and Development: Yoruba Experiences (five papers on the Yoruba in Nigeria); Population Policies, Family Planning and Family Life Education: Ghanaian Lessons (three studies); and Government Plans and Development Policies (three papers, examining policy in Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Ghana).

It can be seen that although the book purports to cover West Africa, in reality it examines only four of the eighteen countries that might have been included. Of the thirteen papers, seven concern Nigeria, with the major focus on the Yoruba. Thus the book in no way attempts to give a balanced over view of the whole region, but presents selected, detailed studies whose orientation and conclusions have a much wider geographical relevance. Indeed, their relevance is in many senses global, and not restricted to West Africa as a region.

The various papers reflect different academic disciplines and research methodologies. The latter include household surveys, individual and group studies through participant observation and structured interviews, and the use of census data and other official statistics, policy documents, and other existing material. These are presented within the framework of international developments, such as UN, ILO and OAU initiatives, for example the Lagos Plan of Action 1981.

The studies are all of countries with a significant incidence of extreme poverty, and many common problems of development. These include socioeconomic flux as traditional ways and values compete with modernisation; the disruption of the family; illiteracy; and a young population structure and rapid population growth, despite continuing high mortality (at 139, the infant mortality rate of the region is the highest recorded in the world). Fertility is, predictably, extremely high.

There are differential rights, expectations, access to education, training and employment, status, independence and power, between men and women. This aspect, a focus of the book, is seen as constituting a central contradiction and difficulty in development. The authors illustrate that family decisions, and, crucially, women's roles in the family and in production, are of great relevance to the success or failure of development policies at a national, as well as at a local, level. Therefore it is vital for planners and others to understand the basis for individual decision making and day to day activities with the family, and the constraints and influences on them.

One paper (by Oppong) also examines men's importance in the family, as fathers and in relation to child spacing. These issues are as often neglected as are women's contributions to the economy through their family roles and informal production.

The book is aimed at a wide readership, including planners, politicians, social researchers, demographers, and practitioners in many aspects of development. Some of the studies are fairly technical, and between them include a substantial amount of hard data, as well as detailed discussion and analysis. The whole cannot be called an easy read, but it contains a wealth of well-researched material that rewards perseverance. It should prove a valuable resource book for development workers and planners in general.

Reviewed by Helen Jackson, lecturer, School of Social Work, Harare.

South Africa: A New US Policy for the 1990s, Kevin Danaher, Institute for Food and Development Policy, San Francisco, 1988 (69pp, US\$6.00).

Kevin Danaher's short book is a model of crisp policy writing. It should be prescribed reading for everyone studying Southern Africa, whether or not they agree with him. It begins by quoting Martin Luther King in 1965, "the shame of the United States is that it is objectively an ally of this monstrous [South African] government in its grim war with its own black people" (p1). Danaher surveys the twenty years subsequent to this statement and concludes that "the United States remains the single most important protector of South Africa's apartheid regime" (p1). He continues "US policymakers were forced into a 'straddle' regarding apartheid: denouncing white minority rule while doing little to interfere with the support given to apartheid by major US corporations and security agencies of the US government" (p2).

Danaher argues that US policy toward South Africa was "accumulationist: safeguarding US corporate access to South Africa's human and natural resources in order to accumulate capital" (p3). In due course, "while verbal criticism of Pretoria's violence was designed to placate critics of apartheid, continued ties to white minority interests were designed to please corporate and national security interests" (p2f). However, five years into the Reagan administration, "public pressure forced the White House to declare limited sanctions" (p7).

In Danaher's view, the central defect of the Reagan policy on South Africa was an obsession with East-West competition. In a secret memorandum Chester Crocker stressed that "the top US priority is to stop Soviet encroachment in Africa" (p8). Danaher believes the chief threat to stability in the region is South Africa, not Moscow. "The permissiveness of constructive engagement allowed Pretoria to create havoc throughout the region" (p9). Danaher quotes Robert Mugabe: "Those who judge Africa in terms of East and West do us a grave disservice and they display deep ignorance" (p11).

On taking office, Chester Crocker knew little of Africa except the 'white' minority, on which he had published. "Crocker and his Rhodesian wife also owned thousands of dollars of stock in South African gold mines" (p9). Crocker said to Danaher in 1980, "All Reagan knows about Southern Africa is that he's on the side of the whites" (p10). But Danaher asserts that "Pretoria was a liability, not an

asset, for US policy in the region...It was South Africa's role [in Angola] that united African governments in denouncing US intervention while supporting Cuban and Soviet intervention" (p12).

Danaher observes that "Pretoria's strength is negative. It has the power to destroy but it does not have the power to build" (p13). When South Africans erupted in protest in 1984-6, the US anti-apartheid movement won a victory by forcing the Comprehensive Anti Apartheid Act on Reagan in place of his executive order which was "designed to have as little impact as possible" (p19).

Danaher sees a contradiction: "most members of Congress seek a difficult goal: they would like to see apartheid eliminated without destroying capitalism. But...apartheid and capitalism developed together in organic unity. This is not to say that capitalism cannot survive in South Africa without apartheid" (p22). "There is a fundamental dispute over the definition of democracy" (p23). Most US policymakers would be satisfied by the vote for all in South Africa; "but millions of South Africans are demanding that the transition to democratic rule include a redistribution of control over property" (p23).

Danaher proceeds into theory, and stresses: "it is not the United States *as a nation* that owns property in South Africa" (p25). The ties between the two countries "are conducted by a relatively small group of mainly older, rich, white males, representing a tiny percentage of each national population" (p25). But "the elite alliances are not limited to the rich" (p26). Poor black vigilantes are part of the elite alliance, for example. In Danaher's analysis, sanctions and disinvestment are not interruptions in relations between countries but between the elites. They should be judged not by whether they create unemployment or hurt the South African economy, but "by the extent to which they drive a wedge between South Africa's rulers and their supporters in the outside world. A white minority of 15 per cent cannot rule for long without powerful external allies" (p27). Reagan did not want sanctions, but "escalating outrage against apartheid created popular pressure in the United States strong enough to force a reluctant President Reagan to impose punitive measures against Pretoria" (p32). The lesson is that "the people can change US policy even with an unsympathetic president in the White House" (p43).

Danaher's policy for the future is less convincing than his analysis of the past. He believes that "Washington policymakers retain the strategic objectives of keeping South Africa nonsocialist and within the Western sphere of influence, but they are gradually realising that the white minority regime is not the best partner for achieving these goals" (p35). Is the last part of this argument not wishful thinking?

A new US policy for South Africa, in Danaher's opinion, should (:36):

- (1) help strengthen links between workers and peasants in South Africa and their allies in the outside world; and
- (2) weaken the international alliance of proapartheid forces by breaking links between South African elites and their inter-national supporters".

Part two is plausible. The idea, in part one, that either President Bush, or Governor Dukakis if he had won the presidency, would be remotely likely to want to strengthen links between workers and peasants in South Africa and their allies, is fanciful.

Danaher wants the US to force Pretoria to end state violence; to feed the starving; to end aggression against neighbours; to repeal the state of emergency and establish equal justice for all; release Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners; permit free political expression; set a timetable for elimination of apartheid laws; and negotiate with the opposition (p37). Danaher sees Washington achieving this by truly comprehensive economic sanctions; by support for mandatory UN sanctions; by weakening the South African military; and by planning for a naval blockade (p39). Quite simply, the United States is most unlikely to do these things in the next five years.

Danaher asserts that "repression can postpone but not prevent a transition to majority rule" (p39). He goes on to say "A relatively non-violent transition to democracy in South Africa will only be possible if the major powers exert pressure on Pretoria to compromise" (p40). Here he is on firmer ground: a large

war in Southern Africa would suit neither super-power, and for that reason an eventual negotiation is likely to be forced on Pretoria. Yet no one should underestimate the length of time for which Pretoria can delay transition, nor the ability of South Africa's elites to use the gold to buy allies abroad.

Consider Danaher's conclusion:

"A foreign policy for the future must seek to be a majority policy: strengthening US ties to workers and peasants, not the generals, politicians and big businessmen who are the main beneficiaries of US policy. Abandoning a foreign policy that hitches the US star to elite groups around the world will require a domestic restructuring of the Pentagon, the CIA, transnational corporations and the other powerful institutions that have locked us into a foreign policy that favours minority rule" (p49).

If Danaher knows how to restructure the Pentagon, the CIA and the largest business corporations in the world so that United States ties to South African workers and peasants are strengthened, he has not told us. Nevertheless, his hyperbole is not entirely intolerable, given the clarity of his earlier text, and given the strong likelihood that there will be some mechanism, orchestrated by both superpowers, whereby apartheid is eventually ended.

Reviewed by Renfrew Christie, University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

Multinational Joint Ventures in Developing Countries, Paul W Beamish, Routledge, London, 1988 (145pp, £27.50 hbk).

Investment by multinational corporations (MNC) in 'less developed countries' has often been seen as a primary means of bringing capital, technology and technical skills into these countries. The effects of such investments, proponents argue, is to support government import substitution policies and to create employment (advantages for the host country) and as a means of obtaining access to foreign markets (advantage to MNC). Critics of multinational corporation investment show how their power (based on size, number of countries they operate in, and wealth - some MNCs have annual turnovers greater than national incomes of the developing countries they operate in) allows them to override the sovereignty of governments, and to distort their social and economic policies. In the end, of course, the aim of the MNC is to increase its profitability.

The questions of capital development, technological advance and industrialisation are of course fundamentally important. For economic and social development to occur - for people's incomes, living standards and social wellbeing to improve - national wealth must increase and national productive capacity must grow. But it must be seriously questioned whether the sacrifices in national sovereignty, in particular of economic policy-setting by true representatives of national interests, are worth making for the minor gains that accrue from multinationals. Surely more important are serious efforts to tap and direct national sources of capital and to mobilise and motivate national initiative and creativity.

This book by Paul Beamish does not, in fact, contribute much to a progressive discussion of strategies for economic development in the 'less developed countries'. Looking as it does, in a rather dry and academic, and occasionally turgid way, at equity joint ventures between American or European multinationals and private companies in LDCs, it is based on a presupposition that such joint ventures "speed up international development". Joint ventures involving direct participation of governments of LDCs are not considered, a fact which makes the book not very relevant in Africa. Though there is an interesting section on the experiences surrounding joint venture exploration with China between 1979 and 1986, it is certainly of more relevance to executives of MNCs thinking about setting up such structures and relationships, than for policy setters or analysts in the Third World.

Of course, if in Zimbabwe the trade liberalisation now underway, and the long awaited and still 'expected shortly' investment code, so direct, the book might become relevant here, but only in

boardrooms of local companies that might go into joint ventures, and for those critics who would be against selling out the nation.

Reviewed by John Stewart, Harare.

Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa 1880-1985, Patrick Manning, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1988 (xii, 215pp, £8.95 pbk, £25 hbk).

This book surveys French-speaking Africa from the southern border of Morocco (Mauritania) in the north-west to Zaire on the northern borders of Zambia to the south-east - an area covering some 40 percent of the African continent. The importance of the subject is obvious - 17 nations with over 100 million people.

The book will be useful to students because the most-up-to-date surveys by Coquery-Vidrovitch are in French and the books available in English (such as those of Brunnchwig and Hargreaves) are over twenty years old. Having said this, however, the reviewer must point out that Manning's book is not easy to follow for the uninitiated reader. No clear chronology emerges and the way in which the individual French colonies were acquired is not made clear. The approach is thematic and the style allusive and therefore requires not a little preexisting knowledge. One also wonders whether the French language, 'Francophonie', does give the subject real coherence, as the Belgian colonies of Congo (Zaire), Rwanda and Burundi had little history in common with the French Empire in Africa, whereas Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia had close contacts and similarities.

Nevertheless some broad themes do stand out, particularly in contrast to the development of English-speaking Africa, for example the French preference for direct rule rather than Britain's indirect approach, and 'federations' ruled from Dakar and Brazzaville - successfully equalled in British Africa only by white-settler South Africa. The French 'federations' have disappeared, of course, with the granting of independence but great similarities (in law and government) and cohesion (in currency management) remain, more so than the former British colonies share.

For such comparisons and ideas Manning's book is to be recommended.

Reviewed by R S Roberts, Dept of History, University of Zimbabwe, Harare.

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