

SOCIALIZED VILLAGES, CONDITION OF DEVELOPMENT

by Sammy Kents



WHEN one morning in April 1968, the members of a nomad tribe of Wagogos who inhabit the central plateau of continental Tanzania, settled down in the village of Chawino, the armed encounter with their traditional bows, arrows and spears failed to take place; rather it was with work tools — spades, machetes, shovels and picks — to initiate the struggle against poverty, hunger and ignorance.

The decision of these Wagogos to group themselves in socialized villoges constituted no isolated factor within the social context of the United Republic of Tanzania, but responded to a development program for the country contained in the historic document known as the Declaration of Arusha. Many of the country's villoges had accepted the plan and joined together under the slogan *Ujmaa* (solidarity or socialism in the Tanzanian sense of the word), following the publication of the Declaration of Arusha in 1967.

The members of the National Executive Committee of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) joined together under the presidency of Julius Nyerere from January 26-29, 1967, in Arusha, a city located at the foot of Kilimanjaro mountain, the highest in Africa, and issued the Declaration of Arusha, a theoretical document proclaiming Tanzania's non-capitalist path of development. The Declaration of Arusha pointed out, among



other objectives, the imperative need for developing the country's rural areas and affirmed that the only way to build socialism in Tanzania was by creating socialized villages.

By recommendation of the TANU party, the political institution that Tanzanians say serves as a bridge between the government and the people, in its first five-year plan, the government of Dar es Salaam offered sufficient capital to put into practice intensive cooperative projects in the villages. These consisted in orienting the villages to plan within the productive framework of the community. The official policy of socialization of the villages is based on the fact that these villages were autonomous communities.

In the villages, the local committee of the party, headed by a president elected by the villagers, is the political orienter and insures the unity of villagers. In addition to the local action of the party in the community, there is also the administration. The local administrative organ has as its mission assuring the best functioning of the productive system and the proper running of the cooperatives.

An analysis made shortly after the union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar on April 26, 1964, by overthrowing the island's Sultan, confirmed the fact that the majority of the country's population lives in the countryside and that 80% of national exports originate in rural zones. For this reason, the socialized villages offer great possibilities for the country's development.

It is important to stress that the collectivization of economic life in the Tanzanian countryside is presently a factor for economic development. Each morning

the country's villages invade the lands of their ancestors. Now they work them not only to sustain the community as their ancestors did thousands of years ago, but they also produce for the market.

A portion of the products is distributed among the members of the village and the other part is handed over to the cooperative which, in turn, sells it to the State. The State supplies the village with the tools it needs, and locates the technicians the community requires for the economic transformation.

In recent years, the United Republic of Tanzania's political education has been slowly penetrating the villages, creating possibilities for adult education and eliminating illiteracy which, in the majority of the countries of the Third World, constitutes an obstacle to development. This same policy establishes free education in the schools created in the socialized villages.

A developing country like Tanzania, whose per capita income does not exceed \$80, finds itself presently undertaking great development projects. Economic planning offers the following sectors for the country:

- 1) State;
- 2) cooperatives; and
- 3) mixed.

The State holds a decisive role in the three sectors of the national economy. The mixed sector could be called private, but according to the Declaration of Arusha, the State has the liberty to act as a stockholder or participant in this sector.





The progressive regime of Tanzania announced on September 3, 1969, the inauguration of an important hydroelectric center on the Pangani River and, in November of the same year, it began the construction of a new international airport in the north of the country which makes possible the expansion of tourism, another source of national income. Presently the country has one oil refinery and one modern textile factory.

The major work undertaken during the last years by the Tanzanian government is precisely the construction of the railroad which will join that country and Zambia. The TANZAM railroad line, which will cost \$300 000 000, is financed by the People's Republic of China and presently has 15 000 technicians and engineers and more than 36 000 Tanzanian and Zambian workers building it.

From the point of view of the infrastructure of the United Republic of Tanzania, it will have advanced when it finishes the construction of this railroad line over which, in addition to Zambia's copper, all agricultural products (sisal, cotton, coffee and tobacco) coming from the south to Dar es Salaam will be transported.

Tanzania, with its plans directed toward the development of agriculture as a base for industrialization, offers greater possibilities for an economic advance than the other member countries of the east African community.

If economic logic confirms that the present countries of the Third World will be able to pull out of underdevelopment after breaking with the metropolis, directing a large part of their efforts toward the mechanization of agriculture, Tanzania's socioeconomic conditions within the same framework point out the appropriate road for this part of Africa.