

The Arusha Declaration

TANZANIA'S NEW REVOLUTION

Toussaint

We have been oppressed a great deal, we have been exploited a great deal and we have been disregarded a great deal. It is our weakness that has led to our being oppressed, exploited and disregarded. We now intend to bring about a revolution which will ensure that we are never again victims of these things.

THE ARUSHA DECLARATION.

THERE COULD BE NO doubting the popular response to the blueprint for advance to socialism adopted by the National Executive Committee of the Tanganyika African National Union, meeting at Arusha from January 26th to 29th. The Arusha Declaration touched off an immediate mass response. In Dar es Salaam and other centres the workers poured out into the streets in spontaneous mass demonstrations of welcome and support. Their intentions were clear. Socialism was the direction in which they wanted their leaders to lead.

Within days of the Arusha Declaration of principles, the Government of Tanzania took bold and decisive action. In President Nyerere's words:

Since February 5th we have nationalised all banks . . . except for the Co-operative Bank. . . . We have taken into public ownership the following firms which are engaged in the processing of foods normally purchased from or through the National Agricultural Products Board (a list of eight big mills and other food processing enterprises is given). We have nationalised the National Insurance Corporation Ltd. . . . As from February 11th, all new life insurance . . . will be handled by this corporation. . . . Other types of insurance business will also be handled exclusively by the N.I.C. Then, to form the nucleus of the State Trading Corporation which will be the authorised body for External and Wholesale Trade, we have nationalised the following firms (a list of eight major trading firms follows). . . . We shall pay full and fair compensation for assets acquired and . . . honour all existing commitments.

Public Ownership in Tanzania, Sunday News, 12.2.67.

President Nyerere stated that, while this was a complete list of firms to be nationalised in terms of the Arusha Declaration, it was intended, through negotiation to acquire a controlling government share in a further list of private industrial firms. It was also intended to secure a controlling interest in the sisal industry for the government. While there would continue to be a place for private enterprise in Tanzania's economy 'the key positions of the economy have been secured for the nation'.

The Arusha Declaration is not just a high-sounding manifesto. It is a working resolution to guide a working political organisation. It is more than a statement of aims; it is the springboard from which the T.A.N.U. government launched a dynamic movement to reshape Tanzania. It is in this light, and not as an abstract or doctrinaire series of generalisations, that we should consider the terms of the Declaration.

The document opens with a restatement of the aims already embodied in the T.A.N.U. constitution, which—in addition to general principles of human rights, democracy, African unity and world peace, such as one would expect in the objectives of a national liberation movement—contains a number of specifically socialist directions. The T.A.N.U. 'creed' declares:

That all citizens together possess all the natural resources of the country in trust for their descendants.

That in order to ensure economic justice the State must have effective control over the principal means of production.

That it is the responsibility of the State to intervene actively in the economic life of the nation . . . to prevent the exploitation of one person by another, one group by another, and so as to prevent the accumulation of wealth to an extent which is inconsistent with the existence of a classless society.

It is clear that the meeting at Arusha considered that these general statements of principle needed to be made more precise, amplified and put into practice. That is just what the second part of the Declaration sets out to do. It begins by setting out four major essentials of a socialist policy. These are:

(a) *The absence of exploitation:*

Tanzania is a state of workers and peasants, says the Declaration, but it is not yet a socialist state; it still has elements of capitalism and feudalism. A true socialist state will do away with these elements; it will not have 'two classes of people: a lower class consisting of people who work for their living, and an upper class consisting of those who live on other people's labour'. In a socialist state no person will exploit another: everyone who is able to work 'does so and gets a fair income for his labour, and incomes do not differ substantially'.

(b) *Workers' and peasants' control of the means of production.*

The way to build and maintain socialism is to ensure that the major means of production are under the control and ownership of the peasants and the workers themselves, through their Government and their Co-operatives.

The 'major means of production' are defined as:

the land; forests; mineral resources; water; oil and electricity; communications, transport, banks, insurance, import and export trade; wholesale business; the steel, machine-tool, arms, motor-car, cement and fertiliser factories; the textile industry; and any other big industry upon which a large section of the population depends for its living or which provides essential components for other industries; large plantations, especially those which produce essential raw materials.

(c) *Democracy.*

But nationalisation is not necessarily socialism, as the Declaration points out. West European welfare-state theorists have vulgarised the meaning of the term, and equated policies of nationalisation in a country dominated by capitalism with 'socialism'. T.A.N.U. rejects such illusions.

A state is not socialist simply because all, or all the major, means of production are controlled and owned by the government. *It is necessary for the government to be elected and led by peasants and workers.* If the racist governments of Rhodesia and South Africa were to bring the major means of production in these countries under their control and direction this would entrench exploitation. It would not bring about socialism. *There cannot be true socialism without democracy.* (My emphasis, T.)

(d) *Socialism an ideology.*

Finally, the Declaration makes the key point that socialism can only be built by those who firmly believe in the socialist ideology and are prepared to put its principles into practice. Internationalism and the universal validity of scientific socialist principles are both implicit in this paragraph, which points out that the fellow-believers in the political and economic faith of socialism are 'those in Africa and elsewhere who fight for the rights of the peasants and workers'.

A true member of T.A.N.U. is a socialist. . . . The first duty of a T.A.N.U. member, and especially of a T.A.N.U. leader, is to live by these principles in his day-to-day life. In particular a T.A.N.U. leader should never live on another's labour, neither should he have capitalist or feudal tendencies.

The exceptional weight attached to this conception is evident from the practical decisions in the final section of the Declaration, the Arusha Resolution itself, to which we shall refer below. Here the precise qualifications for T.A.N.U. and Government leadership are defined with a strictness and rigidity which should preclude the unfortunate experiences of other African countries where, despite proclaimed loyalty to socialism, the self-enrichment of party and government leaders led to the growth of a bureaucratic bourgeois element and nourished the seeds of counter-revolution.

BALANCED DEVELOPMENT—AND SELF-RELIANCE

Part Three of the Declaration consists of a closely-reasoned and self-critical analysis of some of the most crucial questions facing Tanzania—and not only Tanzania!—on the path of independent development. All the countries of the world which—as a result of the domination of imperialism and colonialism—lag behind economically, and hence in standards of living, education, health and welfare—are striving as rapidly as possible to overcome the gap. Lacking internal resources for capital accumulation and state expenditure on public services, many of them have placed the main emphasis on external aid. Attention has been concentrated on industries, while neglecting agriculture and the rural areas. The Arusha Declaration boldly challenges this balance of concentration. In the past, it admits, 'money' has been seen by the T.A.N.U. leadership as the answer to almost every problem.

By our thoughts, words and actions, it appears as if we have come to the conclusion that without money we cannot bring about the revolution. . . . It is as if we had all agreed to speak with one voice saying: 'If we get money we shall develop; without money we cannot develop.'

Everything—water conservation plans, housing, schools, roads, economic progress—all were seen to turn on the question of getting—somewhere, somehow—money to make it possible.

If one calls on the government to spend more, one is in effect calling on the Government to increase taxes. . . . We realise that the cow has no more milk . . . We know that the cow would like to have more milk herself so that her calves could drink it or . . . which could be sold to provide more comfort for itself or its calves. But knowing all the things which could be done with more milk does not alter the fact that the cow has no more.

Can the shortfall then not be made up by outside aid?

It would be even more stupid for us to imagine that we shall rid ourselves of our poverty through foreign financial assistance rather than our own

financial resources. . . . There is no country in the world which is prepared to give us gifts or loans or establish industries to the extent that we would be able to achieve all our development targets.

Even if it were possible . . . is this what we really want? Independence means self-reliance. Independence cannot be real if a nation depends upon gifts and loans from another for its development. . . . It would be improper for us to accept such assistance without asking ourselves how this would affect our independence and our very survival as a nation.

If not gifts, what about loans?

Loans are better than 'free' gifts. A loan is intended to increase our efforts or make those efforts more fruitful. . . . But even loans have their limitations. You have to give consideration to the ability to repay. . . . To burden the people with big loans, the repayment of which will be beyond their means, is not to help them but to make them suffer. It is even worse when the loans they are asked to repay have not benefited the majority of the people, but have only benefited a small minority.

Or foreign investments?

We need these enterprises. We have even passed an Act of Parliament protecting foreign investments . . . Even if we were able to convince foreign investors and foreign firms to undertake all the projects and programmes of economic development that we need, is this what we actually want to happen? . . . Would we have agreed to leave the economy of our country in the hands of foreigners who would take the profits back to their countries? . . . How can we build the socialism we are talking about under such circumstances?

And thus, by a process of elimination, T.A.N.U. comes practically to the policy it calls 'Self Reliance'—the realisation that in the building of socialism, outside aid is at worst negative, or inimical; at best hopelessly inadequate. They face not merely an economic task of development, but also a political task of consolidating and securing the nation's independence. And this, whether easy or not, must be done in the end of ends by the people themselves, relying on their own resources.

PEASANTS AND INDUSTRY

Along what lines then does Tanzanian development lie, with its starting point 'self-reliance' of a desperately poor people? The dilemma is where to concentrate—in town or country, on industry or agriculture?

Because of our emphasis on money, we have made another big mistake. We have put too much emphasis on industries. . . . It is a mistake because we do not have the means to establish many modern industries . . . We do not have either the necessary finances or the technical know-how. It is not enough to say that we shall borrow the finances and the technicians from other countries. . . . Even if we could get the necessary assistance, dependence on it could interfere with our policy of socialism. The policy of inviting a chain of capitalists to come and establish industries in our country might succeed in giving us all the industries we need, but it would also succeed in preventing the establishment of socialism, unless we believe that without first building capitalism, we cannot build socialism.

The Arusha Declaration, accordingly, turns T.A.N.U.'s face resolutely towards the countryside and the peasantry. One of the special consequences of earlier concentration on industry has been an inevitable simultaneous concentration on urban development.

We cannot establish an industry in each village and through this means effect a rise in the real income of the people. . . . We spend most of our money in the urban areas, and our industries are established in the towns. Yet the greater part of this money that we spend in the towns comes from loans. Whether it is used to build schools, hospitals, houses or factories, it still has to be repaid. But it is obvious that it cannot be repaid just out of money obtained from urban and industrial development. To repay the loans we have to use foreign currency which is obtained from the sale of our exports. *But we do not sell our industrial products in foreign markets, and indeed it is likely to be a long time before our industries produce for export. It is therefore obvious that the foreign currency we shall use to pay back the loans . . . will not come from the towns or the industries. Where shall we get it from? We shall get it from the villages and from agriculture. . . .* Those who benefit directly from development are not the ones who will repay the loans.

Thus the danger arises of another form of exploitation: that of the countryside by the towns. For while the industries, hospitals, roads, electricity, piped water and other urban developments did not directly benefit the farmer, they were paid for 'by the foreign exchange earned by the sale of his produce. 'If we are not careful we might get to the position where the real exploitation . . . is that of the town dwellers exploiting the peasants.' That is why the Declaration emphasises: 'Let us be concerned about the peasant farmer'.

Of course it should not be assumed from the above that T.A.N.U. has turned its back either on industrialisation or on external aid. This is a question of emphasis. Certainly industrialisation is the goal. 'The day we become industrialised we shall be able to say we are developed.' But the goal is not the starting point. 'The mistake we are making is to think that development begins with industries.' But the basis of development is agriculture.

Tanzania has more than ten million people. A great part of its 362,000 square miles of territory is fertile and gets sufficient rain. It produces food crops, some of which can be exported, and cash crops. The country is suitable for animal husbandry; the lakes, rivers and coastal waters abound in fish. The only road to develop the country—to 'get more food and more money for every Tanzanian'—is to make the fullest use of these natural resources, to increase agricultural production.

The conditions for achieving these objectives, according to the Declaration, are hard work, and intelligence.

HARD WORK

Here—and as far as I am aware for the first time in a major declaration by any African political organisation—T.A.N.U. makes a frontal attack on the traditional customs of rural life which are characteristic in many regions. Stemming from the olden days, when the division of labour was that men were hunters and warriors and women attended to agriculture, these traditions are a major stumbling block to development. 'In the villages the women work very hard. At times for twelve or fourteen hours a day . . . harder than anybody else in Tanzania. But the men who live in villages . . . are on leave for half their lives.'

The energies of the millions of men in the villages . . . are a great treasure which could contribute more towards the development of our country than anything we could get from rich nations.

To hard work must be added intelligence.

By this, T.A.N.U. means the application of knowledge and good techniques to work in the countryside. Hard work must be combined with good methods:

Using a big hoe instead of a small one; using a plough pulled by oxen instead of an ordinary hoe; the use of fertilisers; the use of insecticides; knowing the right crop for a particular season or soil; choosing good seeds for planting; knowing the right time for planting, weeding, etc.; all these things show the use of knowledge and intelligence.

The Declaration points out that the good results of the Five-Year Development Plan have sprung almost entirely from the people's efforts through such well-directed work; increasing production 'tremendously' of cotton, cashew nuts, tobacco and pyrethrum; and completing such development projects in the villages as the building of schools, dispensaries, community centres, roads, wells, water-channels, dams and animal dips.

Thus the Declaration comes to the conclusion that, at this stage, the future development of the country depends on the land, the people, the policy of socialism and self-reliance, and good leadership.

In our country, work should be something to be proud of, and laziness, drunkenness and idleness should be things to be ashamed of.

The people should always be ready to defend their nation when they are called upon to do so.

It is necessary for everyone to work and to live on his own labour . . . for everybody to work to the maximum of his ability.

This is the concrete immediate meaning of 'self-reliance'. In essence it is an attempt to build a new national conscience, a new social conscience, and a new Tanzanian man who will be the builder of Tanzanian socialism.

If every individual is self-reliant, the ten-house cell will be self-reliant; if all the cells are self-reliant, the whole ward will be self-reliant; and if the wards are self-reliant, the District will be self-reliant. If the districts are self-reliant, then the Region is self-reliant; and if the regions are self-reliant, then the whole Nation is self-reliant, and that is our aim.

LEADERS AND PARTY

It is an aim that will not easily be realised. For in a country like this, educationally backward, economically undeveloped, it will need heroic endeavours. It is an aim requiring that the whole nation lift itself by its own strength. Such a task—under different but certainly no easier circumstances—has been undertaken and achieved before today, in the pioneer socialist countries.

But everywhere where it has been done, the key to success has been the party which led the nation, its ideology, its unity, its cohesion, its preparedness for the task. And so, having stated the aim, T.A.N.U.'s Declaration comes again to this basic task of leadership, and of the party which must undertake it.

T.A.N.U. realises the importance of good leadership. The problem is that we have not prepared proper plans for the training of leaders. The Party Headquarters is now called upon to prepare specific plans for the training of leaders from the national level down to the ten-house cells, so that all may understand our political and economic policies. . . .

And again:

The National Executive Committee feels that the time has come to shift away from mere size of membership on to the quality of membership. Greater consideration must be given to the member's commitment to the beliefs and objectives of the Party, and its policy of socialism.

In a sense the most crucial element of the Arusha Declaration is precisely this emphasis on the concept and understanding that socialism can only be built by a vanguard Party, fully committed to the scientific principles of socialism, and purged of the petty-bourgeois careerist and ambitious elements who are invariably attracted to the ranks of any ruling Party.

We have observed precisely this problem in other countries of Africa, where socialist goals have been announced, but no practical steps have been taken towards their realisation. Or where a genuinely socialist-orientated leadership has actually taken decisions favouring the workers and peasants, and such decisions have been sabotaged in practice by local Party and state officials who saw in state enterprises and co-operatives merely an opportunity for enriching themselves.

The dangers and difficulties are increased a great deal by the fact that the ruling parties were not originally class parties of workers and peasants aiming to achieve socialism. They were mass, all-class parties,

including the working people and also bourgeois and petty-bourgeois, feudalist and tribalist leaders, united not for socialism but for the common goal of ousting colonialist direct rule and gaining constitutional independence. Not abstract theory but the reality of the struggle has taught honest African patriots that formal independence is not enough; that the capitalist road is incompatible with real independence; that only the advance to socialism can secure the gains of the African revolution and satisfy the needs and aspirations of the masses. But we have also learnt—and here again, not from theoretical generalisations but from experience—that taking this hard road involves bitter class struggles, against those privileged strata and classes within African society who are satisfied with the status quo, who prefer the capitalist road and are even prepared to collaborate with foreign imperialism at the cost of independence, to secure their selfish personal and class objectives.

Such class struggles, requiring the political enlightenment and participation of the masses, cannot be led by the old style mass movements, deeply penetrated at all levels by capitalist, feudalist, and self-seeking careerist bureaucratic elements. Either a new political vanguard must emerge, a workers' and peasants' party imbued with and dedicated to the principles of scientific socialism—or conscious and vigorous efforts must be made to *transform* the national liberation movement into just such a party, by raising its ideological level and weeding out all elements hostile to socialism from every position of leadership and authority.

It is the second alternative that T.A.N.U. has chosen. In the long run it is not just socialist declarations and decisions taken at top level that will count; it is the success or failure of the Arusha Resolution—the operative part five of the Declaration—which in effect is devoted into transforming T.A.N.U. into a Peasants' and Workers' Socialist Party.

And it is here that the Declaration is at its most specific.

Every T.A.N.U. and Government leader, it states, 'must be either a peasant or a worker, and should in no way be associated with the practices of capitalism or feudalism'. What gives additional confidence that this resolution means business is that the term 'leader' is precisely defined: it comprises executive members of T.A.N.U., Cabinet Ministers and M.P.s, senior officials of affiliated T.A.N.U. organisations and parastatal organs, all those appointed or elected in terms of the T.A.N.U. constitution, councillors and civil servants in high and middle cadres. For good measure it is added that the prohibitions listed apply not only to the men, or women, involved but also to their wives, or husbands.

The prohibitions are formidable.

No T.A.N.U. or government leader may:

- * hold shares in any company,
- * hold directorships in any privately-owned enterprise,
- * receive two or more salaries,
- * own houses which he rents to others.

'CORRUPTION IS TREASON'

The emphasis on personal austerity of party and state leaders may seem unwarranted to those who think in terms of the 'affluent societies' of West Europe and North America, where public corruption is on so vast a scale, with enormous monopolies holding governments in the palm of their hands, that the seizing of small advantages by politicians passes almost unnoticed. In our African countries, the problem is of a different order.

One of the besetting troubles in the independent states of Africa has been the fact that so many of the lively, the ambitious and the energetic have been lured from the path of duty to the people and to Africa by the lust for personal enrichment and aggrandisement. This alien infection—the bourgeois ethic of individual acquisitiveness, regardless of the cost to others—was spread in Africa mainly by the former colonial masters.

Harmful enough in their own countries, it can be a devastating epidemic in societies where millions lack the elementary needs of a decent life and even food. Personal wealth, even when puny by European capitalist standards, provides a glaring contrast in a country like Tanzania where wage rates average £8 16s. per month (1964). Advantages which, in advanced capitalist society are regarded as fairly trivial 'perks' of office or prominence—high salaries for Parliamentarians, membership of a Board of Directors, inside information about economic development plans—have proved vastly corrupting in every African country, precisely because they offer wealth on a scale which is huge in comparison with the mass poverty everywhere outside the ranks of the privileged.

Certainly in countries whose future depends on the mobilising of a gigantic effort by the masses to attain the high road of true independence advancing to socialism, the existence of widespread racketeering and ostentatious wealth among leaders and officials can be utterly demoralising, endangering not only progressive plans but even the stability and security of a progressive government.

T.A.N.U., I think, is quite correct when—in contrast to certain other African leading parties, it places such stress on the need for integrity and personal modesty in the lives of public leaders and officials, and

fighters against the sort of corruption which turns political leaders, former patriots and party activists into petty careerists, aiming at anti-social goals of personal enrichment at the expense of the nation. To this theme, President Julius Nyerere has returned over and over again in his speeches for many years.

I believe myself corruption in a country should be treated almost in the same way as you treat treason. . . . We have got to have people in local government, in the trade unions, in the co-operative movement, in the political organisations, in the Civil Service and in the Government itself, in whom our own people have absolute confidence. If we can't have it, then I cannot see how the people of Tanganyika are going to get the true benefits of the independence for which they have been struggling.

Speech in Parliament, May 17th, 1960.

Thus the fight against personal corruption in Tanzania is not a new thing. It has been the hallmark of T.A.N.U. leadership and that of President Nyerere in particular for many years. But in the context of the Arusha Declaration, this fight acquires a new dimension. It is not just bribery and graft which are the enemy. It is a question of forging a party of a new type. It must be a party utterly dedicated, with singleness of purpose. It must be a party of devoted workers for the cause of socialism, who not only teach socialist principles but also practise them. It must be a party of peasants and workers whose leaders are free from the corrupting influence of exploitation and have no stake in capitalism.

Ultimately, the conquest of the inspiring goals of Arusha will depend on whether T.A.N.U. can successfully transform itself into just such a new-type Party, a peasants' and workers' party of socialism.

Of all the formidable tasks which T.A.N.U. has taken on in its new phase since Arusha, this—the building of a party composed of dedicated socialists, ideologically trained and mature, and ready to carry out the active tasks of mobilising an entire people—is perhaps the most challenging.

There is a great deal, both in the record and style of work of T.A.N.U. and in the Arusha Declaration itself, which inspires confidence that this formidable task will be surmounted. Like every active political organisation, especially those in Africa where we are sailing uncharted waters, and tackling unprecedented tasks, T.A.N.U. has made its mistakes. Some of them are frankly dealt with and admitted in the Declaration itself. The very fact that they are admitted, analysed and dealt with seriously is the most striking indication of the fundamental soundness and honesty of T.A.N.U. The complex and profound problems of independent African development call for original solutions and the study and recognition of our realities in a spirit of scholarly

humility. They will never be solved by those, however brilliant, who rely on generalities, consider they know all the answers in advance, and refuse to learn from and grow with their experiences.

The real impetus for Tanzania's new revolution comes from the urgent economic needs of the country. It is plain to anyone reading the Arusha document that it did not proceed from theoretical conceptions but was forged directly on the anvil of experience in Tanzania itself. It sprang from the hard and real struggle between those who speak for the working masses and are pressing forward to socialism, and those whose 'socialism' is confined to lip-service while in practice they veer towards capitalism and privilege. The experiences of independence, its problems and challenges, lead African patriots irresistibly to the scientific socialism of Marx—not by reference to theory but through honest striving to overcome the problems set by their own lives.

The language of Arusha is straightforward and direct. It is not couched in philosophical terminology, but speaks to the plain man in words he can understand. There might be some who consider themselves Communists, who might complain that the language of Arusha does not conform with the classical formulations of Marx and Lenin; or that the detailed programme differs from that of scientific socialists in other countries. I think they are wrong on both counts

In the first place, if African leaders who do not start out from the premises of Marxism-Leninism, nevertheless find themselves impelled to adopt more and more of its major theses in order to secure the genuine independence and welfare of the masses—this is not a criticism of those leaders. It is rather a tribute to their honesty, patriotism and concern for the toiling masses. It is also the greatest possible tribute to the universal validity of scientific socialism, proved again in the harshest of all tests, that of practice and struggle. This, and not questions of formulation, is what counts. In any case, socialism in Africa must learn to speak the language of Africa. Anyone who does not recognise these things is not a Marxist but an armchair pedant.

Secondly, scientific socialism is a method for finding the solution to real problems, not a set of formulae applicable to all problems. It would be absurd to expect to find programmes in Africa identical to those for the quite different problems of Europe, or even of Asia. For that matter, the problems will differ from one country or region of our continent, according to varying conditions, and in each case they can and will only be solved by the African socialists of each region.

Arusha does not mark the beginning of T.A.N.U.'s socialism, and it most certainly does not mark the end. There are many more problems

to be solved, and much more to be said. But this historic declaration does mark a very crucial and nodal turning point in the evolution of Tanzanian socialism, to use a phrase of Engels, 'from utopia to science'. It is the coming-of-age of socialism in East Africa which is bound to have far-reaching effects over a very wide area and a long period of time.

The vital hill to be climbed now in Tanzania's ascent to the summit of socialism is the building of a leading party of active socialist organisers, teachers and leaders. Arusha marks the beginning of the assault on that hill. Tanzania's pioneering efforts and progress towards the summit will be watched with the keenest interest by all Africa, and aided with all their strength by all those socialists whose outlook is broad enough not to demand that every socialist effort conforms precisely with their own preconceptions, their own formulations and their own slogans.

The Arusha Declaration is also referred to elsewhere in this issue. In our 'Documents' Section we republish an important policy statement by President Nyerere, and a response to the Declaration by Mr. Oliver Tambo of the African National Congress of South Africa.
