6 Gottfried Haberler, "International Trade and Economic Development" in James T. Theberge, *Economics of Trade and Development* (New York 1968) p.128.

7 See Maurice Dobbs, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism* (New York, International Publishers, 1963) pp.1—82.

8 Geoffery Kay, *Development and Underdevelopment* (New York, Saint Martins 1975) p.127

9 Karl Marx Capital, Volume III (New York, International Publishers, 1974) pp.323—337.

10 For simplified explication of circuits of capital, see Paul M. Sweezy, "Maxian Economics" Monthly Review, 28, 7 (December, 1976) pp.1—6.

11 Karl Marx, op.cit. p.328.

12 It is not fortuitous that the Portuguese colonies were unique in having the value of their trade as a percentage of total value of trade decrease from 4.37 in 1906 to 4.20 percent in 1956. Every other colonial territory increased its value by at least 75 percent. See S.H. Frankel, "Capital Supply and Development" in E.A. Robinson, ed. *Economic Development of Africa, South of the Sahara,* (New York. Saint Martins Press, 1964) p.411.

13 James Duffy, *Portugal in Africa,* (Cambridge, Havard University Press, 1962) p.132.

14 Karl Marx, Vol. 1, p.168.

15 James Duffy, op.cit. p.151.

16 Eric Williams. *Capitalism and Slavery* (New York, Capricorn Books 1966) p.15.

17 James Duffy, op.cit. p.170.

18 Eric Hobsbaum, *Industry and Empire,* (London, Penguin Books 1969) p.30

19 James Duffy, op.cit. p.111.

20 For a simplified version of this process, see Piere Jalee, *How Capitalism Works* (New York, Monthly Review, 1977) pp.49—64.

21 Capital goods imports from foreign countries:

iron and steel	87%
industrial machinery	88%
Agricultural Machinery	98%
Railway machinery	94%

22. V.L. Sheinis, *Portuguese Imperialism in Africa After World War II* (Moscow, 1969) p 260

23. Ibid p. 240

24. For the explication of the concept of 'unequal exchange' see Aghiri Emanuel, *Unequal Exchange* (New York, Monthly Review, 1972) and The *Emperialism of Free Trade* (New York, Monthly Review, 1972)

25 The analysis here differs sharply from Emmanuel's who assumes the surplus appropriated accrues to the workers in the Metropole.

26. Karl Marx, Vol. III,p.237.

27. James Duffy, op. cit.p. 183.

28. Geoffery Kay, op. cit. passim.

29. V.L. Sheinis, op.cit.269.

30 Frank Brandenburg, "Development, Finance and Trade," in D.M. Abshire, *Portuguese Africa* (New York, Praeger, 1969) p.225.

31 V.L. Sheinis, op.cit. p.240.

32 F. Brandenburg, op.cit. pp.222—252

33 Ibid.

34 Sheinis, op.cit. p.274.

35 Ibid, p.259

36 United National, Economic Commission for Africa, Statistical Yearbook, (New York, U.N., 1973) p.43.

37 Karl Marx, The Poverty of Philosophy, (New York, International Publishers, 1963) p.223.

38 For an explication of the concept of 'structural power' see Cheryl Christensen, "Structural Power and National Security" in Klaus Knorr and Frank N. Trager, (eds.) *Economic Issues and National Security* (Lawrence, Kansas, Regents Press, 1977) pp.127—159.

39 For a stimulating analysis of these limits see Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Limited Possibilities of Transformation within the Capitalist World Economy," in *African Studies Review, vol. 17, No.1 (1974) pp.3—26.*

MAURITIUS: INDEPENDENCE AND DEPENDENCE

By Jean Houbert *

A COLONIAL CREATION

Mauritius became independent on the 12th March 1968. It was then taken as an example of a small, isolated, poor, dependent, country shedding off the chains of colonialism only to fall into neo-colonialism — the Third World's, Third World. Indeed, in some respects Mauritius is different from newly independent countries of Africa and Asia. Mauritius is 'Colonial' since it was entirely created by European Colonisation. The economy, the society, the polity, the flora and fauna of the island are all the direct result of its colonial history. Although it is a society of immigrants - all the present day Mauritians being descendants of the willing and unwilling immigrants who settled on the island under colonial rule in the last two centuries, it is not a settler colony' in the same sense as Australia. Moreover, it is a not a replica of the European 'mother country' beyond the seas. Mauritius is rather a floatsam left behind by the Wreck of the Colonial World. In Mauritius, Colonialism was not something alien; it was built into the very being of the country.

We have to ask ourselves what significance does independence have to such a nation and the form taken by development.

SETTLEMENT

Profit brought the first Mauritians to Mauritius, and it has dominated its life and history to the present. Initially there was not much money to be made out of Mauritius itself, an uninhabited small island entirely lacking in natural resources. However, it was part of a bigger scheme, the colonial trade between Europe Asia and Africa.[1]

Several European nations: Holland, France and finally Britain, used Mauritius as a stepping stone on the route to India. Gradually, it changed from a watering place to a trading centre, to a military base, and finally to a sugar plantation, the legacy still enjoyed by the island to the present, though manufacturing for export programmes have been established recently.

Sugar production in Mauritius can be explained by neither the availability of local natural resources nor by other initial factor endowment. It had some disadvantages: it is in the cyclonic belt, its small land surface was covered with tropical forests and volcanic boulders, it is thousands of kilometres away from the markets for sugar — raw sugar is heavy and bulky,[2] and there was no native labour-slaves had to be brought in from distant mainland Africa and Madagascar to cut the forests and clear the land.

The first European immigrants appropriated land and started plantations with slave labour. Initially, a variety of crops were grown but these gradually gave way to sugar. Sugar eventually dominated the economy of Mauritius due to its location in the British imperial scheme. Britain had seized the island for strategic reasons to deprive the French of a base from which they could harrass British ships and challenge her position in India.[3] With British hegemony in the Indian Ocean, Mauritius lost it military and commercial significance, so immigrants turned more and more to the

* Lecturer in Department of Politics, University of Aberdeen.

land'. A political partnership developed between the British administration and the French-speaking immigrants, with sugar providing the revenue needed to administer the colony and maintain troops there. The colonial government provided a minimum infrastructure and coercive apparatus for the plantation system. Slave labour was brought in by the immigrants with some amount of government control. Later, when the slave trade was abolished, the government provided cheap labour in the form of Indian indentured workers.

Within the British Empire, the Mauritian planters had a vast market for sugar. As demand for sugar grew and prices rose on the London market the Mauritian sugar industry expanded.[4] The needs of the industry created an institutional structure: the centralisation of mills, marketing, research, banking, insurance, which through economies of scale reinforced the profitability of sugar compared with other forms of production. This in turn led to more expansion and to displacement of activities unconnected with sugar until practically the whole of the cultivable land was under sugar. This meant that Mauritius had to import most of its requirements, including the bulk of its food.

Mauritius as an entity was, through its very genesis, doubly dependent on the outside world: for its imports and for its exports. Changes in the price of its imports, over which it has little control because of the small quantities involved, could seriously affect standards of living. The quantity of sugar sold abroad and the price obtained for it was vital and Mauritius had only partial control over those. Sugar and the high international specialisation within the colonial empire, produced a vulnerable, fragile economy in Mauritius; though not an underdeveloped one. Operating on an entirely cash basis, with a relatively high GNP per capita, without a peasantry of subsistence farming, and universal literacy, Mauritius does not have the same features of under-development found in many countries in Africa and Asia. In Mauritius capitalism took root right from the start because there was no alternative. The problem of articulating the capitalist mode with other pre-capitalist modes of production, posed elsewhere in the colonial world of Africa and Asia, did not arise in Mauritius. Here capitalism, in its colonial variant, found a virgin fertile soil, as it were, and grew. This growth did not and could not replicate capitalist development in Europe. In Mauritius the development was a dependent one: the economy grew as part of a whole, the centre of which was not in the island but in Europe. In fact it was not correct to think of Mauritius as a self-contained entity; the real entity was the overall colonial empire with its centre in Europe. Within that large whole the important economic and political forces did not only impinge up on Mauritius from the outside but penetrated into and were part of the colonial body of Mauritius. This fundamental dependency was highlighted in the politics of independence by ethnic tensions and the problem of unemployment.

INDIANS IN THE CREOLE SOCIETY

From the time sugar began to be grown on a large scale, the peopling of Mauritius was determined. The number of slaves increased with the need for labour on the plantations. Abolition of slave trade took place at a time when the demand for labour had become insatiable with rising sugar prices and high profits. By then cheap indentured labour from India was proving a more profitable from of exploitation than slave labour for the planters and was more acceptable to the British. The Indians

brought a profound and permanent change in the ethnic composition of the population. In 1835 Indians represented a tiny proportion of the population of 100 thousand — of whom 80 thousand were slaves, by 1861 Indians represented two-thirds of the population. This proportion has been maintained to the present day. In all, 450 thousand Indians came to Mauritius as indentured labourers, most of whom stayed.

When the Indians arrived, the three tier colonial Creole society was well established in Mauritius. The British on occupying the island in 1810 had found the pyramidal structure already laid with a small number of whites (of French origin) at the top, large numbers of black slaves at the bottom, and an intermediate group, in numbers as well as colour, in the middle. The British admistration kept and strengthened that pyramid, grafting itself at the top of it. When slavery was abolished, the indentured Indians took the place of the slaves on the plantations and at the bottom of the social hierarchy of the Creole society.

Within this rigid social structure some mobility was nevertheless possible through the acquisition of land. Sugar growing in Mauritius is a seasonal activity, much more labour is required in the crop than in the intercrop season. Soon, the planters discovered that it was more economical to employ labour by day through a labour contractor rather than keep them tied to the plantations and pay them all the year round. The labour contractor was usually an Indian "old immigrant" who could speak Creole and one or more Indian languages. The planter would give the contractor an agreed sum of money for a given number of labourers where and when required. The contractor was thus in a strategic position able to keep to himself part of the sum or surplus produced by the labour power of his men. With the capital thus accumulated he bought land from the planters. Sugar milling has always been more profitable than sugar planting. A white miller/planter would sometimes, in bad years, decide to divide up part of his plantations and sell or lease land in plots to Indians, on the understanding that they would grow sugar and bring the canes to the planter's mills. The Indians, using family labour, were able to creep into sugar production on marginal land which became uneconomical for the planters in times of falling sugar prices. Planters would also at times give small inferior plots of land to their favourite **sirdar** - a kind of field foremen. The sirdars would engage in market gardening and make extra cash. Gradually, through hard work, saving the exploitation of fellow labourers and favours from the planters, Indians amassed money and bought land. A few of them became very rich and owned large sugar estates in their own rights. Many became "small planters" owning anything between half an acre to several hundred acres of cane land. Today, just under half of the cultivated land is owned by Indians.[7] The sons of many of these Indian planters entered into government employment and the professions through the education ladder. Increasingly they also entered politics. Consequently, slowly at first, more rapidly since the Second World War, a sizeable Indian middle class, with close connections in the sugar industry, grew out of the indentured labourers. The existence of this class acted as a cushion and mitigated class confrontation between the white miller/planters and the Indian sugar proletariat.

THE POLITICS OF INDEPENDENCE

Decolonisation usually takes the form of an indigenous society liberating itself from the domination of a foreign power and its local agents. Mauritius, a complete creation of colonisation, could not be decolonised in this way. Here decolonisation was not liberation from an external power. It was a rearrangement of the political

power balance inside the colonial society. The colonial power, Britain, played a major role in bringing this about. It saw to it that the rearrangement took place at such slow a pace (electoral and constitutional reforms started in 1948 but the island did not become independent until 1968) that it brought to power political leaders who would ensure continuity in the internal structure of the society as well as the external linkages.

Internal pressure for change had taken a class basis at first. A number of Creole artisans and intellectuals had joined with a few Indian professionals to press for constitutional reforms and for the right to strike and form trade-unions. They founded the Mauritius Labour Party (MLP) on a non-ethnic basis just before the Second World War. The birth of the MLP coincided with unrest on some of the sugar estates provoked by a conflict over the quantity of sugar accruing to the "Small planters" for the canes they brought to the millers/planters. With the extension of the suffrage (after some delays due to the war and hesitations of the colonial power) in 1947 ethnic considerations would come to dominate Mauritius politics, and the leadership of the MLP passed into the hands of Indians.[8]

The Indians have been largely creolosed, in the Mauritian conditions. They have, however, retained enough Indianness to make it possible to appeal to them and mobilize them on ethnic grounds in political contexts. Rich Indian planters, civil servants, and the sugar proletariat could, therefore, be rallied together to provide a large electoral base for the moderate Indian leaders of the MLP groomed by the Colonial Office to take over at independence.

On the side of the Creoles, the partnership in colonialism between the British administration and the white French speaking owners of the sugar industry had not been without its ups and downs, and during periods of strain, a kind of Franco-Mauritian nationalism grew up. Infiltrating into other strata of Creole society, this nationalism strengthened the attachment to France and French all categories of Creoles. It even led to a demand for the island to be returned to France at one point.[9] But Creole nationalism could never go very far, because the interests of the sugar plantocracy were too tied up with the British Empire. The French-speaking planters protested now and again, but on the whole they were not too dissatisfied with an arrangement which guaranteed their privileges, their supply of labour, and a market for their sugar, without interferring too much with their cultural and sentimental attachment to France. Large numbers of coloured Creoles had their interests tied to their jobs in the civil service and, however francophile they remained, they could not afford to be too anti-British. For long, the issues of colour and voting rights had opposed creole "reactions" and "liberals" far more virulently than the question of constitutional status. The extent to which Creole nationalism aimed at reintegration with France rather than independence for Mauritius alienated the majority of the population, which was Indian by then.

However, now that the British were bringing about constitutional and electoral reforms, the white sugar barons saw political power slipping from their hands and going to the descendants of "their" indentured labourers, they looked for and found political allies, on an ethnic basis, among the coloured and black Creoles. The coloured Creole, traditionally an intermediary between the white owner and the Indian proletariat in the sugar mills and on the plantations, was also fairly entrenched as an intermediary between the British administrators and the public at large in the civil

service. With the rise of the Indian middle class, the Creoles were in the way and felt that they were being squeezed out of government employment. They had a real grudge against the Indians which could easily be activated politically. The ex-African slaves, displaced from the plantations with the coming of the Indians, had moved to the coast and to towns, where they earned a poor living by fishing in the lagoon with primitive equipments, working as street vendors, drivers and artisans. Many were more or less permanently unemployed and formed a lumpenproletariat on the margins of the sugar economy. The Creoles, rich white mill owners, middle class coloured civil servants and professionals, and black unemployed, are all Roman Catholics. In spite of this colour/social conflicts and the class gulf between them, they all, in their different ways, felt threatened by the Indians, so they responded readily to an ethnic political appeal.

The Creoles also found political allies in the other ethnic minority groups: the Chinese shop and restaurant keepers (now a middle class, Roman Catholic group) joined them naturally.[10]

The Indians had all along been divided into a majority of Hindus and minority of Muslims. Some of the Muslims had come to Mauritius as traders. With money and living in towns, they took the lead in establishing religious and cultural institutions and had helped maintain in a sense of communal identity among the Muslim labourers thus keeping them apart from the Hindus. The Creoles found many allies among them.[11]

Constitutional reforms in the colonial society, helped by the colonial administration, gave rise to two large ethnic alliances: One dominated by the white creole plantocracy, the other by the high caste rich Indian palnters and professionals. Both alliances cut across deep divisions of class interests. The stress on ethnicity served to camouflage the class gulf within the alliances.

The contest over the issue of independence, fought by these two alliances, gave rise to a good deal of ethnic strain and to some violence, though ethnic politics did not bring into question the foundation of the colonial society based on class exploitation. Leaders, on both sides, had nothing to gain by radical changes; they all wanted to keep the links with Britain and Europe.

INDEPENDENCE FOR MAURITIUS

The Parti Mauricien Social Democrate (PMSD) the creole party, advocated a form of integration/association with Britain while the MLP, the part of the Indians, prompted by London, opted for independence in close association with Britain. The impending accession of Britain to the European Economic Community (EEC), an with it the fortunes of Mauritian sugar, loomed large in the preoccupation of both parties. Integration with Britain was presented by the PMSD as a formular for curing all the ailments of Mauritius. With the precedent of nearby Reunion's integration with France in mind, the Creole leaders argued that through integration/association with Britain, Mauritian sugar would continue to enter the UK market without contravening the treaty of Rome after British accession to the EEC, that inside the Common Market not only would Mauritius have a large assured market for the whole of its sugar production but that it would get the high European price for it. As part of the UK, the Mauritian unemployed, with a British passport, would be able to emigrate

o Europe. Within the EEC, close togetherness with beloved France would be renewed at last and the "Hindu Menace" would vanish.[12]

The MLP, for its part, argued that integration with Britain was not obtainable Even if the Mauritians wanted it, Britain preferred Mauritius to be independent. An independent Mauriitius would continue to benefit from the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement (CSA). If Britain joined the EEC, she would see to it that the interests of Mauritians did not suffer. Furhtermore, an independent Mauritius would be better placed to make its own arrangements with Europe - and in particular with France - while retaining its good close relations with Britain.[13]

The strategy of the PMSD was to press the British government to hold a referendum in Mauritius on the straight issue of Independence versus Association, and at the same time make a general appeal to all Mauritians, irrespective of communities, to reject independence. Ably led by a new populist leader, a young coloured Creole, Gaetan Duval, the PMSD conducted a skilful compaign. "Hindu mon Frere" became the slogan on the platform if not in the intimacy of creole clubs and drawing rooms. The enormous means of the sugar industry helping the PMSD drew large number of Indians - particularly the young - to its ranks. In London, the big influence of sugar was highly felt.

It is most improbable however that London would have agree to the plans of the PMSD whatever the wish of the Mauritian people.[14] Mauritius was the most unlikely colony to be made part of the United Kingdom. Without Briton "kith and kin" in Mauritius, London was not keen to hold on to an island where over the century the Creole elite had made the rulers of "the empire over which the sun never sets" feel alien in their own crown colony. Moreover, it was an island with problems of over-population and unmployment, which the PMSD proposed to solve by emigration, the very opposite of the British policy of tightening up on entry of coloured people into Britain. Sugar was also at an all time low and London did not relish the prospect of having to subsidize Mauritius [15] Besides, formal colonial attachments, in any form, were no longer suited to the contemporary world. Britain, having helped to put into place the internal arrangements for the perpetration of a neo-colonial Mauritius, was anxious to get out.[16] London, however, characteristically, played the Mauritians along to get the best deal for itself over what had become a central British interest in the area and which it was determined to secure before casting Mauritius off.

DIEGO GARCIA

From the early 1960's onwards a joint Anglo-American team of experts had been surveying the small islands of the region of Mauritius for a suitable site for a military base (s). Considerations were given to the Seychelles main island of Mahe where Britain, with American contributions, was to build an airport with a runway capable of handling the largest civilian and military aircrafts of the time.[17] The airport would double up as a venture in long distance international tourism in order to reduce the burden on the British treasury of financing the Seychelles. The military part of the Seychelles airport project was later abandoned on account of the United States insistence that Mahe was far too populated as location for a base. (The emphasis of the military strategy of the Great Powers had been shifting back to the oceans, but the United States had concluded that to be secure and effective, oceanic bases have to be

located on uninhabited islands as, in these post-Vietnam days, even a small but unfriendly population could disrupt plans and raise problems at the United Nations). Attention, then shifted to the smaller islands of the Seychelles and Mauritius. At one point Aldabra was considered but it raised on outcry in the world's scientific community on account of its rare fauna. Farquhar and Desroches suited the British who wanted the base (s) to fulfil the secondary function of helping to monitor sanctions against shipping to Rhodesia through Portugese Mozambique. But the islands were too far to the West for the Americans. Finally, the planners settled for Diego Gracia in the Chagos Archipelago. A splendid atoll capable of being transformed into a safe haven for a large fleet of surface ships and submarines and most conveniently located in the middle of the Indian Ocean.[18] There were two problems however. The Chagos belongs to Mauritius; and the islands were inhabited. London considered buying the islands and treating them as ships of the Royal Navy but abandoned the idea for financial and legal consideration.[19] Instead the British government decided to amputate the islands as part of its plan for the independence of Mauritius and etablished, five years after the United Nations Resolutions 1514, a new British colony, the so-called BIOT.[20]

LANCASTER HOUSE CONFERENCE—1965

At the London Lancaster House Conference 1965 held to decide the final status of Mauritius, the strategy of the British delegation consisted of leading the Mauritians to think that London was willing to consider seriously the option of integration/association proposed by the PMSD as an alternative to independence and would be prepared to test opionion in Mauritius on the issue through a referendum as requested by the Creole party.[21] The MLP felt that were it to raise difficulties about the detachment of the Chagos islands, or insist for too high a price for them, the British government might lean to the side of the PMSD and grant its request of a referendum.[22] Opinion in Mauritius showed signs of favouring association. There was a real risk, from the MLP point of view, of losing the prize of independence at the last minute. It was a risk which the leaders of the MLP were not prepared to take. They made a deal with London not to raise objections to the amputation of the islands for the relatively small sum of £3 million once and for all.[23] The MLP also agreed to cooperate with Britain in the depopulation of the Chagos. The British government then proceeded to deport to Mauritius, without their consent, the one thousand four hundred inhabitants of Chagos, who had been in the islands for several generations. It is reported that the British government got, for its part in the depopulation of the Chagos, a rebate of some fourteen million U.S. dollars on Polaris missiles bought from the United States. Six hundred and fifty thousand pounds of that money was given by Britain to the Mauritian government in 1972. The United States, at a cost of over 175 million dollars, has transformed Diego-Garcia into its principal military base in the Indian Ocean. With its 4,000 metres runway handling the giant B521's and a squadron of P3C observation planes, Diego enables the US to do without a carrier force permanently in the Indian Ocean. Storage facilities for Plaris and Posidon on the atoll enables the US nuclear submarines to double their stay on location and the communication station increases the accuracy of their targetting. There is no doubt that the British-Mauritian-American arrangements leading to Diego Garcia becoming "the Okinawa and Malta" of the Indian Ocean have provoked an arms race and the

further militarisation of that of the world to the detriment and to much dislike of the peoples of the region.[24]

Having secured the Chagos from the MLP, the British turned down the PMSD request for a referendum on association and decided that: "it was right for Mauritius to become independent and take her place among the sovereign nations of the world."[25] Britain, through a defence agreement with Mauritius on independence, would look after the island's external and internal security. British troops would intervene internally when requested.[26] A number of Britons were also to remain in some of the key posts of the new state: Head of the Civil Service, Security Advisers to the Prime Minister, and the Commander of the Special Mobile Force. Thus Britain would continue to nurse the fledging state through the early years of independence. But however important this continuing British presence it could only buttress not perpetrate the colonial society. This is more a function of the economic, social and political structures internal to Mauritius itself although linked to external dependency.

ELECTIONS AND INDEPENDENCE

London, having made the decision on independence, had to do all it could to ensure that the MLP stayed in power in Mauritius. A general election scheduled to take place before independence was delayed as long as possible in the hope that opinion would swing back towards the pre-independence parties.[27] Communal considerations were written in the electoral system principally to satisfy the Muslim Committee of Action (CAM) — an avowedly communal party ally of the MLP.[28] Through British advice, the MLP merged with the CAM and the Independent Forward Block (IFB) — A pro-independence party which had been in the forefront of the Indian struggle and which had the support of sections of the sugar proletariat to fight the elections as a single Independence party against the PMSD.[29] In spite of these resources, the results were close. With a heavy poll, the Independence party (MLP-CAM-IFB) obtained 54% of the votes cast to the PMSD 44% but the electroral system and party alliances translated this into 39 seats for the Independence Party and 23 for the PMSD: the Creole dominated party won only one seat less than the MLP's 24 which led the Independence alliance; the PMSD won all the urban constituencies while the MLP got most of its support from the rural areas.

Independence day was not one of universal rejoicing in Mauritius. British soldiers patrolled the street and British warships stood by outside while the Union Jack was lowered at midday instead of the traditional midnight through fear of violence- to mark symbolically the end of British rule.[30] As the PMSD controlled the towns and boycotted the ceremonies, the flag of the new state was not flown in the urban areas for the occasion.[31] The coloured Creole middle class sulked for a time - a few even emigrated to Austalia; the poor black ones of the capital, Port-Louis. and a number of the Muslims, vented their frustration in a short but murderous bout of violence against one another just before independence.[32] But the plantocracy soon realised that independence had not after all changed anything much in the colonial society. It found the new holders of political power as keen as the British had been to foster the interests of the sugar industry — largely because the revenue the government needed was produced by sugar. The Indo-Mauritian middle class, with its own sugar interests, was

as staunch a defender of private property as its Creole counterpart. Partnership between "the private and public sectors" would not only continue to be cordial but would be strngthened after independence.[33] Politically the partnership was sealed with the MLP, having discarded its previous ally of the independence battle, the IFB, coming together with the PMSD to form a coalition government "of national unity" which has lasted, on and off, to the present day.

INDEPENDENT MAURITIUS, THE EEC, AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Securing markets for sugar had loomed large in the preoccupations of both parties during the battle for independence. The PMSD intergration with Britain proposal had been largely motivated by fears that the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement (CSA) (under which Mauritius got an assured market and guaranteed price, normally above the free world market price, for just over half (400,000 tons) of its yearly production of sugar) would come to an end if and when Britain became a member of the EEC. The advantage of the CSA to Mauritius was that it sheltered the sugar industry from the worst effects of price and quota fluctuations on the world market. In the mid 1960's a glut of sugar had brought prices on the open market to a very low ebb. At £17 a ton it was well below the cost of production. The CSA was therefore crucial for Mauritius at the time.[34] Now with independence, Mauritius searched for reassurace in the direction of the European Common Market which the PMSD had first put forward.

France's Role

France, as the centre-piece of the EEC, as a large sugar beet producer and as the European country with the greatest ambition to maintain its presence in the Third world, would have a major voice in deciding the fortunes of Mauritian sugar when Britain entered the EEC. Paris had been a little anxious at first lest independence should bring to power in Port-Louis groups unfavourable to the policy of *departementalisation* in Reunion. On the other hand, with Britain gone, there would be more opportunities for the French presence to be reasserted in a receptive island.[35] Monsieur Debre, deputy for Reunion, ex Prime Minister of General De Gaulle and the most influential of the Gaullist "barons", was only too willing to help bring together the coalition government of the Francophile representatives of sugar and the Labour party in Mauritius. Patronised by the eminent French politician, the occasion of the formation of the coalition was celebrated with much more general rejoicing than had been the case at the time of independence. France rapidly became one of the principal aid donors to Mauritius. Its embassy, with a large cultural section, began to send advisers and cooperants to the remotest villages. (Radio and television programmes from Paris are now relayed to the islands by satellite and boosted to Mauritius by powerful stations in Reunion). The number of scholarships for Mauritians to study in France was increased.[36] France provides help to the schools and the new university of Mauritius. French artists, plays, films, subsidised by the government in Reunion, take in Mauritius on their tours. Mauritian government ministers started to be received in Paris on official occasions with the honours usually reserved for the Senghors and the Tsirananas. Mauritius had since then made a full member of the numerous international French-speaking organisations.[37] Paris made

a new departure by handling relations with Mauritius through the department of Cooperation; this enables the island to have the same asvantages as former French colonies. With the advice and support of Paris, Mauritius became a member of the Organisation Commune Africaine et Malgache (OCAM).[38] Through OCAM, piloted by France and with the support of the French speaking African states, Mauritius became. in record time, a member of the Estats Associes Malgaches et Africains (EAMA)[39]— Mauritius thus became the first Commonwealth state to be associated with the EEC long before Britain joined the Common Market. As an associated state, Mauritius benefited from loans on favourable terms from the European Development Bank and drawing rights on the Fond European de Developpement (FED). Under the Yaounde II Convention Mauritian products could enter the markets of the European member states of the EEC relatively free of tariffs.[40] Mauritian products however meant above all sugar. But sugar was one of the products specifically excluded under the terms of Association because of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the EEC. In good years the Common Market countries were well able to produce all the sugar requirements of the Six, plus a small surplus for export. But with the enlargement of the market, with British entry, it was calculated that there would be a short-fall of around 1.3 million tons - more or less the same amount of cane sugar that Britain usually imported from the less developed countries (LDCs) of the Commonwealth under the CSA. The European countries could expand their productions of beet sugar to supply this extra requirement themselves. And there were pressures, from the French and Belgian farmers notably, to the effect that if Britain joined the EEC she should be bound under the CAP to buy European procuded sugar.[41] Mauritius had hoped and planned however that by being in OCAM and EAMA, before the whole question of the *Associables* was raised, above all by being on close terms with France, the island would get the maximum support for its sugar on British entry into the EEC.[42] In the event it was agreed, after some initial resistance on the part of some of the Continental members, that Britain would continue to import the same quantity of sugar from specific LDC's of the Commonwealth which became associated with EEC under the Lome Convention which replaced Yaounde.[43] Mauritius has been doing particularly well out of the new agreement. It has an assured market for 500,000 tons — over a third of the total African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) quota in the EEC — at a high guaranteed price. The price received has to be negotiated every year but as it is linked to the price received by European producers in the EEC it is normally well above the price in the open world markert.[44]

Several factor helped bring about this most favourable agreement for Mauritus. Britain fought very hard on behalf of the small cane sugar producers of the Commonwealth. Britain had every reason to do this. Through the long years of the imperial connection, Britain had imported cane sugar. Its sugar beet production therefore was not as high as it could be. One of the conditions of importing cane sugar was that it should arrive as raw sugar in Britain. The last, and profitable, stage of refining, the packaging and distribution would be done by a British firm, Tate and Lyle. British refineries are located at the ports and it would be costly to move and transform raw into beet sugar. British firms had sugar interests in the islands of the West Indies, Fiji, some in Mauritius, and in Swaziland. Shipping and insurance interests were also involved. The French government was motivated by its position in the Mascareignes not to heed fully the lobby of its beet producers. Finally the world

sugar context was favourable. The glut of sugar of the mid 1960's had turned to a shortage by 1969 largely due to a drought in the Soviet Union; from the low £17 a ton prices went to over £100 a ton in the world market at one point. Therefore, by the time the agreement was reached, with British entry into the EEC, the ACP producers could sell on the open market at very profitable prices.

In Mauritius, the ACP agreement plus the high price on the open market, amounted to a bonanza beyond the dreams of the planters as well as the government. The climate was also good. Despite a severe cyclone, the amount of rain and sun appeared in the right proportions to produce bumper crop after crop and the quantity of sugar produced reached an all time high. But, for the first time, there was more than sugar. The sugar boom coincided with large scale investments and rapid developments in tourism and manufacturing for export.

TOURISM AND MANUFACTURING FOR EXPORT

It has often been stressed in the literature that one of the principal "bottlenecks" to development in the LDC's is a shortage of capital.[45] In the case of Mauritius, this shortage was not a symptom of underdevelopment but rather of the distorted use of the surplus in the plantation economy; this distortion being itself an aspect of the structure of the global colonial relations of which Mauritus was part. Extreme international specialisation of production had meant that Mauritius produced only one commodity, sugar, but produced it very efficiently. In years of high sugar prices, considerable profits would be made and the planters would accumulate capital. So long as there was room for expansion, this accumulated capital would be ploughed back in the sugar industry. But with practically all the cultivable land of the island under sugar there were no outlets for the surplus in Mauritius itself. The colonial structure of international specialisation discouraged the diversification of economic growth. As the demands for its products, and therefore its growth, was not dependent on the internal market but on the world outside, it was not in the interests of the owners of the sugar industry to raise wages. On the contrary, cheap labour cut down production costs, reduced imports, built up balance of payments surpluses, and contributed to the concentration of wealth in a few hands. Low wages in turn meant too small a market, internally, to be an incentive to diversify production away from sugar. Without investment outlets in Mauritius therefore some of the profits made in the sugar industry would be consumed in the form of sophisticated luxuries, which could not be produced locally, but a good deal would be saved and invested abroad.[46] Mauritius, therefore, exported capital to Britain and South Africa. It is important to stress here that this took place in spite of the fact that Mauritius was a-typical among sugar plantation economies, in that, for historical reasons, most of the capital was locally owned. The planter class of Mauritians never identified themselves with Britain; they lived in Mauritius and considered themselved as the indegenous Mauritians. Mauritius then had a "national bourgeoisie" in the sense of a resident group which extracted and accumulated capital; but it was structurally impossible for that bourgeoisie to de-link from the colonial framework.

After independence, the government made some efforts to reduce capital drain through some legislation measures and the opening of new investment outlets in Mauritius. This reversed the trend and kept profits in the island and brought some back. With new outlets for sugar and rocketing sugar prices, the government was

willing, in spite of the grave unemployment problem, to allow the long delayed further mechanisation of the sugar industry to go ahead. More important, completely new openings for capital became available. These were partly the results of government policy.[47] They, however, largely sprung from developing trends in the world capitalist economy; two trends in particular: long distance air transport and the transnationalisation of capitalist production on a global scale.[48]

Tourism had started timidly in the 1960's. It now gathered momentum with rich South Africans and Europeans fleeing the "vulgar" places and the polluted Mediterranean, jetting in on the overnight flights from Paris, Frankfurt or Milan, in search of the "unspoilt" tropical island. Mauritian capital, by itself or in association with French, British of South African capital, built luxury hotels complete with "native exotica" to entertain and provide fantasy. Foreign aid in the form of soft loans or grants from Britain, France, the EEC and other international bodies helped, notably in the improvement of the infrastructure of roads and the airport — a new airport was planned to be financed-partly by communist China.[49] But the bulk of the financing of development in tourism was on commercial terms and mostly Mauritian-owned.[50] Tourism is the ideal form of development for the sugar industry. On the beach, it does not compete with sugar for land. There is plenty of labour and capital is not scarce. Food importing Mauritius now grows vegetables between the lines of sugar canes to suply the hotels with fresh foods. The government is satisfied the tourists bring in foreign currency and the building of the facilities helped with employment.[51]

In recent years, the really spectacular development in Mauritius, however, has been the new, and for a time outstanding successful, Export Processing Zone (EPZ).[52] The European Common Market has been the key factor in this, for through the Yaounde Convention the doors of Europe were open to a long list of manufacture goods from the ACP countries. Even if for most of the Associated states this has remained a rather theoretical opening, Mauritius has grabbed the opportunity offered by the large rich market to start manufacturing for export.[53] Mauritian capitalists, in the past, had been willing to take risks only in sugar where they understood the market very well. Now foreign firms possessing the know-how and the markets were interested in coming to Mauritius to set up manufacturing plants. The Mauritius to set up manufactured goods for sale in Europe. The government provided an incentive with "tax holidays", infrastructure, sites and factory space at low rents, cheap energy and duty free raw materials, repatriation of profits, banking facilities, guarantee against nationalisation and "political stability"[54] But the two biggest attractions were plentiful, literate, cheap, adaptable labour and entry of the products on the EEC markets. French, Franco — German, UK, Hong Kong firms, among others, set up factories in Mauritius producing anything from textiles — (Mauritius is now the biggest supplier of knitwear to France and has a substantial part of the British market[55]) to electronics via reproduction antique, furniture, toys and suitcases. A Swiss-South African combine established one of their largest diamond cutting factories in Mauritius. Indian industries moved some of the finishing stages of their textile industry to Mauritius to get over the EEC regulations over country of origin. Almost all of the raw mayerials for the EPZ industries was imported. Most of it in the form of semi-finished goods. One, two or more stages of processing were done, then re-exported "Made in Mauritius". A "raw" material may start out in Australia, be processed in Hong Kong or Calcutta, be "finished" in Mauritius, to end up in the

aleries Lafayette in Paris or Littlewoods in Manchester.

High sugar prices, tourism and the EPZ, between them transformed the economic limate in Mauritius in a very short time. The gloom and depression of independence ays gave way to boom conditions and mounting optimism.[56] The main beneficiaries f growth were, without doubt, the Mauritian capitalists. The sugar industry became he owner of a good proportion of the tourist development and had substantial nterests in the EPZ.[57] The diversification and inter-nationalisation of their interests made the owners of the sugar industry feel less exposed, politically, in independent Mauritius than had been the case on the eve of independence. The government obtained more revenue from sugar during the boom years but forewent taxes from the EPZ and, for a time, from tourism. Indeed, it subsidised foreign and Mauritian capital by providing them with below cost facilities. It was a form of taxing sugar to subsidize tourism and manufacturing capital, and this enouraged local capital to diversify its investments. All this being true, however; Mauritius remained principally, if not altogether, dependent on sugar.[58] Furthermore, diversifications which occured did not reduce the external orientation and dependence of the economy. Development of tourism and the EPZ are even subject to fluctuations in the capitalist economy than sugar. This has been highlighted by the recession since the boom years of the early 1970's. From 1976 onwards the price of sugar on the world market has once again fallen below cost of production and the EEC price has accordingly been renegotiated downwards.[59] One EEC country after another have complained about cheap imports from Mauritius affecting employment at home. During the boom years, wages, although pitifully low by European standards, went up, reducing one of the major attraction of Mauritius; the number of new firms opening up in the EPZ had already started declining by the end of 1975; now a number of the established ones are looking to the government for help to survive.[60] The rise in oil prices severely affects Mauritius as most of the energy used is oil based. Air fares, and therefore long distance tourism, are also affected. Expectations had risen during the boom years and government spending remained high, so did imports while exports flagged. With this high propensity to import, inflation in an economy as open as that of Mauritius was obvious and it became inevitable very soon: foreign exchange reserves melted from Rs 1.1 bn in 1975 to a bare RS 89m (less than enough for two weeks imports) in August 1979. The government went to the LMF which granted a soft loan of Rs 730 m in exchange for a drastic 30 per cent devaluation, cuts in government spending, curbs on wages and prices, cuts in food subsidies, a rise in bank rate and a ceiling on bank lending.[61] More important, development has mitigated but has not solved what remains Mauritius principal problem: unemployment; nor has it brought about "political stability"

DEMOCRACY IN AN OVERPOPULATED DEPENDENT SOCIETY

With the end of India immigration, the population of Mauritius had stabilised around the 400 thousand mark. Malaria, which came in with the Indians, helped in that.[62] After the Second World War, however, there was a sudden, dramatic, population explosion. This has been attributed to changes both in the birth rate — associated with the postwar boom in sugar prices — and to the death rate which was brought down by the rapid elimination of malaria. At the time of independence,

Mauritius had become one of the most densely populated agricultural countries in the world.[63] Population growth rates, however, have fallen off in the 1970's almost as dramatically as they went up in the 1950's. Education, rising standard of living birth control, have played their part in this. Despite the evident slow down in rates of increase, the total population will continue to grow in the years ahead because of the very young age structure of the Mauritian population. More than 50 per cent of the population are below the age of twenty four. This means that every year some nine thousand new job seekers enter the labour market. For a good a number of them the chance of ever finding any work in Mauritius is bleak. In the sugar industry, the labour situation has gone full circle the insatiable demand for labour in the nineteenth century, had caused the massive immigration of Indians. Now with all available agricultural land under sugar, the industry cannot provide employment for the growing population. Indeed, more sugar could only be squeezed out of the small land surface of Mauritius by shedding labour and increasing mechanisation. Further centralisation of milling, the installation of sugar soils at the port for bulk shipment to Europe, the reduction of the length of the crop season through mechanised cutting and loading of the canes, would all increase efficiency. The large sugar estates produce considerably more sugar per acre than the "small planters". This is in part due to the poorer quality of the land farmed by the "small planters"; but the main reason is that the large miller/planter follows a different economic rationale to that of the "small planter": because milling involves a great deal of fixed capital and relatively little variable capital. It is in the interests of the miller/planter to plough in capital in his fields — in the form of fertilizers, irrigation, machines — beyond what is economical in order to produce a large quantity of canes; what he looses in planting through over-capitalisation he mere than makes up through his mill working at full capacity. While the "small planter" interest is to put much less capital in his field, and therefore he produces less canes per acre than the miller/planter. From the point of view of the interest of the sugar industry as a whole, the small cane producer should disappear.[64] But here again, as for mechanisation, there was a real conflict between the demands of employment and that of the quantity of sugar. There was no question of reducing the production of sugar on which, together with price obtained, real income per head depended. With universal suffrage it was difficult not to give high priority to employment. The government has done a great deal for the "small planter", it has retarded mechanisation as long as it could; some of the increased revenues of the boom years has been used to give "relief work" and finance the "travail pour tous" programme. For a time, the development of the infrastructure, the construction of the facilities of the EPZ, the building of hotels and restaurants, gave to employment. More permanent employment however, in the hotels, and especially in the EPZ industries, has been largely of female labour. Women are paid substantially less than men and tend to be less unionised and militant than ment. But the sugar industry must continue to shed labour and become increasingly mechanised to remain competitive on a world scale.[65] If in the early 1970's the economic boom enabled the 1971-1975 plan target of creating 52,900 new jobs to be exceeded [66] in the second five year period, to 1980, job creation is going to fall far short of the original target of 76,000[67] — government worries with regard to employment therefore, alleviated for a time, have returned with even more pressing urgency. The nature of unemployment in Mauritius furthermore makes the problem particularly explosive from a political point of view.

EDUCATION

We have touched upon the socio-economic rise of the indentured labourers through the acquisition of land. The 30,000 "small planters" of sugar canes today are a residual legacy of that early upward movement of Indians in Mauritius. The economy of growth of the sugar industry now threatens their survival; but they form an essential variable in the political equation and the parties cannot afford to ignore them.[68] Land ownership however, was a necessary but not a sufficient factor for the political ascendancy of the Indians. Two other interlinked factors have played important parts in this ascension: European type education and the right to vote. Land ownership provided an economic base for some Indians to finance the education of their sons for government jobs and the professions. There posts were the more keenly sought after by the educated Indians in that in the sugar industry all but the inferior positions were in the hands of the creoles and out of reach for the descendants of the indentured labourers. Education as a way of getting out of the sugar fields became firmly entrenched in Mauritius. In fact those who actually succeed in getting a desk job in the government are few. Those who go on to higher education in Europe and entry into the professions are fewer still. But some do and this is sufficient to keep alive for the many the myth of moving out of the sugar fields into a prestigious job in town. This was reinforced by the qualification to vote in colonial Mauritius. At first electors had to have property and or a salary so high as to bar effectively most Mauritians. Then when the means qualifications for voting were removed after the war, a literacy criterion was kept.[69] This led the MLP to put priority on schools at the same time as the party pressed for electoral reform.[70] The result is that Primary education is now free and available to all Mauritians. The government also provides a limited number of places in secondary schools of the British Grammar school type. But such is the demand for education that a large number of "colleges" flourish offering for a fee instruction of varying standard leading to the Cambridge Senior School Certificate or the GCE. Failure rates are very high ; but so great is parental wish to give their children a chance to move out of the sugar fields that they are not deterred, and would go to great lengths, saving and depriving themselves to finance their sons through "college". For large numbers "college" education does indeed mean escaping from sugar, but only to fall into more or less permanent unemployment. Government employment, even on the inflated scale it has reached in Mauritius, just cannot cope with the ever increasing number of semi-educated youth coming on the labour market every year looking for the type of office work they feel their "college" education has qualified them for. Some of these unemployed "graduates" give private tuition or even open new "colleges" which produce yet more "GCE failures". Thus the education system feeds on itself, superimposed upon and ill adapted to the plantation economy.[71] The frustrated semi-educated young Mauritian became very active politically and flocked to the Movement Militant Maurician (MMM[72]).

POLITICAL RIVALRY AND SECOND ELECTIONS

The MMM was founded shortly after independence as a radical movement of young people, Paul Berenger, a young white creole fresh from "the events" of 1968 in Paris, was chosen leader. It rapidly built up its strength on the disenchantment in the popular masses which followed independence and the formation of the coalition government. With the MLP embarrassing the representatives of the sugar barons, the

field was left open for the MMM to organise protest and become real opposition. Standing on a frankly non-ethnic class platform and advocating: land reforms, the nationalisation of the sugar industry, direct democracy, a new system of education and the upgrading of the creole language; the MMM drew big crowds at its open-air meetings.[73] The formation of the coalition government had already let to the amendment of the constitution and the postponement of general elections; but in one by-election held, the MMM won a landslide victory in the constituency of the Prime Minister himself.[74] By-elections were suspendend too.[75]

The MMM had also been very successful at organising trade-unions in the key sectors of sugar, transport, and docks. A dock strike in December 1971 escalated into a general strike and a major confrontation with the coalition government. After some initial hesitations and consultations with the British the government declared a state of emergency, broke the strike, imprisoned the MMM leaders, confiscated its press, and outlawed its trade-unions. However, there was no uprising in the population at large [76] The MMM leaders were detained for a year, but on their release they were forbidden to hold meetings or leave the country.[77] In the mean time, prison and repressing had brought to a head clashes of personalities and of political ideologies among the MMM leadership. The movement divided into two factions: a minority of radicals and a majority of moderates prepared, under certain conditions, to work with the MLP but not with the PMSD.[78]

The MLP was itself divided. The hard liners were close to PMSD and favoured a policy of rapid economic growth based on high profits and adocile labour force. This policy, argued the other section of the party, cut MLP off from its mass electorates in the sugar fields and drove the EPZ workers in the arms of the MMM, making it impossible to hold elections. The ageing British groomed Prime Minister, Sir Seeworsagur Ramgoolam (SSR), the master of the politics of accomodation, held the MLP together and played adroitly on the international and internal chess boards to keep himself in power. The Francophone statesman, with his petites and granded entres at the Elysee, SSR makes quite sure of always being welcome at No. 10 Downing Street as well; the man of Diego Garcia, he never misses an occasion to speak up against the militarisation of the Indian Ocean;[79] equally at home in Nairobi and New Delhi, Sir Seewosagur was Chairman of the OAU without affecting the sale of Mauritian tea to South Africa or the arrival of tourists and investments from the Republic of Apartheid.[80] While he allows Soviet fishing boats to change their crews in Port-Louis, he also accepts Peking's help with the building of an airport to bring more tourists from the West.[81] Having used the IFB for Independence, SSR turned it out, drew the PMSD into the coalition government, took away the support of the sugar industry for that party, enouraged some of its deputies to come over to Labour, then, broke the coalition, clearing the way for a raprochement with the MMM.[82] The MMM though it would pay a high price for the coalition of the left without elections.[83] So Sir Seewosagur decided, in 1976, that with the economic boom over, it was time for elections or never.

The MLP had problems with such elections, although the record of the government was not lacking in providing social services — labour had provided education and health to the masses in the rural areas, subsidies were provided to cushion the effect of inflation on basic foods, there were small family allowances and old age pensions, the tax system provided relief to both "small planters" and to rural inhabitants, and village development programmes and *Travail pour tous* had

provided relief employment. However, the fact that the party had been in office for a long time before and after independence and that there were rumours of corruption and incompetence, were not in its favour. Moreover, the lack of organisation in the ageing leadership, and the loss of contact with the masses were grave handicaps to MLP; the amendments of the constitution, the muzzling of the press, the banning of political meetings and postponement of elections for a decade graver. But the fundamental problem was that Labour had inherited the British role in office, so it was objectively the partner of the sugar barons. Ousting the PMSD from the government at the right time and pointing to it as the tool of the capitalists could camouflage to some extent this unholy electoral alliance. The discredit of the PMSD by associating it with bungled attempts at assassinating the leaders of the MMM helped.[84] Accusing *"ban blancs la"* in the *baitkas* for all the ills of the Indians, was a well tried method of electorally tapping the historical anti-white grudge and glossing over the role of the Indian bourgeoisie. This time, the use of ethnic and religious institutions to mobilize support for the MLP was even more evident.[85] The problem was that the MMM was present everywhere, being well organised and making full use of the educated youths in the villages, the MMM propagates its class message to the rural "treason", for breaking the strike, for repressing the workers, and above all, for collaborating with the exploiters. The MMM also attacked the foreign policy of the MLP, stressing the part it played in the loss of Diego Garcia, the links with South Africa, and generally the proimperialist stand of the government.

The results of the elections held on 20th December 1976 enabled some interesting comparisons to be made with those which preceded independence in 1967, and enabled assessment of the direction of political changes over a period marked by rapid economic growth. Once again there was a heavy poll, with over 90% of the electorate turning out to vote. This time the elections were carried out without violence, but with calm and discipline. The people exercised their arbitration through the ballot box and returned only eleven of the 62 incumbent members of the Legislative Assembly, with only four ministers retaining their seats.[86] The great victor of the contest was as had been expected, the MMM which won 30 out of the 62 seats with 39% of the votes; becoming the largest party in the new Assembly. The young party won seats both in the urban, including the capital, Port Louis, where it had its largest support, and the rural constituencies. The MLP came second with 25 seats. SSR's party got the bulk of its support from the rural electorate, with 38% close to the MMM in percentage of votes, but had not improved much on its 1967 score, in spite of the 150 thousand new voters. The MLP was clearly not attracting the young voters even in the rural areas. This was a bad sign for Labour after the emphasis it had put on schooling and reflects its inability to fulfil the rising expectations of the educated young electorate. The big loser was the PMSD which won only 7 against 23 seats of 1967 and polled less than half the votes, in spite of the large increase of the electorate. In ethnic terms, it would seem that the MMM had replaced the PMSD as the party for the minorities, with the important difference that, whereas the core base of the PMSD was the white and the coloured middle class creoles of the inland towns of Plaine-Wilhems, that of the MMM was the Muslims and black creoles of the capital.[87] The MLP kept, but did not improve upon, its solid core of rural Hindus; though it improved its position among the urban middle class of all ethnic groups. If this trend continues, the MLP might displace the PMSD altogether and become the party of "the haves" in the towns. Although ethnic considerations still play an important part in electoral politics, there

are signs of a regrouping of the electorate along class rather than ethnic lines. For instance, the communal party, the CAM, did not succeed this time to get a single candidate elected.

The result of the elections made the question of alliances even more problematic than it had been before. The MMM was now in a strong position, both in parliamentary and all over the country;[88] but it did not have the overall majority that would have made it constitutionally difficult not to deny it to form the government. Although the MMM had moved away considerably from the radical position it held at its birth,[89] it was still unacceptable to powerful internal and external interests.[90] The MMM could now dictate its terms in a coalition which was not to the liking of "Senior ministers" who had been in office before some of the leaders of the MMM were born. So Sir Seewosagur turned once again to the PMSD, who would now be very much the junior partners but necessary ones for the arithmetic of the new Assembly, which gave the recoalition government a slim majority of two seats. This weak parliamentary position of the government is made more unstable by a now long-standing tug-of-war over the successor of the very old Sir Seewosagur.[91] The Prime Minister declared, in his first broadcast to the nation after the elections, "The majority of the electorate have voted against abrupt and radical change", and, no doubt to the joy of all the new neo-colonizers, "Mauritius will continue to give all ecouragement and facilities to overseas and local investment."

CONCLUSIONS

Mauritius has always been dependent. Entirely created by colonisation, dependence was built into the whole being of Mauritius as an integral part of its economic, social and political structures. Dependent but not underdeveloped, capitalism found virgin fertile soil in Mauritius and grew vigorously. But right from the very start and all along, development has been dependent on a larger whole. Dependence within the British empire was not external to Mauritius, it was part of Mauritius itself. The colonial rulers worked in symbiosis with the sugar economy and society. If colonial rule was a dictatorship, in the sense thatpolitical power rested ultimately on British force, it was not experienced in negative terms by the whole of Mauritius. The owners of the sugar industry, (creoles as well as Indians), the big merchants, and the politicians who worked with Britain, dominated and exploited other Mauritians more unscruplously than Britain ever did. It would be an oversimplification to say that these Mauritians were no more than the agents of Britain. In a very real sense, Britain was as much their agent. They used the military, administrative, and ideological power of Britain to maintain their dominant positions in Mauritius and extract the surplus produced by the slaves, the indentured labourers and the sugar proletariat.

Independence was not the outcome of a national liberation struggle. This does not mean that the bourgeoisie of Mauritius was "compradore" and therefore incapable of playing a national role, rather that the interests of the bourgeoisie was inextricably tied to the larger colonial system. It was Britain which decolonised Mauritius and in doing so created a dependent state and brought to power a puppet fraction of the bourgeoisie. who were willing to perpetuate the internal and international economic arrangements of colonial days and so had the best chance of getting sufficient grass root political support to last. The consideration of internal

political support was crucial, for unlike colonial rule, government in independent Mauritius was programmed to rest on the consent of the masses. Would the government of an independent Mauritius be able to continue the partnership with the bourgeoisie fraction dominating the economy and succeed in retaining the electoral support of the exploited masses? Britain did a diservice to those it gave this difficult role by involving them in the dismemberment of the territory at the birth of the new state; it seriously damaged their patriotic credibility. Against that, the military presence of the United States in Diego Garcia certainly contributes to stabilising neo-colonial relations in the region while presenting a threat to its people.[92] So far the government of Mauritius has made efforts at reformation but has worked within the socio-economic structure it inherited from colonialism while retaining, through heavily circumscribed at times, the essential features of a representative democratic regime. That kind of regime normally relies on economic development and a national ideology. In Mauritius, economic growth after independence has undoubtedly helped. Paradoxically ethnic politics, although detrimental to nationalism, also played a part in that an authoritarian regime resting on an alliance of Indian political rule and creole economic power would be difficult; it would alienate the support of the Indian masses. Conversely a coup by the creole bourgeoisie would be doomed in the teeth of Indian opposition. Independence and rapid rise of the MMM have brought back the element of class into Mauritian politics. To the extent that class and class conflicts become the salient features of politics, national ideology will become the integrative factor supporting the regime and ethnic considerations will be eroded. An MMM government tomorrow would have to operate within the same structural constraints. Younger, better organised, closer to the masses, it would certainly be more willing and probably be more successful, in reforming the system. However, without external interventions, radical changes are unlikely.

What is the sense of dependence today? and can Mauritius be different? Mauritius now has its own state: it is no longer directly dependent on a colonial power. Mauritius however remains dependent on Europe; but beyond the EEC the real dependence is on the world transnational capitalist system. And that system is inside the body of Mauritius itself. Does dependence then mean that the vast majority of Mauritians are exploited by some few Mauritians who are themselves part and parcel of world capitalism? In any case, there is little that Mauritius can do about the world the capitalist system. The option of nondependence, if that means a closed economy, is not realistic for Mauritius. It is very doubtful if in autarchy the island would be able to feed its population let alone grow economically. With an open economy Mauritius is inevitably dependent. Within that dependence there is growth, and since independence Mauritius has shown a limited yet real capability to adjust to changes and opportunities in the capitalist world.

FOOTNOTES

1. For information on the European arrival in the island see G. VISDELOV-GUIMBEAU, *La decouvent des iles Mascareignes*, (Mauritius, 1948). On the historical background of Mauritius in the context of the Indian Ocean; A. TOUSSAINT, *Histoire des iles Mascareignes* (Paris 1972) and A. TOUSSAINT, *Histoire de l'ocean Indien* (Paris 1961).

2. Mauritius is in Lat.20° 15S, Lon.57° 35E. It has an area of 1,865 sq.km. 61 km. long by 47 47 km. with 250 km. of coast-lines. The island is of volcanic origins — formed by three eruptions ranging from early tertiary to mid-pleistocene- fringed with coral reefs creating an extensive lagoon 2260 sq.km. around it. A number of small islands, north and east, are parts of Mauritius: Rodrigues (560 km. to the East) being the most important. Reunion, A French department, is 150 km. West of Mauritius. The nearest considerable land mass is Madagascar some 800 km to the West.

3. On the British conquest of Mauritius see Raymond M. D'UNIENVILLE, *Letters of Sir John* Abercromby, Sept. 1810—April 1811. (Mauritus, 1969) and *The London Gazette Extraordinary*, 13th February 1811.

4. For the development of the sugar industry in Mauritius see Roland LAMUSSE, *The Economic Development of the Mauritius Sugar Industry*, Bachelor of Letters Thesis, Oxford University.

5. Post Second World War developments in the economy of Mauritius are analysed by J.E. MEADE et al. *The Economic and Social Structure of Mauritius* (London 1961) J.E. MEADE "Mauritius, a case study in Malthusian Economics" *Economic Journal*. Vol. LXXI (Sept. 1961) For a critique of Meade's position: John KING, *Mauritius, Malthus and Professor Meade*, Communications Series No. 49, IDS (Sussex 1970).

6. Currently 80 thousand tons of rice and 50 thousand tons of wheat flour, meant, milk are imported. Mauritius is now producing sufficient potatoes and poultry for local consumption but the potato seeds and the chicken-feed have to be imported from South Africa. Some efforts have been made to improve the home supply of fish but industrial fishing has hardly started; Japanese, Taiwan, South Korea fleets exploit the resources around the island. *Financial Times*, Special survey on Mauritius 6.12.1979.

7. For the division of sugar plantations into plots and their sale to Indians see H.C. BROOKFIELD "Problems of Monoculture and diversification in a sugar island: Mauritius "*Economic Geography* Vol. 35, 1959.

8. A Consultative Committee on the revision of the Constitution under the chairmanship of the Governor of Mauritius held several meetings in 1946 and 1947 during which the ethnic Question was debated at length. This led to an exchange of correspondence between the Governor, Donald Kennedy, and the Secretary of State for the Colonies, A. Creech-Jones, and to the extension of the suffrage. *Revision of the Constitution of Mauritius*, Cmd 7228 (London 1947). Text of the 1947 constitution in D. Napal, *Les Constitutionsde l'ile Maurice* Port-Louis, 1962) pp 110-127.

9. "Le retour de l'ile Maurice a la France" Documents publices parla delegation mauricienne (Paris 1919) also J. RIVIERE, L'ile Maurice a la France (Pris, 1920).

10. The Chinese had come to Mauritius from the late 19th Century as labourers but had rapidly moved into retail trading where they gained a virtual monopoly. In recent years the Chinese while retaining a strong position in Commerce, have moved into the professions. Well Creolised, the Chineses now identify themselves fully with Mauritius. Historical background in M. LY-TIO-FANE, *The Chinese in Mauritius* (Unpublished.)

11. Background in MOOMTAZ EMRITH, *The Muslims in Mauritius*, (Port-Louis, 1967). See also for an anthropological analysis of the Indians, B. BENEDICT, *Indians in a plural* Society (London, 1961).

12. The PMSD was originally known as *Le Parti Mauricien — Memorendum to Rt. Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies* (Port-Louis, 1959). Later, to impress the British Labour Government and the International of Social Democratic parties, Social Democrate was added — long document issued by the PMSD to try and establish its credentials as a social democratic party (Port-Louis, undated). The PM had the reputation of being anti Hindu. Members of the MLP embarrassed the leaders of the PMSD later by reminding them of the days when "Malbar nous pas cule "had been their slogan. *Leg. Ass. Deb.* 23 March 1965.

13. Revised *Constitution of the Mauritius Labour Party* (Port-Louis, 1957) reafirmed the Socialist principles of the party. The ten years (1957—1967) of internal self-government under the MLP leading to independence are reviewed in a special edition of *INFORMA: "Dix annees de realisations"* (Port-Louis 1967). The positions of the PMSD and the MLP on the issue of independence were brought out clearly in a debate between. G. DUVAL and K. JAGATSINGH in *L'Express* (Mauritius 31.12.1966).

14. The Prime Minister, Ramgoolam, stated that he himself had been prepared in his talks with British to advocate integration of Mauritus to the UK but "we were told that there is not the slightest chance of this country being integrated with Great Britain .....Great Britain has no time for us. It is painful for me to stand in this House and say so, because I am a loyal citizen of the British Empire. I owe my fidelity and loyalty to this great Empire even if it has not discharged its duties towards the common people of this country" *Mauritius Legislation Council debate*, 13 June 1967, 791-792.

15. *The Times*, 23.1.1968. Also J. De Saint-Jorre, "An impoverished independence" *Round Table*, April 1968.

16. *The Manchester Guardian* 1.2.1965.

17. A Preliminary survey had been in 1958, then in 1961 a joint Report of the Ministry of aviation and Air Ministry established the basis for the decision to proceed. The US was to finance half of the £10 million project. Later, in 1965, when Mahe had been abandoned, three of the small island groups of Seychelles were detached and joined to Chagos to form BIOT. The British argued that the amputation of the Seychelles Island was the price the Seychelles had agreed to pay for the airport. *Seychelles Bulletin* 19.3.1976.

18. The three island groups of Farquhar, Desroches and Aldabra, amputated from the Seychelles at the same time as the Chagos were detached from Mauritius, were returned to the sovereignty of Mahe as part of an agreement designed to boost up the image of Jimmy Mancham, the British groomed President, and make him accept independence. The US was involved because of the military tracking station they have on Mahe and because of their insistance that the three groups of islands be not made available to other power for military purposes. *The People* (Seychelles) 27.3.1974. *Le Monde* 25-28 May 1976.

19 *The Observer* 1.8.1965

20. An indication of how in earnest the British government was in setting up this base is given by the fact that it went ahead in spite of repeated objections from countries of the Commonwealth, see *the Hindu*, 17.1.65., 27.4.65., 19.11.65., 20.11.65. for India's objection and *Dawn* 20.3.65., 29.5.65., for Pakistan; and in the teeth of two UN resolutions expressing deep concern over the project. *Le Monde* 28.11.65., *The Times* 17.7.65.

21. *The Times 6.9.65. and 22.9.65.*

22. *The Guardian* 6.9.65., 8.9.65.

23. *The Times* 13.11.65., 7.12.65. Answering a question on Diego in the Legislative Assembly on the 14 December 1965 M.G. FORGET, then no. 2 in the government said "In discussion of this kind, which affect British arrangements for the defence of the region in which Mauritius is situated, there could, in the government view, be no question of insisting on a minimum amount of compensation. *Mauritius Leg. Ass. 1774.*

24. The sources for the Diego question and the roie of Mauritius are: *The Times*, 8. & 19.11.65, *The Guardian* 10.9.75. *The New York Times* 22.9.73, *The Sunday Times* 21.9.75., *The Hindu* 20.11.65. *Le Monde* 13.3.76. Systematic reading of the local press in Mauritius at the time. Interviews with several of the Mauritian delegates at the 1965 London Conference. Interviews with Professor De Smith, the Constitutional Adviser at the Conference. Interviews of Government Ministers in Mauritius and Seychelles. G. Duval, the leader of the PMSD, has published his version of the Diego question. *Une Certaire Idee de l'ile Maurice*, (Port-Louis, 1976) Sir S. Ramgoolam gave an interview to *Le Monde* 13.3.76. on the issue. R. SCOTT, *Limouria, the lesser dependencies of Mauritius* (LONDON 1961) gives a wealth of information on life in the Chagos. The author is an ex-colonial governor of Mauritius, which makes the British official argument once the Diego deportation had been exposed in the press that the islanders did not live permanently on the islands but were temporary resident employees of a Seychelles Copra company, sound rather contrived.

25. *Mauritius Constitutional Conference, 1965. Report by the Chairman Mr. A. Greenwood.* Cmnd 2797 77 The terms used to turn down the referendum were "...the main effect of the referendum would be to prolong the current uncertainty and political controversy in a way

which could only harden and deepen communal divisions and rivalries... and would not be in the best interests of Mauritius...." See also *The Times* 25.9.65.

26. *Agreement on Mutual Defence and Assistance,* Cmnd 3629, p2 The Agreement was to continue in force for six years. The British-much to the chagrin of Sir Seewosagur- decided not to renew it. The Mauritian Prime Minister had been very keen all along to tie Mauritius to British strategic deployment in the region.Back in 1961 he had already given guarantee that "an independent Mauritius would not follow a neutralist policy which would remove it from areas of British strategic defence "OFNS 26.6.61. — *Exchange of letters for the Provision of Assistance or Advice in connection with staffing, administration and training of the Police Forces of Mauritius,* Treaty series no. 3 Port Louis 1968.
27. *Daily Telegraph* 26.4.67. *Financial Times* 4.8.67.
28. An electoral Commission lead by Mr. Banwell, after much work had belatedly published its report — a masterpiece of an electoral system — The Report was badly received by the Prime Minister, the prime objection being that it made little allowance for the ethnic groupings — *Leg. Ass. debate* 7 June 1966. In fact Sir Seewosagur was keeping his part of the bargain for the support he received from the CAM at the Lancaster House conference. Whereupon the now infamous John Stonehouse was dispatched to Mauritius where he introduced an element of communal consideration into the Banwell system. This satisfied the MLP and its ally but the price for it has been to entrench communalism in the constitution of independent Mauritius. *Report of the Banwell Commission,* Colonial No. 362 (London 1966) Constitution in *The Mauritius Independence Order 1968* (London 1968).
29. A Mr. Ford, "a chubby bearded gentleman" was how one British paper described him, *Sunday Telegraph* 10.3.68 was loaned to the MLP by the British Labour Government to organise the election campaign. *Financial Times* 4.8.67.
30. A visit of Princess Alexandra, to represent the Queen at the ceremony, had to be cancelled, not a single Head of State attended, for fear of further disturbances. Actually there was no violence then although tension was high. *New York Times,* 13.3.68
31. *New York Times* 16.3.63. In fact the flag was not flown for months; in Rodrigues it was not put up for a year.
32. There had been a first wave of violence over the visit of Mr. Greenwood in 1965 *The Times* 12 and 14.5.65 but then it had been between Creoles and Indians, the two main commun al contestants over independence issue; what was strange about the violence of 1968 was that it was between creoles and Muslims, the two ethnic groups which had opposed independence, that it remained localised in a groups which had opposed independence, that it remained localised in a groups which had opposed independence, that it remained localised in a suburb of the capital, and that it occurred after the election but preceded independence day. All kinds of theories have been put forward to explain the violence and to attribute political responsibility for causing it but none are satisfactory. However, whatever the cause one of the consequences was that for a time the Muslims withdrew their support for the PMSD. *The Times* 22.1.68, 25 & 26.1.68.
33. After the elections Ramgoolam had extended "whole-hearted support and cooperation to the private sector... trust that the rate of local and foreign investment will increase and that the private sector will make its full contribution towards a concentrated, national effort" Legislative Assembly 22nd August 1967.
34. In a debate in the Legislation Assembly, the year before independence, Ramgoolam had introduced a motion impressing upon Great Britain "the vital necessity of protecting Mauritian sugar" in any negotiations for British entry into the EEC. Mauritius he had stressed "will continue to grow as much sugar as possible. Sugar is our lifeblood". "The CSA", the leader of the MLP had stated, "is vital for us". In the same debate Sir Seewosagum had said that France as General De Gaulle had said "should have a responsibility towards all the French speaking countries of French culture (sic) - "to which I fully subscribe," stressed the Mauritian leader, and, stealing a leaf from the PMSD, he added "because here is a country to which France has contributed so much, and I do not think France can now say that all of a sudden she had absolved herself from all her responsibilities" *Legislative Assembly* 13.6.1967 — 791.
35. *Le Monde* 10.8.67. *Departementalisation* in Reunion has become the central objective of France in that part of the world. The Communist Party leads the opposition and advocates a policy of *Autonomie* for the island. Regional pressure against departmentalisation is mounting and France reacts by strengthening its military position while extending its aid to "friendly" forces in the area.
36. French scholarship fund went up from seven to twenty-seven milion Francs in 1973. R. BENEZRA L'île Maurice, Huit ans d'independence *Afrique Contemporaire,* 84 March 1976.
37. Mauritius was host to the *Agence de Cooperation culturelle et technique* (ACCT), where twenty-eight French speaking countries were represented in November 1975. *Le Monde* 28.11.1975 Ramgoolam has expressed the wish of seeing a Commonwealth a la francaise created, *Advances* 26.4.77; the *Association International du Parliamentaries de langue Francaise* (AIPLF) met in Mauritius in 1975 at which M. Debre said: "Le Francais en tant que culture n'appartient pas a la France; elle est une responsabilite commune" Answering questions of the press the French leader said that Mauritius represented economic and political stability in the region but that she needed friends and France was in the front rank of friends. L'Express 16.9.75. and 21.9.75.
38. If for Mauritius OCAM use part of the strategy of getting close to France and Europe with British accession to the EEC in view, for France the aim was to get a new member at a time when the French sponsored organisation was in very bad health indeed — shortly after the meeting of the organisation in Mauritius in May 1973, where only the faithful Senghor, Bongo and Bokasa turned up, Madagascar withdrew as did T chad and Cameroon. The adhesion of Maurtius was the more important for France because of the policy of treating Reunion as part of the metropole, a class distinction must be maintained between Africa and the Indian Ocean islands — hence the 'M' in OCAM. For if the islands were regarded as they are by the OAU — as part of Africa — the policy of Reunion/ France is challenged.
39. *L'Express* 1.6.73.
40. Raymond CHASLE, L'Accord de Port-Louis, l'adhesion de Maurice a'la Convention de Yaounde II (Port Louis, 1973).
41. *L'Express* 26.7.73
42. *L'Express* 26.10.71, 23.2.73, 8.7.73, 24.8.74, and 3.9.74.
43. *Week-end* 28.7.74.
44. For the calendar year 1975 the price was £260. *Mauritius Economic Review 1971-1975* (Port-Louis 1976) p.45. In 1975-1976 the last of the boom price year with a price of £188 per ton for the EEC quota the Mauritius sugar industry had a net profit of £20 million. *The Financial Times* 18.6.1976.
45. For that kind of model in relation to Mauritius see J.E. MEADE et al op. cit.
46. In the absence of exchange control Mauritius was a net foreign investor throughout the 1950's; long term capital outflow amounted to 10% of gross domestic capital formation. S. King op cit. p9.
47. Mauritius, in common with most newly independent states, has a government department devoted to planning the long term social and economic development of the country. But in an economy as open and dependent as that of Mauritius, planning cannot be relied on to achieve much. Nonetheless, the 1971-1978 Plan, within *Development Strategy 1971-1980* (port-Louis, 1970) set the target of full employment by the end of the decade. With the economic boom, employment was further emphasised with a *Travail pour Tous"* Programme of development work, *Mauritius Economic Review 1971-1975* (Port Louis, 1976) set the ambitious target of creating 76,000 additional jobs, mostly in manufacturing industries and tourism.
48. On the problem of development and transnational see the interesting collection by I.D.S. scholars edited by J. VILLAMIL, *Transnational Capitalism & Development* (Lon. '79)
49. *L'Express* 10.8.72.
50. Special Report on Mauritius in *Financial Times* 18.6.76.

51. Numbers of tourists rose by 28% per annum since 1970 to reach 73,000 in 1974. Gross earnings from tourism increased more than four fold during the period 1970-1974 to reach Rs 112 million in 1974, *Mauritius Economic Review 1971-1975,* op cit. pp 90-91.

52. See the special number of the journal of the sugar indurstry *Prosi* No 102 July 1977.

53. R. GARRON, "Le particularisme des rapports entre l'ile Maurice et la C.E.E." in *Annuraire des pays de l'ocean Indien"* vol 2, 1975 (Aix en Provence 1977).

54. *Industrial Investment in Mauritius* (Pamphlets published by Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Port-Louis, 1976).

55. Special Report on Mauritius, *Financial Times,* 18.6.76.

56. The GNP increased by 25% between 1967 and 1975 at current factor costs. When corrected for inflation this left an annual growth rate of over 11%. The gross domestic fixed capital formation increased from £13 million in 1970 to £70 million in 1974. Minister of Finance *Budget Speech,* 1976.

57. *The Financial Times* 18.6.1976 gives up to 22% of capital invested by the sugar industry going into tourism and manufacturing. The 1971-75 Plan envisaged that some Rs 400 million would be available from external sources for financing the Plan. In fact receipts from abroad totalled only Rs 143 million while local sources provided Rs 603 million. *Budget speech* 1976 op cit. p3.

58. J.M. BOISSON "Les comptes de l'economies de Maurice" in *Annuaire des pays de* l'Ocean Indien, vol l, 1974. (Aix en Provence, 1976) See also Special Report on Mauritius of *Financial Times* 1976 op cit.

59. The base guaranteed price is £198.38 to which is added the fluctuating monetary compensation amount (MCA) which reflects the relationship of sterling to the EEC unit of account; thus while in 1978 Mauritius received an average price of £226 a tonne for its EEC quota, in 1979 the MCA has on occasion been reduced to nothing adding no premium to the basic £198.38. As the producers estimate their current cost at no less than £200 a tonne even the most efficient are now earning "a derisory return on capital". Special Report on Mauritius, *Financial Times* 69.12.79.

60. *The Times* 8.3.1978.

61. Special Report of *Financial Times* 1979 op. cit.

62. H.C. Brookfield "Population distribution in Mauritius" *Journal of Tropical Geography, vol. 13-18, 1959 p4.*

63. The population problems of Mauritius were thoroughly examined by R.M. TITMUSS and B. ABEL-SMITH, *Social policies and population growth in Mauritius* (London 1961) Total population from 1846 are as follows: 1846—158,456, 1861—310,050, 1901—371,023, 1944—419,185, 1952—501,415, 1962—681,619, 1972—826,199. By June the population was estimated to be 910,000. Sources, Central Statistical Office, *Bi-annual digest of statistics, 1969. Facts about Mauritius,* 1976. The Financial Times 6.12.1979. Population rate of growth reached a peak of 3.1% in 1962. But in the 1970's the rate dropped, by 1972 it was only 1.94 and by 1977 only 1.44% a low figure by Third World standards. *The Times* 8.3.1978.

64. H.C. BROOKFIELD, "Problems of Monoculture and diversification in a sugar island" *Economic Geography,* Vol. 35, 1959 pp 32-33.

65. Special Report on Mauritius, *Financial Times* 1976 op cit.

66. *Mauritius Economic Review 1971-1975* op cit p.28

67. Special Report on Mauritius, *Financial Times* 1979, op cit. See also the pessimistic conclusions of Robin Cohen in Manpower and Unemployment Research, McGill, Montreal, April 1978, reproduced in *Le Mauricien* 9.8.78.

68. V. NABABSING and R. VIRAHSAWMY, *The characteristics of the small planter class in a small plantation economy,* unpulished paper for a Conf. at University of Mauritius, August 1976.

69. See Revision of the constitution of Mauritius 1947, Cmd 7228, op cit.

70. For political developments in Mauritius in the post-war period see J.C. LEBLANC — La *vie constitutionalle et politique de l'le Maurice de 1945 a'1958* (Madagascar 1968) on the Labour Party see M.N. VARMA, *The Struggle of Dr. Ramgoolam* (Port-Louis, 1976) and M.L.P. *Le Souffle de la Liberation Quarante ans de Travaillisme, (Port Louis, 1976).*

71. Benedict "Education without opportunity", *Human Relations,* Vol II, 1958. The conclusions reached by Benedict then remains valid today. If anything the greater availability of post-secondary education now compounds the problem: unemployed university graduates compete with the school graduates for "college" posts. Recently the government has taken over the financing of the "colleges" but without changing the structure of the system; there are signs that it will not be able to go on footing the bill after the IMF imposed restrictions.

72. In 1975 the "college" students marched on the capital and riots broke out when they were confronted by the Minister of Education accompanied by the Security Adviser and the Riot Unit of the Police. *Week-End* 25.5.1975 and 1.6.75. This year the students at the University staged a sit-in and kidnapped the Vice- Chancellor in protest about their bleak job prospects *Week-End* 15. 4.79.

73. MMM, *Pour une ile Maurice possible* (Port-Louise 1970).

74. *L'Express* 21.9.70. The electoral system of Mauritius, one of the most complex in the world, provides for three members constituencies.

75. *L'Express* 19.10.72.

76. Documentation: *L'Express* 16&18-11-71; 9,10,13,15,16,18,20,21,22 and 26.12.71.

77. *L'Express* 23.12.72 and 12.1.73.

78. *L'Express* 19 and 26.4.73, 6.5.73.

79. The UN General Assembly declared the Indian Ocean as a Peace Zone on the 16.12.1971 Gen. Ass. XXVI, 2832 and set up a Special Committee of 15 member states including Mauritius — for the Indian Ocean Peace Zone. Gen. Ass XXV 15.12.1972.

80 The 13th Summit meeting of the OAU in Mauritius in 1976 provided an opportunity for SSR to show his virtuosity in the diplomacy of Africa -notably with regard to the South Africa connection. *L'Express* 25.6.76, *Le Militant* 30.6.76, *The National* 3.7.76, *Le Maurician* 6.7.76. Apparently impervious to jet lag' and fatigue SSR travels the world and seems as fresh after a long flight as he is after late banquets and is able to go straight on to a press conference, a party meeting, or answering questions in the Legislative Assembly.

81. *Le Maurician* 5.2.74

82. *L'Express* 15.1.74.

83. *Week-End* 28.7.74. *L'Express* 28.4.75.

84. *L'Express* 26 and 29.11.71, 27.8.72.

85. For the role of the Seva Shivei see *L'Express* 16.6.76. For communal and caste considerations *L'Express* 5.9.76. S. BHUCKORY, *Profile of the Hindu Community* (Port Louis 1972) and P. RAMSURRUN, *Anya Samaj brings independence* (Port Louis, 1970 give interesting insights and supplement the more scholarly B. Benedict, *Indians in a plural society* (London 1961) on the role of the Hindu religgon in Mauritius.

86. Under the Mauritian Constitution, with the communal considerations introduced by the amended Ranwell electoral system, eight corrective seats are allocated after the election results are known: This time four seats went to the government and four to the MMM opposition. It was thus possible for the government to reintroduce some of the defeated ministers back into the House. For a short background to this system see S.A. DeSmith, Mauritius: *Constitutionalism in a plural society,* Reprinted from the *Modern Law Review, Nov. 1968.* The Author was the Constitution Adviser at the Lancaster House Conference of 1965.

87. The middle class of Mauritians working in Port Louis commutes every day to the residential areas inland and higher up the plateau, leaving a proletarian and small shop keepers as the electorate of the capital.

88. A measure of the new balance of forces in the country was given in the summer of 1979 when an MMM supported strike paralysed the port and transport; the government chose to negotiate rather than call out the troops as in 1971. *Week-End* 19 & 26.8.79.

89 By 1973 MMM programme included the nationalisation of only 3 (out of 21) of the sugar

factories with their land, to be run by an autonomous authority comprising representatives of management, the workers, and the government; the nationalisation of the docks, insurance, transport; greater stress on cooperatives and more diversification of the economy. *Programme Gouvernmental du MMM* (Port-Louis 1973) Since then the Programme has been revised to take into account even more the "realities" of Mauritius.

90. *Le Monde diplomatique,* July 1977.

91. The two must likely candidates are Sir Satcam Bolell (SSB) Minister of Agriculture, a high caste Hindu of the majority "calcutta" group who, for the time being. is reputed to be acceptable to the PMSD and sugar interests. The other is Sir V. Ringadoo (SVR) Minister of Finance, a Hindu of the minority "Madras" group. SVR, for the time being, is reputed to bee too soft towards the MMM. The MLP' problems have been compounded by the dismissal of the two government ministers for alleged corruption, and the defection of two or three backbenchers who have formed a new party. One way out for SSR reasonably would be to make Mauritius a Republic with himself as President. There would be consensus among the parties for that. See *WeekEnd* 13 and 29.7.79, 12.8.79, 25.11.79.

92 There are rumours of developing links between a strong French military presence based on Reunion and the Americans on Diego in which Mauritius is involved. *L'Express* 20.1.1976

Understanding African Politics: The Political Economy Approach

J.R. Barongo *

What I intend to do in this paper[1] is to indicate how African politics is to be understood and explained. In spite of the numerous differences among African countries (which no doubt produce variations in the nature of local political interaction) such as territorial and population size, historical and contemporary experience, structure of social organization, level of social and economic development, resource endowment and the number and quality of political elites, there are nevertheless common patterns that characterize Afrizan politic that can be discerned, described and explained. I am interested in the salient features of this politics namely, the intense and often violent political competition, acute ethnic and elite conflicts, tendencies towards aggrandizement of power both at personal and institutional levels, the adoption by governments of different ideologies of development in the face of more or less similar problems of development and the dependent nature on foreign policies of many African countries.

To say that there are similar patterns that characterize African politics implies the existence of certain basic features common to the countries which condition and shape the political process. The task, therefore, is to identify the characteristic features of African societies which constitute an infrastructure of politics to influence the emergence of those peculiar patterns of African politics which we are interested in explaining. However, before we proceed to identify the foundations of politics in Africa, a brief review of the current attempts at explaining African politics is necessary in order to show the point of departure of the approach proposed in this paper.

Since 1960, the year of African independence, many Western scholars professing expertise in the various branches of the science of society have been attracted to Africa to undertake studies of the problems confronting the emergent nations. Right from the beginning the political scientists, among them, were confronted with a host of political phenomena, some of them interesting and fascinating, some disturbing, which could not properly be accounted for within the established theoretical models that were used in the study of the politics of the older states.

These scholars found out quite early that unlike the familiar patterns of politics in the West, the trend of politics in the new states was tending towards what the Western theoretical precepts considered to be undemocratic rule characterised by the emergence of one party systems, authoritarian civilian and military regimes and lack of effective political participation at the mass level. It was further discovered that political activity in the new states appeared to lack well organized and institutionalized procedures for political competition and that the relationship between groups of elites and among communities was one of conflict which quite often resulted in violent

* Lecturer in Political Science, Ahmadu Bello University. This paper was presented at the Fifth Annual Conference of the Nigerian Political Science Association held at the University of Ife, Nigeria in April 1978.