

## A SPECIAL POLITICAL ECONOMY FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ?

*Prof. Dr. FAWZY MANSOUR*

( *Introductory remarks for a seminar* )\*

The present writer first became aware that such a question is being debated by marxist scientists in the summer of 1968. It is his belief that because of language barriers, this debate remains unknown to most economists in developing countries. The only literature on the subject he was able to get is Prof. **Tulpanow's** paper « Grundprobleme der Politischen Ökonomie der Entwicklungsländer » and Prof. Dr. **J. L. Schmidt's** paper « Warum benötigen wir eine Politische Ökonomie der Entwicklungsländer und welches sind ihre Aufgaben ? » Unfortunately, he could only get a summary, in Arabic, of these two papers, and he was warned by the friends who provided this service for him that both the summary and translation could only be considered as approximate and at times even equivocal.

In view of these limitations the present paper can pretend to be no more than a series of tentative remarks suggested by the literature so far accessible to the present writer. It is hoped that a more definitive formulation will be presented in a subsequent paper, after becoming more thoroughly acquainted with the literature on this subject as well as on the allied subject of « The non-capitalist way of development ». For the same reason, it is hoped that whatever mistakes the present writer might have made in presenting or interpreting Profs Tulpanow's and Schmidt's views will be excused. This explanation is all the more needed, since the present writer's views are in many important respects different from professor's Tulpanow's and Schmidt's view and since the present paper, more often than not, takes the nature of critical remarks on their papers.

---

\* This paper was the subject of a seminar held in April 1969 at the High School of Economics, Berlin, German Democratic Republic.

### I — The Peculiarities of Historical Development in Developing Countries Which Justify Special Treatment.

1 — There can be little doubt that socio-economic development in ex-colonial and ex-dependent countries present many specific features : Until very recently, and for so many years, these countries were subjected to imperialist domination which affected their development in various ways. In certain directions this development had been arrested ( sometimes even pushed back), in others it was distorted in other directions, still it was artificially fostered. The overall result was, not only economic backwardness, but also a peculiar socio-economic structure which, though on a world level belonging to the world capitalist system and forming an appendage to it, is not in itself, each country considered by itself, capitalist, but an agglomeration of sectors belonging to two or three, sometimes even more, socio-economic formations — not in the same way such sectors can co-exist in periods of transition, but in a special «artificial» way shaped and to a certain extent stabilized by imperialist political as well as economic domination.

2 — With the removal of this domination — a continuing, revolutionary, process which gains momentum as the might of the socialist world increases and the allied national liberation movement scores more and more victories — three basic features emerge which show themselves to be, more than anything else, affecting the course which development in newly liberated countries is taking. These features are :

a) The extremely low level at which the forces of production stand ( and the concomittent low standard of living ) in these countries. This feature acquires its special significance for the course their development is taking when considered not only in comparison with, but also in connection with the high level these forces have attained, or the high rate at which they are growing. in capitalist or in socialist countries. The implications of this connection will be dealt with later on.

b) The « peculiar » socio-economic structure these countries have inherited as a legacy from the period of imperialist domination.

c) The cardinal fact that their present course of development takes place in an epoch of which the main content, on a world level, is the transition from capitalism to socialism.

3 — It is evident that, having a historically different point of departure, both as regards their inner structure and the external conditions surrounding them, these countries cannot be expected to follow a course of development which is a mere duplication of that pursued by the — now — highly developed capitalist countries two or three centuries ago, when their forces of production stood at a comparable level of development. History does not repeat itself, for each major development, if on a sufficiently world-wide scale, forms the starting point for a still newer one. This remark lies at the basis of the well known — and now historically proven — Marxist-Leninist thesis that in the epoch of transition to socialism, countries belonging to pre-capitalist socio-economic formations or having an immature capitalist structure need not necessarily pass through any or all stages of capitalism before they come into socialism. The same remark is also relevant in connection with so many aspects of contemporary development in the newly liberated countries of which it cannot as yet be said that they have embarked on a course of socialist construction. To cite just one example : both for internal and external reasons ( the immensely large scale nature of modern production, the peculiar socio-economic structure inherited from the period of imperialist domination, the ever existing danger of falling back once again into a state of economic dependency and at the same time the impossibility of exploiting other countries) for these reasons the processes of primitive and capitalist accumulation in the newly liberated countries cannot take the same form or the same dimensions it had acquired when capitalism first emerged. Hence the existence in almost all of these countries — and irrespective of whether the ruling ideology in them is avowedly anti-capitalist or not — of a large public sector of which the main function, objectively considered, is to provide for the accumulation required by the contemporary level reached by modern techniques of production.

4 — Both the special features which form the point of departure for the newly liberated countries and the peculiarities their actual course is showing would thus justify — even necessitate — a special treatment. To this extent then we agree with the

call for such a special treatment. It is one thing, however, to speak of specialized chapters or even studies, on socio-economic developments in developing countries, and, in our view, quite a different thing to speak of a « special political economy for developing countries » which would stand « side by side with the political economy of capitalism and the political economy of socialism ». The difference is not merely verbal or one relating to terminology. Nor is it made any smaller even when the advocates of the latter view take great care to explain that such a special political economy does not mean the existence of a special mode of production for developing countries, that it is merely an application of Marxist-Leninist Political Economy to the weakly developed countries under the special circumstances of the present stage of world history. For, in spite of these explicit disclaimers, much of the argument put in favour of a « Special Political Economy for Developing Countries » which would stand side by side with the « Political Economy of Capitalism » and « The Political Economy of Socialism » would in fact lead to such results as are being disowned. Nor is this our only observation on the way the question, and its solution, are being formulated. In fact, such remarks on the subject as we have can most easily be made by reference to the following characteristic paragraph from Prof. Tulpanow's paper :

**« New historical conditions give rise to new laws of development ».** In the great majority of cases, ex-colonial and dependent countries — which we can bring together under the term developing countries — belong to the capitalist world system. **They are more or less subject to the laws which are dominating there. However, within the framework of the world economy, they also succumb to the growing influence of the socialist system. In the same measure the sphere of the absolute rule of monopoly and its laws diminishes.** The developing countries and also those which are ensnared in the various forms of economic and political dependence of imperialism, occupy, as was explained in the program of the C.P.S.U. a special position in the system of capitalist world economy. This cannot as yet be said in the same sense about colonies. They have a real possibility to break away from imperialism and capitalism. At a certain stage, **the developing countries can, in taking part in the international division of labour and so becoming part of the world economy, hold for them-**

selves an intermediate position between the capitalist and socialist systems and form a special sector of the world economy, a sector which is not yet socialist but is no longer capitalist. Some developing countries have already begun their non capitalist development. Of those countries which consequentially go along this way it would be no longer correct to say that they occupy a special position in the capitalist world system, but in the socialist world system. **This means that one can imagine the rise and strengthening of world socialism to-day no longer as a unity of countries where socialism had fully won ( where the state takes the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat or of the people's rule arising thereof) but that the socialist world system can likewise comprise members who are not fully socialist or half-socialist ».**

## **II — Critique of the « Special Political Economy » School. Its Underlying Assumptions :**

5 — The choice of the above paragraph is not particularly selective : most of the underlying assumptions and trends of thought contained therein can be discerned as running throughout the two above-cited papers. These assumptions and trends can be summarized as follows :

**A. Development in newly liberated countries is essentially a function of the character of the present epoch as an epoch of transition — on a world wide scale — from capitalism to socialism, and stems directly from this fact.** In a certain sense we would agree with this statement, but not when it means that the decisive factor affecting development in newly liberated countries is the external factor, whether it be the influence of the imperialist world or the socialist world; and it is mostly in this latter sense that this statement has been actually used.

It is fair to mention that, for example, Prof. Tulpanow explicitly writes that the period, the rate and the concrete road taken towards the solution of the historical question **Who and For Whom** on a world scale does not depend only on the class relations in fully developed capitalist countries, nor necessarily on the correlation of forces between the socialist and imperialist systems, but that this question shall be solved by the active

participation of the peoples of the newly liberated countries, within which a struggle is being waged for pursuing the broad road of development. He also writes that the analysis of social and political problems of developing countries in an independent part of Political Economy alongside the other two parts relating to Capitalism and Socialism is dictated by three factors which he enumerates as follows : 1 — The Position of these countries in the world economy, especially the nature of their relation with imperialist and socialist countries; 2 — The special characteristics of the process of reproduction in these countries and the relations of production resulting thereof ; 3 — The special conditions relating to their class structure and social struggle. Similar statements, which we may describe as multifactor statements, in the sense that at least they do not specify of the many factors affecting development which is the essential one, can also be found in Professor Schmidt's analysis.

Nevertheless, an unmistakable impression is formed that the trend of the argument throughout is to consider the development of the struggle between the two world systems **as the essential factor influencing the internal development in the newly liberated countries.** This can be evidenced by such statements as that « developing countries can **in taking part in the international division of labour and so becoming part of the world economy,** hold for themselves an intermediate position between the capitalist and socialist systems and form a special sector of the world economy », and that some of them, in consequently following **this way** ( i.e. taking part in the international division of labour ) can even become part of the world socialist system even before they themselves become fully socialist.

It would take us too long to follow, paragraph by paragraph, the ramifications and consequences of this view. One corollary however, deserves special notice, and that is the presentation of the question of development facing the peoples of these countries as a « Problem of Choice » between the two systems. Thus it is written — and this is just one example among many, and not only in the two papers referred to here — that « Never before in the history of mankind did the problem of choosing the road of development appear in this form before backward

countries as it does in our epoch, for, before the eyes of 1.5 milliard persons, the struggle takes place between two systems, one of them capitalist at its latest stage, and the other communist at its first stage. Before these peoples and their leaders appear the two **alternative** systems with all their contain, not only of economic systems, but also ways of life, thought, politics, culture and ideology... They are also in the position and place which would enable them to join the Capitalist or the Socialist World System. « The implications of this form of presenting the problem facing the peoples of newly liberated countries will be discussed at a later stage. Suffice it now to say that if a crude — admittedly a very crude — summary of the argument for a special political economy is attempted it would be something like the following. « Our new epoch, the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism brings with it new laws of social development ; the peoples of the newly liberated countries will have **to choose** in the light of the struggle going between the Systems, the main task of the new — or special — political economy is to help clear the way before these peoples to make the better choice ».

B. The second impression one gets from the literature on the subject — and in the absence of full and exact information one can speak of nothing more than general impressions — is that **newly liberated countries are being thought of, now and in the future, as a homogeneous whole building a coherent unity, following the same path and obeying the same laws, one might almost say always at the same time.** This impression builds itself in, in spite of explicit statements as to the heterogeneity of the third world, and of various distinctions and differentiations made about countries existing within this world. It is not merely that the idea of a world sector, standing in an intermediate position between the capitalist and socialist world sectors, implies such a homogeneity, or rather such a coherent unity. After all, this implication would not arise of that sector where thought of as a transitory stage, at various phases of which countries contained within the sector stand. But it is just this interpretation that, in its turn, is explicitly rejected in the literature and implicitly negated by the idea of a « Special Political Economy for Developing Countries ». For, if that sector formed merely a transitory stage, its analysis — rather than forming a special branch of Political Economy — would naturally belong to that part of

Political Economy which deals with the mode of transition from capitalism to socialism. Furthermore, a science, or a special branch of a science, can only deal, not with what is transitory in a phenomenon, but with what has a certain degree of permanence in it, and then attempts to disengage the laws of its motion. Also it can only deal with what is general in the various instances which constitute a phenomenon, and not with what is specific to each one of them. And, after all, the idea of treating the third world as a unified coherent whole, having its own special but uniform laws of movement is inherent in the concept of the struggle between the two world systems as the essential factor affecting the development of this third world, for if this struggle — and its outcome — is the essential factor, then the relative difference between the countries forming this third world will be only of minor importance. The more fundamental criticism of this view will be presented later. For the moment, we need only note that the treatment of the « third world » as a coherent whole often gives rise — even occasionally in socialist economic literature — to such fallacious problems and calculations as, for example, the amount of investment required to raise the average income in « developing » countries to the present level existing in highly developed countries, or the number of years it takes them « all » — assuming a certain rate of investment — to reach that level; calculations which can only make sense — if at all — on the assumptions both that these countries will remain at the same level of socio-economic organization and that, in any case, they will all move in the same direction, at the same pace.

C. The third main impression — in itself a corollary of the second one — which one gets from the available literature is that **the non-capitalist way of development is the way through which all newly liberated countries are destined to go, if they are at all to march towards or reach socialism — with the concomitant conclusion, sometimes explicitly stated, that the non-capitalist way of development is the immediate goal which progressive forces in all newly liberated countries should set for themselves.** This impression is derived particularly from the tendency to identify the subject — matter of the « New Branch of Political Economy » — with the various aspects of non-capitalist development.

Moreover, the impression — perhaps not a well founded one — is gained that this non-capitalist way of development is thought of, naturally not as a period of transition towards socialism, but as an imperceptible colourization of the third world, continuously gaining, with the continuously more victorious outcome of the struggle between the two world systems, not only in intensity but also in extension. The subject of non-capitalist way of development, however, is much too big to fall within the narrow scope of the present paper.

**III — The World Socialist System as Determining the Course of World Development. At which Level of Abstraction and to what extent does this Concept Apply to Developing Countries. The Theoretical and Practical Implications of too sweeping a View :**

6 — At the root of all our previous remarks stands the idea of the two world systems and their action on the internal development of newly liberated countries : in what sense it can be considered decisive and in what sense it cannot. It is just as well now to consider for a moment the idea of a **world system** and what it means. As it is well known, this term first found its application with the emergence of the Capitalist world system and its consolidation into the system of imperialism. Not only did capitalism, in developing productive forces to such an enormous extent, link all parts of the globe — for the first time — by various economic ties which have at their base some sort of international division of labour, but also, when ripening into imperialism, it established a coherent system of hierarchy encompassing the whole world, in which a few advanced capitalist countries exploited the rest of the world economically **and** dominated it politically. In order to preserve their hegemony and yet proceed with their exploitations these advanced countries, or rather their ruling classes, had to do two apparently, but not really, contradictory things. **On the one hand** they had to introduce certain changes in certain sectors of the economy of the dominated countries, of their social relations, or of their superstructure, which are necessary for the capitalist-imperialist mode of exploitation — such as the introduction of certain aspects of modern technique ( transport, banking etc. ), the dispossession of peasants of their land in order to create a capitalist sector, or the introduction into

the superstructure of a legal framework suitable to capitalist exploitation yet superimposed on social relations which are overwhelmingly pre-capitalist in content. **On the other hand, and mainly through political action**, these ruling classes in imperialist countries made sure that the capitalist transformation of the dominated countries would proceed only to the extent required by their exploitation **but no further**, and they saw to it that by far the greater part of the economy and of the social relations pertaining to it remained essentially pre-capitalist in nature. Political action was required to achieve this result because without the normal working of capitalist laws of development it would have led to the disintegration of older forms of social organization. And the result itself was necessary because, had capitalism been allowed to « take roots » and naturally emerge and develop in the dominated countries it would have cut the ground from under the feet of foreign exploitation or would at least have stood as a strong competitor with it.

7 — It is in the light of this observation that both the concept of the capitalist world system and the concept of the homogeneity and universality of capitalist laws should be regarded. Capitalism — or rather imperialism — became a world system, the world system, only in the sense that a certain degree of international division of labour and of interdependence had been achieved and a certain hierarchy — political as well as economic — encompassing the whole world had been established, **but not in the sense that capitalist relations of production and the capitalist forms of organization were established over the greater part of the globe**. Likewise, capitalist laws acquired their homogeneity and their universal character only in the sense that they determined the path and pace of world development, that even within colonial and dependent countries they ruled over certain sectors of the economy and retarded or arrested the development of others, **but not in the sense that, within these countries, they formed the inner texture and content of the greater part of their social and economic relations**. To that extent, and it is not an inconsiderable one, it can be said that during a definite stage of world development, the period of the hegemony of imperialism, the world formed one unit, one phenomena in which the boundary between external and internal factors in some respects disappea-

red and within which capitalism and capitalist laws of development played the essential role. But, and it is an important but, it should be noted that the system of imperialism which encompassed the whole world in one unit was a political as well as an economic system, in the sense that the relations between the imperialist and other countries were not merely economic and, when political, not based on equality and the respect of sovereignty.

8 — With the victory of socialism, then the establishment of the socialist world system, and the powerful impulse and support these have given to the national liberation movement, the political domination of imperialism is being washed away from one country after another. Though this does not mean the end of imperialist economic exploitation or the complete removal of the influence of laws capitalist development emanating therefrom, it brings about a qualitative change inside the newly liberated countries. **No longer is their overall development a function of the development of the world system of imperialism, but it becomes, once again, a function of their own inner structure, though operating in a new world context.** This means, to put it quickly and succinctly, that their development obeys, not new laws — to be discovered as yet in a special branch of political economy — resulting from the struggle between the two world systems, but the same old laws of social development : The law of necessary correspondence between relations of production and forces of production, the law of revolution as the necessary means for passing from one socio-economic formation into another and the specific, theoretically and historically established, laws regarding transition into socialism. (On these points, however, see and compare part IV of this paper ).

9 — No doubt the effect of the establishment, the consolidation and the successes of the socialist world system is not limited to helping the ex-colonial and dependent countries liberate themselves from imperialist domination and thus enabling them once again — by virtue of their own inner resources — to face and master their own destinies. Whether by the force of example, or by the various forms of economic, political, and when necessary, military support, the socialist world system exerts a powerful pull on the road developing countries are taking and on the

speed at which they are going along this road. The point, however, is that this influence, or pull, is from the outside, and in a sense in which the influence of the imperialist camp was not, for the latter was really the determining, decisive, factor at a certain (happily now past) historical period. To put it in another way, the analogy between the past effect of the imperialist world system and the present effect of the socialist world system in determining the course of development in the « third world » would be a mistaken one, and that for the following reasons :

- (1) Political domination over other countries was — as we have seen — an essential element in the imperialist system, whereas such an element is, by nature and necessity, completely lacking in the formation of the socialist world system, which pursues a policy of scrupulous respect for the new sovereignty of the newly liberated countries.
- (2) The basic difference between the laws of capitalist development and the laws of socialist development. For, whereas the former ( like all capitalist laws ) could operate in the past independently of the will of the subjugated peoples and without their active participation, and only as an extension of the system of dominant capitalist countries, socialist laws cannot operate outside the socialist system and as an extension of its influence ( whether moral or economic ), **for they pre-suppose the active and conscious participation of the peoples concerned, including, of course, but not only, their cadres and their leaderships.**
- (3) Likewise, and as a corollary thereof, capitalist social relations could gradually appear within a pre-capitalist formation, whether on their own, or as an extension of the social order of a dominant capitalist country, whereas socialist relations cannot so gradually appear within a pre-socialist social formation as a result, for example, of increasing co-operation and economic relations with the world socialist system.

10 — The distinctions made in the preceding paragraphs are not made for pedantic reasons, for on them depends whether

or not it can be accepted, for example, the thesis, that by taking a greater part in the international economy, developing countries «can hold for themselves an intermediate position between the capitalist and socialist systems, a sector which is not yet socialist but is no longer capitalist», or that the world socialist system can comprise members who are not yet fully socialist, or that the victories of the world socialist system or its economic relations can by themselves lead to the appearance of «socialist» elements within the economies of developing countries. More important still, on such distinctions depends the view whether so many of the measures — such as nationalization and pseudo-planning — which are now being taken in so many developing countries that have not secured for themselves the requirements essential for the beginning of a socialist transformation are really socialist elements or are mere forms void of socialist content, aped from socialist systems, and at best carried out, under various social and economic pressures, for the purposes of construction and consolidating national independence. The implications of these various views fall outside the scope of the present paper, but, from a broader historical point of view one cannot help observing that, if the view is accepted that socialism can appear «by gradual extension» as a result of the radiating influence of the socialist world system, and by way of alternative to socialism through revolution, then one can expect to see in future a world socialist system much broader than the present one, but with so many of the new comers so anaemic — in spite of all the paraphernalia of socialist organization — as to be void of any real socialist content, for as Gleezerman remarked: «It is the countries where outworn social relations were wiped away with a greater degree of ruthlessness that secured a greater rate of development, whereas the maintenance of these relations and adapting them to the new conditions was a cause of backwardness for others».

**IV — Some Theoretical Problems connected with the Appearance of Socialism in Countries which are not Highly Developed. The Concept of Potential Forces of Production. Its Legitimacy and Necessity.**

11 — Although the main content of the present epoch is the transition, on a world scale, from capitalism to socialism

and that this content is determined by the struggle between the two antagonistic world forces: World capitalism and world socialism, it is the inner contradictions and correlation of forces working out their way within the given country itself that shape and determine the course of development in each single country, with the struggle — on a world scale — between the two main world forces playing the very important role, still only an assisting one, of an external factor. When squarely put in this form, it is doubtful that this statement would be contested. Yet many writings in the recent literature on developing countries appear — when not directly tackling this problem — to hold or at least to imply the opposite view. The reason cannot be sought merely in the optimism that had been prevailing over certain developments in some newly liberated countries which seemed so unexpectedly to take what appeared to be a socialist path; a phenomenon which most easily found its explanation in the increasing influence and strength of the socialist world system and the attraction the socialist system held to the peoples of the «third world» — which is true **but not sufficient**. In our view the main reason behind this tendency stems out of a theoretical problem that was not completely solved. This problem is the spread of socialism in countries where the forces of production are so manifestly low and capitalist relations are only very weakly developed or not at all. It is thought, one feels that this problem cannot be explained by reference to the basic law of correspondence between relations of production and forces of production and to the mode in which this necessary correspondence works itself out to bring forth the birth of a socialist society, so an alternative explanation (rather remote in content and technique of analysis from Part I of any textbook on historical materialism) is found in «the paramount influence of the world socialist system and the content of the present epoch».

12 — Yet such a dichotomy need not arise between Part I (The Basic Laws of Historical Materialism) and, say, part III or IV (The Transition of Backward Countries to Socialism), if by productive forces is understood, not the Actual productive forces already existing in any one given country (however backward it is) but, in the context of modern world conditions, the level which productive forces (one might wish to

say specifically productive techniques) have attained elsewhere in their normally Most Developed Form, and hence, if by productive forces is understood the potential level of productive forces that can be reached — again in the context of modern world conditions — by any given country. So understood, it can be very readily seen how the actual relations of production prevailing in any of the developing countries come to be the major hindrance to the development of productive forces in that country. It can also be as readily seen not only that socialism is the sole means of eventually resolving this contradiction but also — which really comes to the same thing — that it has come to be the historically necessary solution, in the sense that within these countries, and irrespective of the level both of the forces of production and of the relations of production prevailing therein, there exists the social forces that are capable of bringing about this solution, and which will eventually bring it about without having to wait until an intermediate socio-economic formation, capitalism, have flourished, matured, and then decayed.

13 — There is, of course, nothing new in the conclusion contained in the last sentence. It is an application of the generally admitted Marxist-Leninist thesis of the possibility for certain societies under certain given conditions of side-stepping one or more socio-economic formations, and especially, under modern world conditions, of side-stepping capitalism. And it is implied, for example, in Professor Schmidt's statement that «The non-capitalist way of development is a way of development towards socialism... and the possibility of choosing this way does not depend on the levels of development of the socio-economic structure of the given country, but on the correlation of forces between the anti — and pro-capitalist forces.» What we think, have been especially stressed in the preceding paragraph is bringing this phenomenon more in line with the basic laws of dialectical and historical materialism, especially the laws relating to the decisive role of internal contradictions and to the necessary correspondence between the relations and forces of production, and this through a special extension of the meaning of the term «forces of production» so as to include, in certain historical circumstances, not only the actually existing forces of production, but also the potential ones.

14 — It is our view that this extension is both **legitimate** and **necessary**. It is **legitimate** because, in this modern world of ours, where means of communication have become so efficacious as to bring, even to the homes of the very poor in backward countries, visions of life existing in other countries or by other classes in their own country, they would not have dreamt of before as possible to exist, where techniques of production can in themselves, that is, if all other requirements are satisfied, be so easily transplanted from one country to another, where these techniques become so directly and evidently linked in the minds of men with the possibility of a better life, — in such a modern world —, these forces of production, especially, as we stressed before, the techniques of production, lose their local character restricted to the societies and countries in which they are most developed or applied and acquire a force which might be stronger (through their action on men's minds and interests) when they are not there than even their force when they are already there, embodied in running factories which already provide work, accumulation — more or less performed — which already makes for some sort of abundance, mouths which are fed and stomachs which are more or less satisfied. Naturally, the mode through which these **absent** forces of production have **by their very absence** such a potent effect in shaping and pushing forward social development in backward countries need to be studied in much greater detail than can be presented in this paper. Suffice it, for the moment, to say that such a study would have to start with an objective analysis of the modern techniques of production and their nature, especially their interdependence, and their requirements, would lay much greater stress on the requirements of accumulation rather than on the mere facts of exploitation, and would define the forces which would bring forth the new system as those classes which are not only exploited and submerged by the present order of things but are also most able, interested in, and willing — by their very nature and their place in the process of production — to provide for the necessary accumulation and to utilize it in the most rational way.

15 — Important as such themes are (and they may be presented in a future paper), more important to the immediate

purposes of the present paper is to say why such a procedure, such an analysis by way of extension of the meaning of the term «forces of production» and of directly relating it to the fundamental laws of dialectical and historical materialism is also necessary. It is necessary, we think, because without such an immediate «rapport», and under the umbrella of a «Special Political Economy» or a «New Branch of Political Economy» — which has as yet to discover the new laws governing social development in the «third world» without somehow feeling bound to relate them directly and step by step to the old established and general laws of this development — anything and everything can be said or discovered. In particular, countries might be spoken of as standing at crossroads and making a choice between alternative — and hence logically possible — roads of development, instead of classes persuing and at the same time being driven along paths of historical necessity. Scientific study of the inner contradictions battling within the bosom of each particular country might give way to a general optimism about wholesale conversion of various social forces to socialism which is supposed to be one of the marks of the epoch of world-wide transition to socialism. And — not least of all — form might occasionally be mistaken for content. On a minor key still, without anchoring oneself so firmly to the basic laws of social development, new multi-factor theories might inadvertantly profligate which would raise the inessential, say natural resources, or population increase, or special cultural or historical traits, (important as they are but never the determining factor) to the level of the essential. Lastly, and with the pass-word of a special or new Political Economy providing a special pretext, if not protection, reactionary and opportunist elements in developing and in imperialist countries might have one more excuse and guise for bolstering up the crumbling banner of special destinies for «third world countries» and new socio-economic formations.