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PERSPECTIVES ON IMPROVING INSTITUTIONAL  
CAPACITIES OF THIRD WORLD ADMINISTRATIVE  
SYSTEMS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO AFRICA

by

Dele Olowu

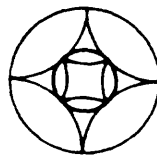
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I. Introduction

In spite of elaborate efforts made across social science disciplines to fully comprehend the nature of Third World development since World War II as most of these "new" states became independent, only modest progress has been made.<sup>1</sup> Yet, policy advocacy could not wait for the reaching of better or more comprehensive understanding. Hence, policy advice in diverse areas -- economics, political organization, and the management of the development process -- has been proffered in rapid succession without any real paradigm shift or the expected social transformation of the new states.

This paper examines the different perspectives on strategies for raising institutional capacity in Third World countries, with special reference to Africa. The reason for selecting institutional capacity is that it encompasses all facets of the development process and represents an area in which the artisans' attempts at producing strong, productive, and responsive administrative systems continue to be an elusive goal. A recent publication of the United Nations notes rather wryly that "generally, the results of administrative reform programs (in the Third World) have fallen short of expectations."<sup>2</sup>

The African condition is selected for emphasis, as it is generally recognized to be the least developed of the three Third World continents of Latin America, Asia, and Africa. It also represents a good opportunity to appraise critically the latest in the

tradition of policy advice on improving institutional capacity in Africa, the "market" approach as presented recently in Professor Goran Hyden's (1983) No Short-Cuts to Progress: African Development Management in Perspective.

## II. An Overview of Perspectives on Strategies for Improving Third World Capacities for Managing Development

Figure 1 is a tabular presentation of the major forms of policies advocated for improvement in institutional managerial capacity in the Third World as a whole with special reference to Africa (see Figure 1).

The Colonial development strategy was premised on the conception of a limited role for government; its major preoccupation was the preservation of law and order in support of the colonial economy. Politically, it permitted very limited political participation and gave rise to the emergence of strongly authoritarian civil service systems which were not subject to domestic control. In the colonial polity, bureaucratic ideology reigned supreme, especially as political and administrative functions were fused in the colonial administration both at the capital and in the field.<sup>3</sup> Yet, colonial systems carried within them the seeds of governmental dominance of the development process, which has become one of the major distinctions of Third World development, as the colonial governments became committed to the implementation of a range of economic and welfare programs.

After independence, the frontiers of the public sector in almost all countries were expanded, partly as a response to raised social expectations and partly as a result of their underdeveloped indigenous private sector. The bureaucracy, which had been regarded in most

Figure 1

OVERVIEW OF PERSPECTIVES ON STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING  
THIRD WORLD MANAGEMENT CAPACITIES

Period	Economic Goals	Implied Political Institutions	Implications for Public Bureaucracy	Sponsors
Colonial	Trading Posts; Extractive	Authoritarian, Centralizing	Narrow Scope, Limited Services; Economic and Military Interests -- but highly centralized and hierarchical	Imperial Metropolitan Governments (and Businessmen)
Post-Colonial I (1950's to early 60's) "Economist"	Rapid Economic Growth (Big Push, etc.)	Authoritarian, Centralized	Increasing scope -- Initiating and Implementing planned changes	United Nations (in collaboration with National leaders)
Post-Colonial II (1960's) Dev. Admin. II	Rapid Economic Growth	Development of political parties, pressure groups etc. "the constitutive system"	Large scope (to be reduced)	Ford Foundation, USAID (through Comparative Administration Group)
Basic Needs Movement (1970's) Dev. Admin. II	Development (growth plus efforts at eradicating poverty on absolute and relative levels)--development from/with growth	Participatory Political Instruments	Decentralized to field units, parastatals, coops, local governments, etc.	ILO, WHO, World Bank (up to McNamara), USAID
Market Approach (1980's)	Economic Growth (equity later)	Authoritarian	Privatized	World Bank (post-McNamara) and IMF

colonies as an alien institution, was now seen as the major instrument for effectively establishing control over a national territorial space held together, until independence, by the sheer power of the colonial government and its instruments of control. The bureaucracy became not only stronger but very pervasive in economic and social life. The early attempts at administrative reform through the transfer of advanced management and budgeting techniques, in spite of their modest success, helped to strengthen the bureaucracy further, especially compared to other social institutions such as the market, political parties, and interest groups. This trend in administrative reform was strengthened by economic growth models such as the "Big Push" or balanced growth, unbalanced growth, and dualistic growth models which predicted rapid economic growth under conditions in which strong political and administrative system was held as a constant (see Illchman and Bhargava, 1970).

Most of these economic models proved unworkable as social factors began to impose themselves on available administrative technology in the form of military coup d'etats and the collapse of "democratic" political apparatus inherited at independence. New perspectives on development strategies emerged. The first, led mainly by the Comparative Administration Group, was financed largely by the Ford Foundation and other technical assistance programs funded by the United States government (under USAID), and comprised mainly American academics (drawn from political science and related disciplines), whose central advocacy was the need to delay bureaucratic improvements and growth until other social institutions such as political parties, the market, and pressure groups were fully developed to demand a more

accountable public sector.<sup>4</sup> The greatest contribution of the group was in helping to clarify our understanding of the nature of differences in political and administrative systems between developed (especially the United States) and less developed countries (LDC's). The best in the tradition seems to be Rigg's characterization of the public bureaucracy in LDC's as being closer to a sala rather than a Weberian "bureau." But their prescriptive power was weak, constrained as they were by a variety of factors, including a predetermined political agenda. For instance, whereas research into political management types predicted "the superiority of the dominant mass party type" over all other forms of political organization (conservative oligarchies, competitive interest-oriented party systems, communist totalitarianism) (Esman, 1963: 98), the preference of policy advocates was for competitive interest-oriented party systems which have proved to be a disaster in most Third World nations, Africa inclusive. Similarly, the commitment of American public administration to the politics-administration dichotomy led in favor of early reform efforts which were intended to make civil servants more neutral and professional, but the predominant realities led to the development of more highly politicized bureaucracies (Subramaniam, 1977).

There was another school of thought, mainly from the political economy group who were preoccupied at first with demonstrating the neocolonial nature of political independence in most Third World states and the heavily-skewed nature of international trade in favor of the developed Western capitalist countries. Resting their historical constructs on Marxism-Leninism, some of them were content to allow the growing deprivation of the people to continue, as this

would promote the development of capitalist production and thereby advance the cause of class struggle while others within the group believed that imperialism prevented the national development of capitalism. The only agent which was thought most capable of bringing about the development of capitalism was the state. Hence, for some in this group, domestic policies within Third World countries had little bearing on the development process, while for others within the group, state capitalism was seen as the only means of advancing the cause of socialism.<sup>5</sup> They therefore advocated central planning, nationalization of enterprises, extensive state regulation, and economic involvement. Few countries could follow this advocacy consistently because of its economic, administrative, and political implications, but most embraced the less objectionable aspects of its prescriptions.

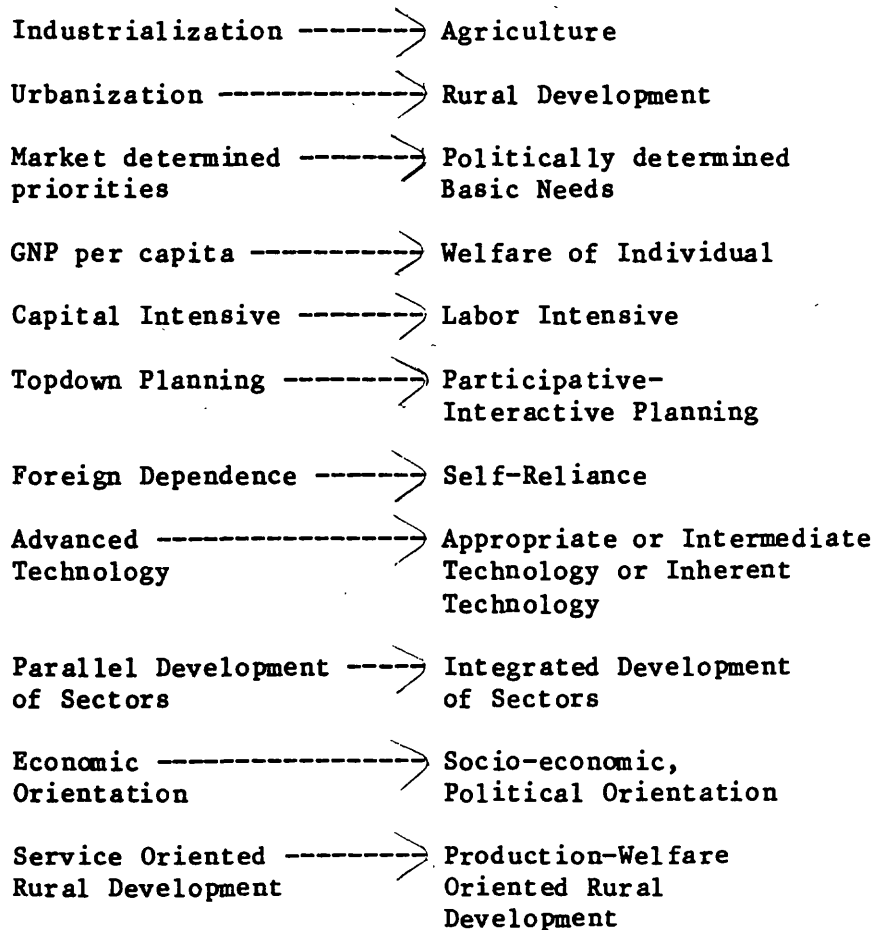
Dissatisfied with the results of both classical and Marxist models of management development, multilateral agencies such as the United Nations and its many agencies (e.g., ILO and WHO), as well as the World Bank (up to the period of MacNamara), attempted a convergence model that synthesized as realistically as possible these economic models. This led to the Basic Needs movement and its implications for management improvement strategies led to a rethinking amongst Development Administration scholars. The essential distinctions between the two phases of Development Administration are as summarized in Figure 2. The exponents of this new movement were at pains to explain that it was not a new development objective but "an emphasis which brings to development a heightened concern of the ultimate goals of the whole population with respect to consumption,

particularly in education and health . . . expressed in a cost-effective fashion. . ." (Burki and Haq, 1981: 167; see also Islam and Henault, 1979). Though it subscribed to a strategy of public sector intervention, mainly for redistributive purposes, its emphasis was on decentralization, rural development, and how to effectively structure the public sector to perform such roles.

Figure 2\*

DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

Development has shifted from:



\*Source: N. Islam and G. M. Henault (1979) "From GNP to Basic Needs," International Review of Administrative Sciences, Vol. 45, No. 3, p. 261.



In the late 1970s and early 1980s, there was a strong, conservative sweep in Western politics which, in part, was a response to global economic recession. There was a renewed emphasis on supply-side economics, in contrast to Keynesian economics which had held sway since World War II. Third World policy advisors, mainly from the World Bank (post-MacNamara) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), again called for a drastic reduction of government and a greater reliance on the market and market surrogate forces in managing the development process. The World Development Report of 1983, published by the World Bank, was devoted to this theme and has become a major component of IMF conditionalities for assisting developing countries. An earlier report of the World Bank, entitled "Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for Action" had underscored the major policy changes required in Africa along these lines in order to stimulate agriculture on the continent.<sup>6</sup> Professor Hyden's book, which is discussed in greater detail below, elaborates on this theme and attempts to put this new policy advocacy into historical perspective.

### III. The Market Approach: A Re-Emergence of Neoclassical Economic Perspective

It has been observed, rather perceptively, that Hyden is an African scholar whose opinions will be difficult to dismiss lightly (Chege, 1984). As an Africanist, educated on both sides of the Atlantic and as one who has taught in the University of Dar-es-Salama in Tanzania (the home of African political radicalism) for over six years, and one who has written extensively on the African condition,

there is no doubt at all that Professor Hyden knows his onions. When he refers to himself as "a person with a long-standing commitment to and concern with development in Africa" (Hyden, 1983: 14), few can deny him of such a claim.

Initially, he had wanted to write a textbook on African public administration, but the sordidness of the African condition that came to view as a result of his research for this modest assignment led him to turn the book to a follow-up to his last book, Beyond Ujaama in Tanzania: Underdevelopment and an Uncaptured Peasantry (London, 1980). Indeed, as the reader goes through this very closely-argued critique of the African development management strategy, he cannot but be impressed by the author's access to detailed information on East and Central Africa but which is lacking for the Western and Southern parts. This, however, does not detract substantially from the strength of the arguments nor the considerable analytical power he brings to bear on this treatise on economic and historic determinism.

Hyden's message is a simple one, taken as he says, ". . . straight from a Marxist textbook" (Hyden, 1983: 213), namely that the evolution of Africa's pre-capitalist economic system through a material transformation by technology and capital comparable to the historic process in the West is sine-qua-non to any real advance in economic and social development. Efforts by the state to shortcut this necessary historical process through state interventionism has been and will be undermined by the "economy of affection" (pre-capitalist social relations) which though serves some social welfare functions, is, on balance, destructive of economic growth. At a time when Africa's economic fortunes have been rapidly declining,

partly through global economic recession and much more seriously through misinformed economic policies and management strategies, and also when aid donors (which have provided the bulk of African development finance) are becoming critical of aid, the solution to these problems seems to be the abandonment of distributive welfare policies and the urgent necessity to stimulate economic growth through the organized private sector and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). This would imply an openness of their economies to further penetration by international capital, the sacrifice of social services programs (which are in any case poorly delivered) until the NGOs are fully developed and equipped to take over. The overriding prescription is a reduction of government interventionism in economic and social policy, a drastic cutback of government size, a greater role for the market and NGOs (which in the case of Africa comprise mainly the "church" — or religious institutions -- and to a much more reduced extent, trade unions and cooperative societies). His thesis is that decolonization aborted the emergence of the bourgeoisie "capitalist" class in Africa and:

The only force capable of addressing this issue in a relatively short perspective is the market. The latter promotes the rise of a local bourgeoisie, encourages greater effectiveness in the public sector through the diversification of structural mechanisms for development, and promotes behavioral changes throughout society, leaving people of different backgrounds more ready for social action (Ibid., p. 198).

Even though all these now seem rather familiar, the force of Hyden's arguments captures the spirit of the development problems confronting Africa and states succinctly and powerfully the type of policy advocacy held today for solving problems of social management

on the continent. Anyone who has observed at close range the high-level of governmental inefficiency, public waste, institutionalized corruption, the failure of several state projects, poor maintenance of institutional facilities, and the disappointments with state-directed agricultural and industrial projects cannot but come to similar conclusions (see for instance, Scott, 1970, Olowu, 1983a).

On further reflection, however, it becomes evident that Professor Hyden has merely raised an old problem, though in more forceful language, without providing real answers. These problems can be categorized into those from the "right" and "left" intellectual traditions. First, the traditional objections in liberal economics literature are lightly dismissed by Professor Hyden. These comprise a whole range of issues — the underdevelopment of the indigenous private sector, the negative role of multinational companies in the development process, externalities, the production of luxury rather than "appropriate" products, the negative effects of a highly skewed income distribution pattern on the development process (capital flight, foreign travel, etc.) and the negation of the center-periphery model in the developing world (Todaro, 1975). Blair has pointed out that this capitalist road has been pursued by many Latin American and Asian countries and, in many cases, the "economy of affection" has been severed, yet the promised improvements are yet to be seen (Blair, 1985: 455). If Asia and Latin America of today represents the image of Africa tomorrow, such a future is hardly a heart-warming one. D. J. Murray, in a cutting response to the World Bank's 1983 report, has questioned the confidence with which the market solution is being

bandied about for the Third World countries, especially given the controversies in management thought, the empirical performance of private sector institutions in the Third World to date and the diversities among countries within this block (Murray, 1983).

The "market" approach also subsumes three broad issues which have been raised from the right. The first and perhaps most serious of these is the question of whether there are unilineal or multilinear growth patterns. Goran Hyden sticks to the unilineal concept but the predominant academic opinion is multilinear. In economics, Simon Kuznets, Nobel laureate, and a number of others have attempted to show the impossibility of Third World countries replicating the economic growth process of the "First World," due especially to differences in the international economic environment, technology, and a number of other domestic factors. As for the rapid growth of Asia's Gang of Four (South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore), which followed the Japanese model of an export-oriented economy and is usually regarded as authenticating the unilineal model, more recent studies have shown that these countries have peculiar economic and political histories which make a repeat performance unlikely (Todaro, 1975, Streeten, 1983). One of the central issues of the market strategy, for instance, is free trade. But Sidney Dell has shown that there is:

not a single industrial country that did not employ vigorous protection at some stage in its history. Among the much applauded newly industrializing countries the most important have highly regulated economies. Even such a highly industrialized country as Japan, the miracle economy of the century, continues to this day to protect its industrial development in a variety of ways (Dell, 1983: 32-33).

Yet this represents one of the key items on IMF conditionalities and the market strategy as a whole. In terms of the political context of

public administration, Michael Lofchie has shown that the combination of political, economic, and technological factors from the external environment of most African states make the highly centralized and authoritarian model of the European State, which was so favorable to the emergence and success of capitalism in Europe, impossible in African countries. These fundamental economic and political constraints include a wide acceptance today of universal suffrage and modern social values (compared to the harsh dislocations of industrialization and limited suffrage in Europe and the United States until the twentieth century), the gradual evolution of technology and its impact on society (rather than technological imposition on African countries by multi-national and public sector corporations with more adverse effects on employment opportunities), the widely-accepted notion of Welfarist and entrepreneurial states in the twentieth century as against laissez faire and regulatory states in Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Lofchie, 1971). On the basis of these contradictions, Immanuel Wallenstein has gone further to suggest that neither radical (socialist) nor capitalist options can be effective in dealing with the twin problems of low budgetary constraints and the fragile state machinery (Wallenstein, 1971). The implications of these environmental and philosophical contradictions on the organization of the public service seems to have been captured by an African civil servant who observes that:

Modern public administration (in the West) developed gradually through three phases. First, the despotic, highly centralized and controlled bureaucracies, instituted first and foremost for the purposes of building nation-states by

strengthening the center at the expense of the periphery. Then the democratization of the services from being services of a head of state to a service owing allegiance to elected parliaments and therefore to all the people. The third phase was that of vast expansion and complexity of services resulting in decentralization and devolution of public services, now, from the center to the periphery to maintain efficiency and enhance meaningful involvement and participation of the governed in the whole process of government.

The development of administration in English-speaking Africa is the story of how these newly independent states have tried, and are still trying, to merge into one phase of the three fairly distinct phases that seem to have developed logically from one to the next (Mawanga-Barlow, 1978: 94).

The second problem raised by Hyden's formulation rather than by the "market" school generally is that it lacks a clear articulation of ultimate purpose. This becomes important in terms of the draconic effects that the applications of those prescriptions will have on the people. There is a need for the legitimation of sacrifice and Peter Berger has suggested that this in essence has been the major contribution of capitalism and communism as ideologies to social progress (Berger, 1976). What is the purpose of economic growth? Is it to further capitalist development and the myth of perpetual economic growth, the emergence of pure democracy, or to hasten the arrival of socialist utopia? Hyden adopts the posture of a Marxist intellectual but he calls for more of capitalism in the short-run. Such equivocation makes sacrifice unbearable and almost impossible.

This brings us to the third problem posed to Hyden's formulation from the right: the political and administrative feasibility of the implementation of the market approach. The failure of previous economic growth models has been adduced to their political impracticability (Illchman and Baghargava, 1970). Hyden's polemic

seems to be an appeal to reason to all the strategic elites (the politician, the administrator, the manager, the academic), involved in defining economic and social policy in Africa, but much more importantly to aid donors, to whom he devotes a whole chapter. He seems to have a greater faith in the latter as a growing and substantial percentage of capital investment in Africa has come from aid donors (up to 75 percent of the Tanzanian budget in "the last five years"). He strongly approves of President Reagan's initiative of American private sector initiatives in Africa. Thus conceived, the market surrogate strategy should be easy to apply.

All it takes is for foreign donors to shift their aid from the government to the private sector. Both the World Bank and the IMF also seem to have strong faith in this strategy (Schultheis, 1984; Green, 1984). This is, however, an unrealistic expectation for two reasons. First, foreign aid donors are not just interested in doing business, they are interested in using aid to further particular foreign policy goals. Second, and more serious, is the fact that few governments will be willing to condone that the bulk of aid should bypass them or that they should undertake the cutback on the size of government, or openly eliminate distributive policies. This issue underscores the dilemma of Third World nations who wish to do business with the International Monetary Fund.

The wooly and ambiguous reference to the reduction of government size by the "market" school does not help matters either. Most statements relating to the "higher" performance of the private sector in Africa are largely impressionistic and it is not surprising that Hyden, in spite of the enormous power and coherence with which he



advanced his arguments in a book which runs slightly above two hundred pages, could not relate these to any data on the variable performance of African states based on the degree of their commitment to either the "market" or "socialist" strategy. On the contrary, the range of services which the market school expects from the public sector is one which is likely to leave the size of the government sector only slightly reduced (if at all) after they have adopted the "market" strategy. These services, according to President A. W. Clausen of the World Bank, include among others:

- Adequate provisions of physical infrastructure, such as roads, ports, and power;
- Minimizing of market distortions and rigidities so that the prices of capital, labor, foreign exchange and products reflect their relative scarcity;
- Assured access to inputs and markets;
- Support for research and the dissemination of its fruits;
- Relatively unrestricted entry into a particular industry;
- Extension of considerable autonomy to entrepreneurs in their investment and managerial decisions;
- Respect for contractual obligations;
- Protection by law of property rights, including intellectual property;
- Consent and uniform application of government policies to ensure fair and equal treatment among sectors and firms, including non-discrimination between foreign- and naturally-owned enterprises, and the right of foreign investors to remit capital and earnings; and
- Adherence to agreements ensuring independent arbitration of investment disputes and the provision of insurance coverage against political risks (Clausen, 1985: 7).

In the meantime, research on efforts at state deregulation by conservative governments in Western Europe and the United States shows that the literature on public sector ingovernability is not only contradictory, it is neither useful nor verifiable and in any case its chief protagonists "from Reagan to Kohl . . . end [up] implementing the opposite of what they advocated: Instead of deregulation, they create more State" (von Beyme, 1985: 29-31).

The problems raised from the intellectual left are even more devastating. The state is regarded as a predatory instrument of capitalist domination. The expansion of the state since the colonial era was at the behest of private capitalist interests, both within and without. In other words, capitalism (not socialism, even if it is so styled by political leaders) called forth extensive controls by the public sector in order to protect its interests. These interests are not the same as they were in the West at comparable historical periods because neither the foreign nor indigenous bourgeoisie are committed to the reinvestment of profit to further the growth process in Africa:

The state in contemporary Africa remains primarily the instrument of the metropolitan bourgeoisie for the reason that the internal process of capital accumulation is subordinated to the requirements of external, primarily metropolitan interests. African ruling classes, unlike their metropolitan counterparts, have no faith in the future of their respective nations, let alone in the future of the continent. This is evident in the fact that 80 percent to 90 percent of their accumulated surpluses (mostly loot from the public treasury) is kept not as investible funds in their national economies but in banks in the metropolitan centers. The state has functioned for the transfer of Africa's surplus abroad, generating the crisis of underdevelopment with few historical parallels (Gana, 1985: 129; see also Amin, 1975; Wolfe, 1977; and Ake, 1984).

Similar sentiments have been expressed and factuated by assessment of the state in Latin America (Kaplan, 1985). In other

words, capitalism as practiced in Africa and most Third World nations has been extremely exploitative of the masses of the people more than it had been elsewhere. Can the answer to these privations be more of the same?

While foreign capital and expertise may provide needed assistance, the consensus of opinion of even the more moderate scholars is that few lasting changes can be brought about by foreign capital and technology, even assuming the most benevolent intentions (Mabogunje, 1980) The major contribution of Hyden, like the World Bank 1983 Report and the debacle of IMF conditionality facing most African states today, is that it gives them an opportunity to reappraise their development strategies and propose fresh alternatives to the present form of social organization that will be much more conducive to the twin goals of socioeconomic development and nation-building. We intend to suggest the outlines of what such an alternative strategy might be. This alternative perspective transcends the controversy over public versus private sectors.

#### IV. Towards an Alternative Strategy of Social Organization in Africa

Virtually all the perspectives reviewed above for transforming institutional capacities in Africa have a basically economic orientation. Indeed, much of public administration is the application of economic principles to the problem of human governance. As a result, with the exception of the Basic Needs Movement (BNM), successive advocacy has been for strong, centralized state structures, patterned after the colonial and European models as well as those of countries which have recently joined the "developed" category (Japan,

Korea, etc.). This pattern is also thought desirable in view of political, economic, and social conditions which call for strong centralized government; the need to break feudal oligarchies, the adoption of a war posture in tackling problems of economic and social poverty, and the structure of the international economic and political relations. Hence, even the BNM has been careful to insist that it is not a different strategy and expects decentralization to progress on a gradualist and very incremental basis. It is not surprising therefore that very little, if any, progress has been made in respect to decentralization after at least a decade in which it had entered the statute books or development plans of most African countries (Nellis, 1983; Rondinelli, 1983). An alternative strategy for transforming African administrative systems will argue that the problem faced by most African states is one of devising appropriate political institutions which will create an environment more favorable to the development process.

One institutional mechanism which has been taken for granted by almost all the perspectives on reforming institutional capacity is the state. The state as bequeathed at independence, and given the circumstance of colonial rule, was conceived primarily in an Hobbesian sense. Hyden was correct in drawing our attention to the "almost total absence of a discussion of the nature of the state in the vast literature on either policy-making or administration (in Africa)." The reason he adduces for the situation was the inherited Anglo-Saxon tradition in which the institutional distinction between state and society was not taken seriously. This is also a correct assessment and he then goes on to relate this to the historical thesis that as of

now, the state in Africa is suspended in the mid-air between the modern and traditional sectors, effectively controlling neither.

This is a very helpful insight into the nature of politics, governance, and economy in Africa which is often ignored in high policy circles. This also constitutes our point of departure. The state in Africa, which is dominated by the petit-bourgeois (rather than a true business bourgeois), services international interests and thereby hopes to serve its own interests. The state, much as it would have liked, is not in control of the society nor of its economy. However, it strives to do this. Hence the tendency is always towards greater centralization even when there is a strong advocacy for decentralization or a political commitment to decentralization to local governments, cooperatives, parastatals, political parties, or the market.

For both external and domestic reasons, no programs of decentralization can succeed and the present call to decentralize to the market is not likely to succeed where the others have failed. The reasons may now be summarized. Firstly, international capital expects its capital to be protected and the state is often a willing accomplice both because of the need to make the national economy attractive to foreign capital as well as the interests of the petit-bourgeoisie (military, bureaucratic, and political class) who control the instruments of the state. Secondly, nationalists as a reaction to the "divisive" traditional forces have always favored a strong central state, drawing either upon socialist or liberal economic theories. Thirdly, the conditions for the existence of perfect markets does not exist in most parts of Africa and many

services which should qualify for private sector initiative are in essence public utilities.

There is, however, a consensus that the public sector has failed all over Africa. In spite of its remarkable achievements in the management of specific projects or crises, the predominant impression is that the public sector is ineffective, wasteful, corrupt, and self-serving (Ekpo, 1979; Rondinelli, 1983; Olowu, 1983b; Gana, 1985). The market approach is largely a sincere reaction to this stagnation. But as we have argued above, this is unlikely to succeed, even though a few gains may be made in transferring a number of parastatals to the private sector.

What then should be the outlines of an alternative strategy of social organization? First, there must be recognition of the existence of alternative modes of social organization and that different modes produce different forms of social behavior. The colonial concept of the state, which is essentially Hobbesian and which has been sustained by force in all parts of Africa has alternatives, which can be worked out by choice.

A second step in thinking through an alternative strategy is to recognize that the merits of the centralized state structure in terms of political, economic, and social modernization has not been realized for most of Africa. Indeed, it can be argued and has been argued that the scale of natural, political, and economic disasters (food shortage, soil erosion, and the threat of mass starvation) which Africa has been subjected to in recent years are not a result of natural cataclysms as such, but are the tragic consequences of political repression visited on the mass of the people since the

colonial enterprise. Now the feeling abroad is that "if people had been left to their own devices, they would have attended more efficiently to their own survival as they had done for centuries" (Ake, 1985: 213; see also Wunsch, 1985). This feeling is buttressed by historical records which indicated that precolonial society, in spite of its several shortcomings, also had remarkable features of excellent social organization:

In the thoroughness of their political institution, and in the skill with which social institutions were utilized to lend stability to the political structure, they [the precolonial African states] far exceeded anything in Europe prior to the sixteenth century (Linton, 1959: 170).

The centralized, unitary state structure which exists all over Africa promised national integration but the monocratic presidential systems (which often lack the principles of power separation) have done the exact opposite by intensifying inter-ethnic elite competition for the spoils of office (what Hyden refers to as "the economy of affection") which has led to several civil wars in Nigeria, Uganda, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, etc. Even the military have been drawn into such political conflicts, thereby worsening the political situation (Belassie, 1975; Nwanbueze, 1973). On the economic front, unitary state structures promised a rapid shift from agriculture to industrialization but the result has been a worsening on both fronts. R. H. Bates has shown how African politicians fleece agriculture and the rural people (through pricing mechanisms and foreign exchange policies) for industry and the urban elites (Bates 1981). Yet, industrialization has brought more debt than employment or the the modernization of the agricultural sector. Furthermore Poly Hill, in an often cited study, has demonstrated that agricultural/economic

policy is yet to come to terms with the mobilization of capital amongst the crucial peasant "capitalists" in the West Africa sub-region, preoccupied as it is in the present with the acquisition of foreign capital and highly sophisticated technology (Hill, 1970).

Finally, the centralized state system promised to promote equity, national consciousness, and mobility, but it is doubtful if this has occurred. The achievement, with respect to basic services (education, health, etc.), is pitifully low, outside perhaps of Tanzania. And as competently argued by Goran Hyden and others who have dealt with the problem of public sector on the continent, the notion of "two publics" continues to provide a very powerful insight to the understanding of corrupt behavior in formal governmental institutions and its relative absence in informal community organization all over Africa (Ekeh, 1975).

Where do all these lead us? Namely, a need for the critical re-evaluation and rejection of the unitary approach to social governance in Africa and a recognition of the potential of pluralistic approaches to the problem of human governance. There is a need to give greater constitutional, political, and economic powers to the different regional/local and economic groups to enable them to tackle the problems confronting them more squarely within the framework of a relatively weaker center. This will bring about a blend in the aspirations between the governor and the governed, promote mutually productive competition, reduce the incidence of treasure-looting, and start most African nations along the road to genuine nation-building and economic development. This has serious political, economic, and constitutional implications, but it is our contention that the basic



problem confronting African states today is not a technical one but is political and constitutional. It is heartening to note that African leaders and thinkers have begun to see this on their own. For instance, the Nigerian Head of State in reviewing the country's rough economic and political 25-year history noted that: "What really lies at the bottom of our past dilemma is the absence of a viable political arrangement" (West Africa, 1985: 2076).

#### V. Conclusion

A review of the various prescriptions for strengthening organizational capacity in Third World countries and especially in Africa shows that economic models of unilineal development have been the underlying theme of most efforts at organizational reform. More importantly, the prevailing perspectives have normally drawn inspiration from the academic and popular persuasions in the West (or East). What we have suggested is a closer attention to the politics of social organization, the science of politics which Tocqueville calls "the mother of all sciences" (Ostrom, 1974: 106), and to attempt to endogenously seek how basic traditional social institutions which have existed to date (in spite of hostile opposition from the government and its agents since colonial rule) can be made relevant to economic and social aspirations of the people. This is a challenge which will involve a search by all African peoples to design institutions by choice for themselves and their own welfare. Such institutions, if successfully developed, will not be dogged by the high sense of insecurity, which makes any form of genuine decentralization inconceivable at present. Being a much more difficult task, however, than receiving new perspectives and policy

choices from abroad either in the form of aid or technical assistance, the idea must inevitably be confronted with almost insurpassable difficulties, but that the reality of the African condition hardly leaves room for any other alternative is perhaps the most important contribution of the "market" approach to our knowledge.

Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>See Robert T. Holt and John E. Turner, The Political Basis of Economic Development: An Exploration In Comparative Political Analysis (Princeton: D. van Nostrand Coy, 1966), pp. 1-66. A very detailed review of the work of the Comparative Administration Group and the development administration movement is available in Fessel Heady, Public Administration: A Comparative Perspective, 2nd edition (New York: Marcel Sehher, 1979), pp. 10-48.

<sup>2</sup>United Nations, Enhancing Capabilities for Administrative Reform In Developing Countries (New York: Department of Technical Cooperation for Development, 1983), p. 1. For the few exceptions to failure see S. Paul, "The Strategic Management of Development Programs: Evidence from an International Study," International Review of Administrative Sciences, Vol. 44 (1983), pp. 73-88. Of the six cases, two were from Africa.

<sup>3</sup>See for instance, Victor C. Ferkiss, "The Role of the Public Services in Nigeria and Ghana," in F. Heady and S. L. Stokes, ed. Papers in Comparative Public Administration (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1962), pp. 173-181. See also, F. G. Burke, "Public Administration in Africa: The Legacy of Inherited Colonial Institutions," World Congress of International Political Science Association, Brussels, 1967. The idea of bureaucracy as ideology is fully developed in, D. Argyriades, "Reconsidering Bureaucracy as Ideology," in Gerald E. Caiden and Heinrich Siedentopf, eds. Strategies for Administrative Reform (Toronto: Lexington Books, 1982), pp. 39-57.

<sup>4</sup>As in all academic groups, this broad CAG prescription was not shared unanimously within the group. For an alternative view, see Ralph Braibanti, "Administrative Reform in the Context of Political Growth," in Fred Riggs, ed. Frontiers of Development Administration (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1970), pp. 227-246. For the United States Congress stipulations on the type of reforms to be promoted through AID programs, see Ralph Braibanti, "External Inducement of Political-Administrative Development: An Institutional Strategy," in R. Braibanti, ed. Political and Administrative Development (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1969), pp. 3-106.

<sup>5</sup>See A. G. Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America (New York, 1967); Colin Leys, Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism (London: Heinemann, 1975); and Bill Warren, "Imperialism and Capitalist Industrialization," New Left Review, Vol. 81 (1973). For an attempt to review the different conceptions of development by diverse schools of thought in relation to the Third World, see Akin Mabogunje, The Development Process: A Spatial Perspective (London: Hutchinson University Press, 1980), Chapter 2.

<sup>6</sup>For the controversy that has been generated by this report, see the special symposium on "The World Bank's Accelerated Development in SubSaharan Africa," African Studies Review, Vol. 27, No. 4 (December, 1984), pp. 1-60.

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