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MALAWI'S SEARCH FOR FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Part III: Integrated Development and Consolidation of Gains

by J. Gus Liebenow

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Until 1977 the planning for economic growth and increased smallholder participation in production had for the most part been pursued on an incremental rather than an integrated basis. Linkages among the various departments concerned with development were informal. The exceptions to this situation were the four so-called Major Agricultural Projects (MAP), where the government had commenced in 1968 to develop integrated development packages. The four designated project sites—the areas, around Lilongwe, Karonga-Chitipa, the Shire River Valley, and the Lakeshore region of Lake Malawi—collectively cover an area of 9,170 square miles. These pilot areas have been selected because they were regions of high population density which had manifested a real potential for immediate expansion of agricultural production. Given past performance of the people with respect to creating structures that would sustain economic growth, it was felt that changes in the income and standard of living of the 1.2 million people within the project areas could be measurable within a short period of time. The projects were heavily capitalized with generous assistance from the IDA of the World Bank, as well as grants and loans from the West German, British, American, and Canadian aid agencies, and the EEC. Despite the emphasis on capitalization, the primary thrust was to improve smallholder income through a more rapid adoption of agricultural innovation.

The Major Agricultural Projects were characterized by:

- (a) the provision of rural feeder roads; stores for the distribution of seed, fertilizers, and other inputs; produce markets; facilities for health care and veterinary services; boreholes and other clean water sources; and housing and headquarters for the project staff.
- (b) various efforts at expanding acreage for production; increasing yields per acre; implementation of soil conservation measures; and rationalizing land tenure law and practices for smallholders.
- (c) strengthening various smallholder services in the fields of extension, marketing, and public health.
- (d) facilitating the granting of smallholder credit.

Although the hard data are still being assembled at this writing, it is the conviction of both Malawian officials and expatriate advisers that the integrated approach has distinct advantages over the incremental approach; and that the government had selected its pilot areas wisely. Indeed, the World Bank regards the Lilongwe Land Development Program, in which land registration and consolidation have actually commenced, as one of the very models of integrated development in Africa.

Despite the success of the four pilot projects, the government in 1977 concluded that the continuation of the MAP should not come at the expense of the rest of the country. The high capitalization, for example, would be difficult to replicate elsewhere, given the evaporation of overseas donor funding. The concentrated deployment of scarce technical manpower in the pilot areas had constituted an elitist approach to development which ran counter to President Banda's long-term commitment to the redistribution of income to rural persons generally and to balanced regional development.

While continuing and even expanding MAP, the government in 1977 launched the National Rural Development Program (NRDP) to quicken the pace of smallholder participation in the economy elsewhere in the country. Over a period of 15 to 20 years, efforts will be made each year to start 3 new development areas (one from each region) until all 40 of the designated Development Areas have been activated. The order of activation would take into account not only negative factors, such as the degree of underdevelopment and the critical nature of food production, but also positive factors such as the demonstrated initiative of the population with respect to self-help programs, the overall economic potential of the area, and the ease of access to the area. Unlike the heavy capitalization required in the four pilot areas, NRDP would focus on projects that have an immediate impact on agricultural production; which emphasize self-help rather than the creation of an administrative superstructure; and which stimulate low capital-cost agro-industries, such as oil presses. Even more so than in the pilot projects, the attention of the government will focus on extension services and smallholder involvement in conservation of soil, water, and forest resources. Thus, the NRDP will be much more oriented to grassroots participation even though overseas donor assistance is being sought.

The NRDP continues the two-pronged approach evident from the outset of the Banda government. That is, the NRDP will stress both an expansion of cash crop production for exports and for domestic agro-industries as well as sustaining Malawi's self-sufficiency in food so that it can feed both its rural and urban populations. Under the NRDP, moreover, agriculture includes both fisheries, which provide Malawians with their most important source of animal protein, and improvement in livestock management for beef and dairy purposes.

Participation

In pursuing a strategy of economic growth based upon increased participation of smallholder farmers, a government must be able to sustain—and in certain cases alter—the perceptions of rural citizens regarding the promise of rural life. If the countryside can satisfy psychological needs; preserve family and other traditional social linkages; provide for the improved health, education, and living conditions of one's family; and meet one's rising expectations regarding the political order, then the task of increasing agricultural productivity appears to be far less formidable.

The Malawian leadership starts out with a distinct advantage. It is a virtually unanimous conclusion of expatriates who have visited Malawi that the countryside is one of the most attractive in Africa. Whether one travels the main roads or diverts to remote villages in the mountains or along the lakeshore, one is struck by the cleanliness and neatness of rural life. Litter is almost nonexistent, and each homestead and minor settlement is kept neatly swept. There is a concern for beauty, with plantings of flowering shrubs and trees lining the homesteads in a manner reminiscent of Switzerland or Austria. While the questionable security and modernity of mortar, brick, and corrugated iron roofing has not penetrated every village, traditional housing of wattle and daub is kept in a good state of repair and provides more than adequate shelter against the cold and rainy *chiperoni* fog. And while Malawians must certainly be counted among the poor of Africa, one only rarely encounters a Malawian who is not neatly dressed, whether the clothing be Western or traditional in style. Above all, however, one is always struck by the industriousness of the people. They appear to be almost constantly in motion, tending their fields, fishing, studying, carrying produce to market, and engaging in other constructive activities. It is this industriousness of the Malawians and their self-discipline that have been commented on by early European visitors to the area and echoed most recently, for example, by the Taiwanese technicians who have implemented rice and other development schemes in Malawi. It is these qualities that President Banda and the Malawi Congress Party have capitalized upon in advancing their ambitious programs for self-sufficiency in food and general development of the agricultural sector.

Limiting Migration

One facet of sustaining the positive perception toward rural life comes with respect to reducing

the push and pull factors which led to out-migration during the colonial era. Indeed, rural to urban migration is a phenomenon which in most other African states has continued unabated since independence. On balance, although the proportion of urban residents went from 4 percent in 1960 to 10 percent in 1980, Malawi has done more than most African states in terms of discouraging rural to urban migration. It stands in sharp contrast to Zambia, Zaire, South Africa, and other states where the percentage of urban residents is fast approaching—if it has not already exceeded—the 50 percent mark. Undoubtedly the elimination of punitive agricultural rules and the *thangata* system of the colonial era have been significant in reducing some of the “push factors.” The elimination, too, of the hut and poll tax, which was a thinly disguised instrument for compelling young Malawian males to seek wage labor in the mines of Southern Africa—has also reduced pressures for out-migration. Parallel to that, the government in the mid-1970s called for a complete halt to officially sanctioned recruitment of mine laborers, and recruitment has been renewed at a considerably reduced level. In the interim, employment opportunities in constructing the new capital, expansion of the estate sector, and the more favorable environment for smallholders reduced out-migration. The tax system, moreover, which requires the lowest income cultivator to pay only K3.50 a year in taxes, is not viewed as a push factor in rural to urban migration. (One kwacha = US\$1.18.)

Despite the disparities between *wage* labor in the agricultural and industrial areas—which is acknowledged by Malawian officials to be a situation that requires correction—the overall disparities in terms of real income between the agricultural and nonagricultural sectors are not all that great. They are not, apparently, sufficient to stimulate a mass rural-to-urban exodus. Although the data from income studies currently under way are not yet available, impressionistic data suggest that Malawians themselves are already aware of the economic advantages of remaining in the rural sector. Indeed, the increased earnings coming from the expansion of agricultural production; the availability of clean water, without charge, in many rural areas; and the possibility of reducing one's cash outlays for food and building materials in the rural area are apparent to many a would-be migrant. Conversely, the bright lights and income advantages of urban employment must be offset by the payment of rents, transport costs, and other expenses one encounters in the city.

In analyzing the migratory factor, however, one is compelled to examine evidence of a more critical nature. While discouraging urban drift, the government has been encouraging the growth of the capital city of Lilongwe. Admittedly the process of urban growth in Lilongwe has been carried out in a much more orderly fashion than in most other African cities, and the new economic activity near the country's geographic center has reduced the migratory distance for laborers from the northern region. Nevertheless, the potential dangers of a growing elitist urban population making income and other demands, which can only be made by increased outputs of the rural agricultural sector, are nonetheless real.

Furthermore, while external migration and rural-to-urban migration are problems of reduced importance, the same is not true of rural-to-rural migration in search of employment within Malawi itself. Roughly half the persons identified as agricultural wage-earners are employed in neighboring areas on the farms of the more prosperous smallholders. Those migratory agricultural laborers can continue to enjoy a rural existence with most of their social, political, and other ties remaining largely intact. The same, however, is not necessarily true of the other migratory agricultural workers who are employed on the tobacco, tea, and sugar estates. Some reports of the living standards on the estates suggest that they rival the overcrowded urban and industrial situations elsewhere on the continent.¹ The shack-type housing provided on the estates can normally only accommodate single workers, and the distributed food rations are low in protein and fats and high in starches. Wages on the estates are low (seldom more than a fraction of a kwacha), and the labor turnover is considered to be unusually high. Collectively, agricultural paid-labor has not only remained low in absolute terms, but increases in agricultural wages have not kept pace with earnings in the nonagricultural sector despite efforts on the part of government to reduce disparities. The National Statistical Office figures for 1978, for example, reported that average annual earnings for agricultural workers increased from K114.5 in 1972 to K134.8 in 1976 (roughly 17.7%), whereas average yearly earnings for nonagricultural workers increased from K436.5 to K539.3 (23.5%) for the same period.

In fairness to the contemporary leadership of Malawi, one must recognize that the conditions of poverty are in many respects an inheritance from the colonial and traditional eras. In evaluating present circumstances of housing,

nutrition, and the provision of social services, one must look not only at what preceded the present regime but also the continuing commitment to changing things for the better. President Banda's words to this author during an interview in 1980 have been stated on many occasions during his two decades of service to Malawi. In reflecting on the program for self-sufficiency in food, he commented: "Freedom on an empty stomach is not independence at all." Unless his people had enough food, proper roofs over their heads, and good clothing, he insisted, not only would he have failed them, but they would have failed themselves. This philosophy permeates much of governmental activity in Malawi. Thus, while President Banda might take pride in the fact that the GDP at current market prices went from K60 per head in 1970 to K143 in 1977, President Banda himself takes the lead among Malawian government and party officials in engaging in national self-criticism. That self-criticism is directed to the need to increase production, to reduce regional as well as rural-urban disparities, and to expand health and education services so that Malawi's most important asset—its people—are improved.

Nonfarm Employment

Malawian officials are very candid regarding the fact that much remains to be done in terms of finding productive employment for rural Malawians during the dry season. Alternative forms of nonagricultural employment, which increase the income of smallholder families, are present already in the growing number of import substitution firms (textiles, cement, fertilizers, beer, wooden crates for shipping tobacco) and the equally expanding agricultural processing industries. Both forms of industrialization are providing job opportunities for Malawians whose energies cannot be absorbed by the agricultural sector. As Shankar Acharya of the World Bank points out:

It is noteworthy that both Ivory Coast and Malawi, two of the countries in which the bias incentive policies against agriculture were least pronounced, were also the ones in which the manufacturing sector grew at annual rates of 10 percent or higher between the early 1960s and 1975.²

Other African countries that favored the urban sector or forced the pace of industrial growth produced far less impressive results. Indeed, of the 36 least developed countries, Malawi heads the list in terms of processing industries adding to the value of agricultural products.³

Admittedly, both forms of industrialization cited above are multipurposed, inasmuch as they also assist in improving the balance of payments picture, reducing the cost of transportation of both raw materials and finished products, and enhancing the country's economic independence. The employment factor, however, may be the most significant aspect in the long run.

The siting of the new industries also contributes to Dr. Banda's efforts to emphasize rural over urban growth. Although for economic and political reasons, many of the new industries are being located in Lilongwe or Blantyre, a pattern of decentralization can be discerned. Fish processing, for example, takes place largely at Mongochi; the milling of rice at Karonga and Nkhoto, in addition to Blantyre; cotton gins are located at Bangula and Karonga; the new fertilizer plant will be located at Nkula Falls, close to the source of dolomite; sugar refining takes place largely in Chikwawa and Nkhoto districts; the processing of macadamia nuts at Chikoro; the manufacturing of cement at both Kasungu and Blantyre; the ethanol plant was built at Dwangwa, and the fruit and vegetable cannery was located near Mulanje. Similarly, the various pulp mills and other wood-processing industries are located in smaller communities scattered around the country (including the Viphya area in the north), rather than being concentrated in Lilongwe or Blantyre. Thus, the rhythm of traditional social, religious, and political relations is less disrupted when family members can find wage employment closer to their home districts.

The establishment of locally oriented consumer industries, however, has run into the problem of ADMARC pricing (discussed in Part II). Although Malawian officials are currently attempting to rectify the situation, one crude estimate is that cash income from the sale of crops does not exceed K60 per family per year (with the highest prices going to tobacco, groundnuts, cotton, rice, sunflower seed, and maize). Even with government and donor agency subsidization of the costs of fertilizers and other inputs, smallholder income in many areas is barely sufficient to cover subsistence needs. Not only may continued low prices for crops reduce incentives to expand production, but the market for products of rurally oriented domestic industries would be limited in the absence of rural purchasing power.

A closely related problem is the lack of serious attention to the investment opportunities of those who do increase their income from agricultural

production or from external mine labor. Beyond meeting the costs of school fees for their children, putting a corrugated iron roof on their homes, or buying clothing and other consumer items, there are few investment opportunities in the rural areas. One outlet did emerge in the late 1960s when the government restricted the residence and occupation of Asian residents to the three major urban centers of Blantyre-Limba, Zomba, and Lilongwe. Consequently, retailing of tinned goods, clothing, and other small items in the major settlements has become an investment alternative for some of the more prosperous smallholders. Even the less prosperous farmers have set up temporary stalls along the main roads, where the women and children sell potatoes, melons, firewood, and other commodities not sold to ADMARC.

Meeting Basic Needs

There are other positive notes to sound. Within the limited revenues available to the Malawi government, it allocates a proportionately higher share of funds to meeting the basic needs of the rural poor than is true of most other African countries. One example of this is the reforestation program, which addresses the fact that long before independence the high density of population and intense cultivation had led to a denuding of Malawi's forest cover. This had created severe problems of both wind and water erosion, particularly in the mountain areas. In addition, the lack of local wood for cooking and building purposes had increased the cost of imported materials as well as threatened material security.

One outcome of the concerted reforestation program has been the launching of a highly successful timber industry oriented to both export and domestic commercial markets.⁴ Equally important, public discussion of the rewards of reforestation produced a national tree-planting program focusing on rural cultivators. The program emerged from a ceremonial exercise on the part of the Malawi Congress Party to help cut down on erosion. From the small blue gum groves planted within the village areas as well as the many trees planted along the margins of the main roads, rural Malawians are now being provided with an inexpensive and replenishable source of fuel for cooking as well as ridge poles and timber needed for house construction. In addition, the planting by villagers serves the purpose of soil and water conservation and provides many with an additional source of cash income.

Health and Nutrition

A critical test of an African government's commitment to the improvement of the rural sector is the impact its policies and programs make upon the general health and nutritional status of its citizens. The health services inherited by the government of Dr. H. Kamuzu Banda were among the poorest in British colonial Africa. With the exception of medical attention afforded workers on the tea, tobacco, and other estates or in the areas where Christian missionaries had made concerted efforts at evangelism and education, rural medical services were severely neglected by the Protectorate government during the 80-year tenure of the British in Nyasaland.

The government of independent Malawi has had to cope not only with the diseases common to the temperate zone climates (measles, tuberculosis, diphtheria, tetanus, polio, whooping cough, and gastroenteritis) but it has also had a high morbidity rate based on diseases now more commonly associated with the humid subtropics—malaria, schistosomiasis (bilharzia), cholera, amoebiasis, hepatitis, and a wide range of intestinal and respiratory diseases.⁵ Infant mortality rates were—and still are—high, compared with the developed world. Even by 1978, the life expectancy nationally was only 42.4 years for both sexes and closer to 40 years in the rural areas.⁶

To the credit of the Banda government, however, this is up by approximately six years over the life expectancy at the end of the colonial period. The Banda government also inherited a high incidence of kwashiorkor, marasmus, and other diseases of malnutrition among the very young. Undernourishment among the older population has accounted for absenteeism from work or school and increased susceptibility to other diseases directly responsible for the high death rate. Even in periods of abundance, the lack of nutrition education led to a diet which was lacking in vegetable or animal protein and in high energy starches.

Surveys on current nutritional intake are now under way (by scholars from Meharry Medical College, Dr. Banda's alma mater), but results have not yet been published. Interpretation of the data presented in this *Report* on increases in food production and the diversity of food crops gives one comfort in stating that significant nutritional advances have been made over the results of the 1968-69 survey reported in Table 1. That survey was conducted before the exploitation of fish

Table 1
Annual Consumption of Food Per Head In
Rural Areas by Type of Food, 1968-69

Type of Food	Consumption (lb.)
Maize:	
a. Mgaiwa	80
b. Ufa	336
Total grain equivalent ¹	622
Millet	9
Cassava	33
Groundnuts	5
Pulses	59
Other vegetables	91

1. Mgaiwa (milled maize grain) plus the maize grain equivalent of ufa (pounded maize grain). Ufa converted to maize grain on the assumption that 100 lb. of maize grain are required to make 62 lb. of maize flour.

Note: All figures refer to consumption at meals only.

Source: In *Compendium of Agricultural Statistics, 1977* (Zomba: Government Printer, 1977), p. 71.

resources began in Malawi, making fish the most important source of animal protein in the Malawian diet. Similarly, the 1968-69 data do not take into account the virtual ban since 1974 on external sales of maize, with the increased yields going into an improvement of the Malawian diet. Since the survey was conducted, Malawi has become self-sufficient in both rice and sugar production, and expanded production of groundnuts and other nuts that add significant sources of protein and fats to the diet.

A pilot National Sample Survey of Agriculture conducted in 1979 (Table 2) provides some hint of what the Meharry and other more comprehensive surveys will reveal. Data presented to the 1981 SADCC conference on food security suggested that only 3 of the countries within the 9 state region had by 1974 attained the required 2,334 kilo-calories per capita per day. The three were Zimbabwe (108%), Malawi (103%), and Lesotho (100%). Four of the states in the region had less than 86 percent of the required caloric intake.

Like the strategy for increasing agricultural production, Malawi's approach to improving the health and well-being of the rural majority and the urban minority has many facets. Some of the more significant programs have been in the preventive, rather than the curative area: for example, the donor-supported scheme for bringing clean water to the rural areas.⁷ This program recognizes not only that general good health

depends upon a sufficient supply of water for cooking, drinking, and bathing purposes, but that impure water as well as ponds, wells, and other exposed water sources contribute substantially to such water-related diseases as malaria, schistosomiasis, diarrhea, and amoebic dysentery. Hence, in 1969—long before the UNDP launched its "Decade for Clean Water" in 1980—Malawi had initiated an ambitious low-cost program for tapping the waters of mountain streams for drinking and cooking purposes. At that stage already one-third of Malawi's inhabitants had access to safe water, which gave it one of the best records among the less developed countries. Close to half a million additional rural residents have now been provided with a reliable source of clean water, and an additional 300,000 will be covered by 1982. Since the system was built in part by community self-help and relies on gravity flow, the overall cost has been kept low. The best estimate is that the expense to government and donor agencies has been roughly \$10 per person assisted for life. The self-help aspect resulted in the water being provided without charge to the users. The effectiveness of the clean water system in reducing the incidence and spread of cholera has already been demonstrated in a recent outbreak.

Preventive medicine has also been prominent in coping with the high infant mortality rates, which dropped from 160 per 1,000 live births in 1970 to 142 per 1,000 live births in 1978 at the national level. Rural area rates in 1978, however, were still 151 per 1,000 life births (compared to 74 per 1,000 in the urban areas). The 1977 census, moreover, revealed that 25.1 percent of the deaths in the preceding year were of infants

Table 2
Pilot, National Sample Survey of Agriculture,
by Weight of Food Consumed

Category	Percentage of contribution of energy by weight of food intake	
	1968/69	1979
Cereals	79	75
Groundnuts	1.7	5.7
Roots, tubers	6	5.3
Pulses	9.7	5.4
Vegetables	1	3.4
Animal protein	2.6	3.1
Others		2.1

under one year of age, and 55.3 percent were of children under 5. It is for these reasons that Malawi has placed a high priority on the establishment of over 300 ante-natal and over 920 "Under-5" Clinics which are maintained in addition to the regular health clinics and hospitals established around the country.⁸

The "Under-5" Clinics, which were commenced in 1971, are important with respect to instructing mothers on proper nutrition, such as balancing the maize diet with fish and beef, and with the need to provide only safe water to the very young. The "Under-5" Clinic staff holds classes for expectant and new mothers three times a week, and instructors from the centers travel through the smaller villages of the district in follow-up calls. Roughly 5,636,083 out-patient treatments were administered to children under 5 years of age in 1978.

The "Under-5" Clinics have also assumed responsibility for polio and other immunization programs in Malawi. As with the clean water schemes, the role of the Malawi Congress Party as a grassroots organization in getting community support has been significant in that area. With the assistance of the party leadership, convincing the rural residents of the benefits of immunization, the United Kingdom Save-the-Children Fund was able to complete its immunization of children in the southern region in record time for Africa. The Fund has not moved to a countrywide immunization program.

Malawian officials, however, have been candid in acknowledging that lowered mortality rates do not necessarily mean improved nutrition. Consequently, they have made a concerted effort to educate Malawian women with respect to proper diets and improved child care. It has been necessary, for example, to overcome some taboos, such as one that warns pregnant women against eating eggs and other foods that could provide needed protein to both her and the fetus. And although the Ministry of Health is now considering working more closely with traditional healers, young mothers have had to be cautioned against taking some of their advice. One obvious danger, for example, is the administration of traditional herbal purges to children suffering from dysentery. This "remedy" only further dehydrates the child and almost insures death. The greatest emphasis in education mothers is on nutrition education, in order to correct a situation common to many parts of Africa, of food abundance and malnutrition existing side by side within the same community. The emphasis on nutrition education and child care becomes all the more necessary since Malawi (as is true of all

but nine African countries) has not officially addressed the problem of family planning. Estimates on fertility rates indicate that there are 7.7 live births per woman of completed fertility.

Emphasis on the preventive aspects of health services is not intended to suggest that curative aspects have been neglected. On the contrary, plans to establish a medical school; the building of a new nursing school at Lilongwe; government bursaries for over 500 Malawians to study medicine abroad; and the establishment of a network of medical facilities throughout the country are evidence of the seriousness of Dr. Banda's commitment.⁹ Indeed, the pyramidal structure from general referral hospitals down to over 500 primary health centers, dispensaries, maternities and health posts, means there is a penetration of rural areas which are totally ignored by the colonial regime.¹⁰ The Ministry of Health is fully aware of the absence of trained physicians (a doctor/population ratio of 1/50,000 in 1980, which is down from the 1/58,000 ratio in 1970, but still low for Africa generally). To compensate, the ministry has been posting clinical officers, with three to four years of training and years of practical experience, to staff the rural health centers. The rural impact of the Ministry of Health is also furthered by an extensive midwife program and by efforts to formalize and regulate linkages with traditional healers, especially in such areas as psychological disorders, problems of barren females, and treatment of snake bites.

Credits and Debits

This *Report* series has focused on Malawi's efforts to achieve both self-sufficiency in food production and the strengthening of the small-holder sector, without attempting to analyze in detail the broader economic, political, and social framework within which these efforts have taken place. Malawi, like most developing countries today, faces a serious balance of payments problem, based in large part on the difficulties of meeting the rising costs of fuel. Like other countries which strive for self-reliance, Malawi seems destined within the near future to continue to need generous external funding to advance its development objectives. Some readers certainly would have preferred a more detailed analysis of Malawi's ideology and political system.

My purpose, however, has been to examine the achievements of the Malawian leadership in succeeding where so many others are failing. What makes the accomplishment all the more remarkable is that Malawi started off without the built-in resource and infrastructural advantages of the two African states with which its development is often compared: the Ivory Coast and

Kenya. Malawi, moreover, appears to have persevered through adversity rather than having dissipated its human and other resources in the ways that Uganda, Ghana, and certain other moderately advantaged countries did once independence was achieved. Thus, extreme poverty and an odious history of colonial rule have not proved to be the insuperable barriers to economic growth that we often have taken them to be in explaining underdevelopment elsewhere.

On a rather pragmatic level, as well, the programs the Malawian leadership has undertaken in expanding uses of land and water resources, diversifying agricultural production, altering soil technology, establishing grain storage reserves, distributing farm credit, and initiating a modest program in industrialization based upon agriculture are worthy of examination and emulation in other developing countries. The policies and practices of Malawi's leadership in retarding the pace of rural to urban migration also have lessons for other countries where the problems of feeding the urban unemployed create severe political and social, as well as economic, challenges. Enhancing the quality of rural life, decentralizing industrial development, and resisting efforts to stack the economic deck in favor of the urban masses takes a great deal of political courage. The Malawian example exists for those leaders who care to examine it.

The greatest act of political courage, however, has been Dr. Banda's insistence on pursuing an

alternative strategy for development rather than following the course of socialism embraced by most of the continent's leaders—with very mixed results. The Malawian emphasis on the smallholder as the key to genuine sustained growth is a positive recognition of the inherent value in some aspects of conventional wisdom over the blind acceptance of the advice of the outside experts. More important, the Malawian strategy recognizes the value of individual creativity and individual acceptance of responsibility for one's own fate—two qualities that are all too often lost sight of in this day of centralized planning.

Despite the optimism of this *Report*, the problems ahead for Malawi are considerable. It is still a poor country, and to a considerable extent it will continue to be a captive of its own geography, history, and traditional culture. Many of its economic problems—such as the inadequacy of the farm pricing mechanisms, the overgrazing of cattle, and the neglect of providing investment opportunities for the more productive smallholders—may frustrate the leadership's efforts to sustain self-sufficiency in food production and the strengthening of the smallholder sector. The most promising thing about Malawi's situation is that in most instances the leadership recognizes the problems, and pragmatic steps are being taken to eliminate or control some of the worst manifestations of underdevelopment in Malawi.

(August 1982)

[Part III concludes the series on *Malawi's Search for Food Self-Sufficiency*]

NOTES

1. See (pseudonym) Samuel J. Waterford, "Kamuzu's Maverick Rule," *Africa Report* (Sept.-Oct. 1980), p. 11.

2. "Development Perspectives and Priorities in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Finance and Development*, Vol. 18 (March 1981), p. 17.

3. See IBRD, *World Development Report*, 1980.

4. Pulpwood plantations under state control grew from 33,842 hectares in 1975 to 54,254 hectares in 1980. Saw timber plantations grew from 8,932 to 13,103 hectares in the same period; and wood energy plantations grew from 0 hectares in 1975 to 1,952 hectares by 1980.

Not only has the industry earned export dollars for Malawi, but it has also reduced imports in certain areas—such as replacing the imported metal drums for shipping tobacco with locally produced wooden crates.

5. See Eric R. deWinter, *Health Services of a District Hospital in Malawi* (Assen: Van Gorcum & Co., 1972).

6. Ministry of Health, mimeographed report. See IBRD *World Development Report*, 1980.

7. See my "Malawi: Clean Water for the Rural Poor," *AUFS Reports*, No. 40, 1981.

8. Five hundred fifty-three clinics are government managed, the rest are mission and other private institutions. They are distributed widely with 216 in the north 293 in the center, and 411 in the south.

9. Draft report by D. N. Lantum, WHO, mimeographed, c. 1981.

10. In addition to the "Under-5" Clinics discussed previously, the pyramid includes 3 general hospitals, 43 hospital clinics, 29 primary health centers, 432 sub-centers, and 21 health posts. There is also a leprosy hospital and a mental hospital.