

“an iron law of oligarchy” at work in every organisation. “Organisation implies the tendency to oligarchy . . . every party becomes divided into a minority of directors and a majority of directed.”

The leaders in a party possess advantages which give them superior bargaining power over the rank-and-file members who may wish to exert pressure. The leaders are better educated, better informed than the members. They control all communications between the leadership and the followers. Their views rather than followers' views are likely to be given prominence in the party press. The leaders are full-time paid officials and consequently can devote much more time and energy to presenting their views than the ordinary rank-and-file member. As professional politicians they are much more skilled in the art of dialectics, in oratory and political writing and in organisation. As leaders they are much more in the limelight and acquire a prominence and a renown which gives them an insurmountable advantage over the ordinary members. These are largely occupational skills which are developed in the leader's role.

“The masses are incapable of taking part in the decision-making process and desire strong leadership.” Michels firmly believed in what he described as the “incompetence of the masses”. They feel a need for guidance and are incapable of acting without an initiative from above. They have an urge to venerate the leaders: “Their adoration for these temporal divinities is the more blind in proportion as their lives are rude.”

The leadership becomes a “closed caste”, highly suspicious and selective in allowing new members into the caste. The leaders are able to twist criticism of themselves into the appearance of “factionalism”. They can make it appear as an attempt to undermine the unity of the party and, as indeed the British Labour Party has found in recent years, this plays right into the hands of their opponents. Criticism can therefore be represented as some kind of intra-party treason.

Michels' studies were confined to European Socialist parties but he agreed that his law of oligarchy held good

for all bureaucratic organisations.

Some writers have shown that Michels was overdeterministic in his conclusions. He ignored the factionalism inherent in any large party whose centrifugal force any leadership must counteract. Parties will tend to have left and right wings or to have factions based on regional considerations. The American parties, for example, do not pretend to be anything more than coalitions of groups, united at the national level only for the purpose of contesting presidential elections. How can the President hold his party together other than by a process of conciliation or arbitration between the various constituent groups? And does this not suggest a greater degree of interaction between leaders and followers than Michels cared to stress? Did Nehru dominate in Michelsian fashion the different groups which go to make up the Congress Party?

ALL AFRICAN NATIONALIST leaders are committed to the goals of economic development and the modernisation of their underdeveloped societies. All see the need for strong government, for centralised economic planning and extensive state initiative. None is prepared to adopt the laissez-faire approach and hope that “forces of the market” and the Protestant ethic will secure a suitable growth rate. Negative government is out of the question.

A broad distinction can be made between what Schlesinger has termed “hard” and “soft” leadership. “Hard” leaders like Nkrumah, Sékou Touré and Ben Bella, see themselves as surgeons, inflicting an operation on society, modernising by dragging society up by the scruff of its neck. No opposition from traditionalist-orientated leaders, like the chiefs, or from the older generation of less radical nationalist leaders (like Danquah in Ghana) will be countenanced. Little or no independent power will be allowed to new interest groups which arise if the process of development continues. Trade unions in Ghana, for example, are kept firmly under the wing of the C.P.P.

It is not correct to say that these mass-party leaders are necessarily entirely hostile to traditional society.

## A F R I C A N A

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● He said one of the main reasons for Whites leaving Kenya was because of the integration at schools. It had even been rumoured that they would soon have African prefects at formerly White schools.

— *The Star* [J.M.]

● “The *Cape Times* has been asked to point out that the headline to a report published yesterday about Mr. J. C. Carstens, Vice-Principal of the School of Industries for Coloured children at Ottery who is to receive a University of Cape Town doctorate, might have given the impression that Mr. Carstens was a Coloured teacher, he is, in fact, a teacher of Coloured children.” — *Cape Times* [H.L.]

● IT'S FUN TO BE BLACK  
ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN ON  
SOWETO TRAINS

— *Sunday Chronicle* [C.C.]

● “No legislation can legitimately be attacked on the sole ground that it interferes with human rights, for every law that ever was passed interfered with human rights to some extent.

“One does not hear measures of slum clearance and rehousing condemned on this ground so why should human rights be invoked in the attack on the Bantu Laws Amendment Act? — Hon. F. H. Broome, Judge-President of Natal, *Cape Argus*.”

● A beauty contest with 17 girls, arranged by the Gardens branch of the Nationalist Party to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the party in the Cape . . .

The prize in the contest is a course at a charm school (plus gifts of clothing and cosmetics) and a boat trip to Robben Island, South Africa's long-term prison colony, seven miles offshore from Cape Town. — *Sunday Times* [F.P.]