

reality

pol's

A JOURNAL OF LIBERAL OPINION

IN THIS ISSUE...

EDITORIAL	page 2
RACE RELATIONS by Terence Beard	page 4
ISLAM AND APARTHEID by Fatima Meer	page 10
JUSTICE AND FREEDOM by Robert Birley	page 13
OLIVE SCHREINERS LIBERALISM by Marie Dyer	page 18
HUMAN MODELS AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS by Rick Turner	page 22

EDITORIAL

PATRIOTISM IS NOT ENOUGH

We did not expect to return so soon to the topic of our last editorial, the argument of which was that while the Government was in principle committed to the idea of encouraging the racial cultures of each of our many races and "nations", such cultures must in fact accept the main assumption of Afrikaner (Nationalist) culture, namely, that harmony in a multi-racial country can only be achieved on the basis of racial separation, total in respect of Afrikaner and White non-Afrikaner.

In our last editorial we dealt with the case of the Rev. Dick Cadigan, an American Anglican priest whose continued stay in South Africa was considered, though not in so many words, to be inimical to the best interests of the country.

KNIFE-EDGE

Since then the World Council of Churches has made a gift of some £140,000 to organisations connected with guerilla and terrorist activities. This has understandably angered the Government which holds the strong view that the South African Council of Churches should now secede from the world body. The Prime Minister has also ordered the deportation of two Anglican priests in Stellenbosch, because one of them in a parish pamphlet presumed to

analyse and state the probable reasons for this gift by a Christian body to organisations which are clearly bent on overthrowing the "powers that be". Such resistance runs counter to the teaching of St. Paul, who enjoined obedience and condemned disobedience to those powers. Father Robert Mercer, the Stellenbosch priest who wrote the pamphlet, suggested that the evil of terror and violence must have been adjudged by the World Council to be less than the evil of Apartheid, with its instruments of race classification, migrant labour, job reservation, and group areas legislation.

This is what one might call a knife-edge issue. It is very hard to go on sitting on the knife. And the hostility of those for whom patriotism is enough against those for whom pat-

riotism is not enough, is something that every dissenter must reckon with, especially if he is not a born citizen of the country.

It is noteworthy that Father Robert Mercer condemned the World Council gift. He clearly does not believe that it will do anything to bring the problems of Southern Africa nearer to solution. His offence is that he was prepared to understand the reasons why a Christian body should give such a gift. And if you are a patriot, such reasons can only be un-Christian and unjustifiable; one is not only condoning, but also encouraging violence, chaos, and murder.

FOR OR AGAINST S.A. ?

It is noticeable that such issues, which divide so sharply and bitterly, always arise when the survival of white South Africa is at stake. It is dangerous for a dissenter to condemn white Rhodesia, or the Portuguese presence in Africa, or the supply of arms by Western powers. It is equally dangerous for him to say or do anything which might suggest that he aligns himself with the guerilla and the terrorist.

Reality cannot evade its obligations in regard to this knife-edge issue. Senator Horwood has already issued a challenge to the non-Dutch Reformed Churches to say whether they are for or against South Africa. By this simplistic approach he makes his own position all the more secure, but he poses a question to which there is no answer for any liberal.

The disbanded Liberal Party did not see violence as a liberating instrument in the South African context. Nor can **Reality**, which has inherited the principles of the party. Therefore we cannot approve the action of the World Council of Churches. But that still does not make it possible to answer Senator Horwood's question.

What does he mean by South Africa? It is quite clear what he means. He means the party to which he belongs. He means the white people of South Africa. He does not mean a considerable portion of the Coloured people, many of whose members go to football and cricket tests to cheer the enemy teams on to victory. He does not mean a sizeable portion of the Indian people, who under the Group Areas Act are treated as people of no account. He does not mean millions of African people, who are pushed from pillar to post, whose family life is in large measure destroyed by the cruel laws which govern migrant labour. It is also quite clear that Senator Horwood

has no idea of the meaning of the church. In no circumstances is it the primary duty of a church to be for or against any country. The issue is as old as Christianity itself — older still, because it is as old as the prophets of Israel — and it will no doubt never be settled. The automatic identification of the Church with the country in times of war is hard to reconcile with any of the teachings of its Founder, and it has brought the Church into disrepute, and severely tried the loyalty of its members, especially those who are opposed to the use of violence.

GROWING OPPOSITION.

We too may well examine the motives of a world Christian body which gives money to terrorist organisations. One may assume that this body also had to face a knife-edge issue. Whether it faced it wisely will no doubt be searchingly discussed by the South African non-Dutch Reformed Churches with the World Council. But one can only suppose that the World Council felt that its action was moral in the circumstances. This may make some of us ungovernably angry. Yet it is no less than the growing isolation of white South African sportsmen, and the isolation of the theatre, the medical profession, and a dozen other bodies, a sign that the world at large is not beginning to see the reasonableness of Apartheid or Separate Development. On the contrary its opposition seems to keep on growing.

In their anger and consternation, some White South Africans are finding that the World Council has turned its back on sacred Christian principles. The truth is that many of these principles are reserved as principles only when it suits us. The principle that the powers that be must be obeyed was not a principle for Mr. Vorster in the Second World War. We do not doubt that if a black or non-racial government were established in South Africa, and that if white guerillas resisted it, some white churches would not find it unChristian to send them aid.

The fact that world opposition to Apartheid is growing, means that there will be more and more of these knife-edge issues. It will become harder and harder to maintain that patriotism is not enough. In these difficult times it will be the duty of Reality to analyse the issues calmly, and to go on driving home the truth that the main and originating cause of these crises is to be found here at home.

It is not Communism or Permissiveness, or the apostasy of world Christianity. It is Apartheid, by whatever name it may be called.

RACE RELATIONS

by terence beard

— the economic sine qua non

From the time when van Riebeeck first landed at the Cape, to be met by the Hottentots, South Africa has been faced with the problem of race relations. And from this time too, the problem of race relations has been inextricably interwoven with economic factors.

From the very first, trading relations were restricted to the Dutch East India Company, for van Riebeeck forbade private trading. Trading relations were therefore inter-group, and were at first **nominally at least**, on a basis of equality, for it is arguable that initially both the Company and the Hottentot tribes were economically at this time "inter-racial". I shall use the term "inter-racial" to refer specifically to this kind of relationship, a relationship based **nominally** (prima facie) upon equality of status, and therefore upon the autonomy, relative to one another, of the parties involved.

MULTI-RACIAL SOCIETY

Three years later, in 1655, the first slaves were brought to South Africa, and from this time whites in South Africa have lived in a multi-racial society. After 1655, at no stage whatever, and in no part of South Africa whatever, has any significant group of whites lived in a purely "white" environment. Their environment has always been a multi-racial one. And the main feature of this multi-racial society is, and has always been, the fact that it is a white dominated society. This domination is both political and economic. The main pattern of historical development in Southern Africa has been that of "inter-racial" contact, followed by conquest or attrition leading to the imposition of political and economic domination by whites over the indigenous populations. This was the pattern in the Western Cape, a pattern which was repeated in the Eastern Cape, the Orange Free State, Natal and the Transvaal, as the whites spread into the interior. The main motive for conquest over the indigenous tribes was an economic one, the desire for land. Had it not been for the Imperial Factor in South Africa it is quite possible that even more land would have been alienated to whites, but as it happened, the indigenous populations were consolidated in some areas of the country, but under white suzerainty. White

political and economic domination penetrated to every corner of Southern Africa. Whites dominated and ran the political system, established a monopoly of control over the economic sector and white ownership was established over all but a few "Reserve" areas of land. While it might appear at first glance that the relations between the white communities and the African populations in the "Reserves" was "inter-racial", this is not the case, for overpopulation and the imposition of taxes forced the tribesmen to sell their labour in white areas, so that both political and economic domination was established in these areas too, and the only "inter-racial" feature was the residential one. This was little more than a feature, for the "Reserves" could not adequately support their populations even at subsistence level, so that they became hardly more than labour reservoirs for white capitalists, farmers and householders.

In this way white domination was established throughout Southern Africa, with whites securing a monopoly of political and economic power, which meant complete control over the economic resources of the country.

WHITE DOMINATED SOCIETY

I shall use the term "multi-racial" to refer to this white dominated society, racially stratified, with whites monopolising political and economic power, but a society nevertheless in which all the component racial groups contribute essential economic services without which the society as a whole could not survive. It is a society in which there is racial interdependence and economic integration, a society which could be territorially separated into its component racial groups in a total way only with the radical restructuring, socially and economically, of all the component racial groups.

The main consequence of this political and economic control by the whites has been that the economic development of South Africa has

taken place in what are known as the "white" areas, for all areas where natural resources of any consequence have been discovered were claimed by the whites, and economic development naturally began where mineral and other resources were to be found. The "Reserve" areas remained all but undeveloped, both because of lack of capital among the indigenous peoples and because taxation and overpopulation soon led to the situation where at any particular time a majority of male working population of the "Reserves" was employed in white areas. Workers returned home to rest or to plough, and where they returned to plough it was to help buttress a subsistence economy which was no more than a subsidiary of the huge white dominated economy which was being developed in white South Africa.

AFRICAN PRODUCTIVENESS

As a consequence of the fact that most Africans from the "Reserves" worked in white areas, and that the vast number of Africans who lived permanently in white areas did likewise, the great proportion of African productiveness has been and is in white areas. While whites have given their know-how, their technological skills, their capital, and their labour to the development of the South African economy, the non-white populations have given their labour. That they have not given capital or skill is a consequence of economic racial stratification fortified by laws denying skills to Africans and so preventing their accumulation of capital. Nevertheless, non-white labour has been one of the most important factors in the building up of the economy. The availability of cheap labour has given an impetus to economic progress which cannot be denied. The gold-mining industry which has provided the base upon which South African industry has been built has been viable only because of the availability of cheap labour, for it would be true to say that labour costs in the United States or in Europe would have made prohibitive, because unpayable, the mining of ores with a similar gold content to that of our main gold-reefs in the Witwatersrand and the Orange Free State.

Non white labour has been used in the construction of every public building, of all factories, of almost all private houses, and in every branch of commerce and industry. South African agriculture is dependent upon non-white labour, and a large proportion of white

families employ non-white domestic labour. It is difficult to point to any economic good of consequence in South Africa in the production of which non-white labour has not played a significant part. Of equal importance has been the part played by non-white labour in the building up of the economic infrastructure. The roads, the railways, the dams, the harbours, the airports, the power stations and power lines have all been built up with the use of non-white labour. Again it can be stressed that the "Reserve" areas are almost without this infrastructure and that African productiveness has been confined mainly to helping the development of the "white" areas. In short, non-white labour has been a vital factor in our economic development, and has become an essential element in the economic processes.

UNSKILLED WORK

While non-white labour has played this important role, the nature of the "multi-racial" society has meant that the non-white contribution has largely been restricted to unskilled work, Job Reservation, lack of education, and the prohibition of African Trade Unions together with an over-supply of labour having served to keep non-white wages at a low level. For the year 1966, 64% of the total wages and salaries paid out in South Africa was paid to whites who comprised only 19.02% of the total population, while 27% of the wages and salaries was paid out to the African population who comprised 68.06% of the population. Taking the Gross Domestic Product for 1966, the white's share was 76% while that of the Africans was 18%. (i) Per capita wages and salaries averaged R828.63 for whites, and R97.6 for Africans, with that for Coloureds and Asiatics R147.8 and R164.8 respectively. While it is necessary to make adjustments in the figure for Africans to allow for non-wage earners in the rural areas, this would make no substantial difference to the picture of poverty which is revealed. The overwhelming majority of the African population unquestionably live below the Poverty Datum Line.

The overall picture of the South African population reveals a poverty stricken African population almost completely dependent upon the white dominated economy operating in the areas denominated "white" in the statute books. The "Reserve" areas may, no less than Lesotho, be aptly described as "a waif, sustained, not developed, by the South African economy." (ii).

TWO SOLUTIONS

It is the thesis of this article that those members of the South African government who hold that there are only two alternative solutions to South Africa's race problems which are based upon the principles of justice and are therefore morally justified, are in essence correct in their claim. These solutions are commonly referred to by those who propound them as the Common Society and Separate Development. Those who contend for the Common Society envisage the systematic demolition of the white dominated multi-racial society and the emergence of a non-racial society, which however stratified, will not be stratified racially. The Common Society is not tied to any particular constitutional forms, but it is tied to the Rule of Law and to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Those who would choose the alternative of Separate Development envisage the development of independent states all "racially homogeneous", all eventually politically and economically autonomous. The Common Society involves the replacement of the multi-racial concept with a non-racial concept, while Separate Development implies a return to the inter-racial concept involved in the van Riebeeck model mentioned above. Given these two alternative plans, all other possibilities would necessarily lie somewhere between the two and would for this very reason fall short of the requirements of a morally justifiable solution. Such models are either based upon the principle of the constitutional parity of the races, implying that all are equal but that some are more equal than others, not to mention the difficulties inherent in applying the doctrine of "separate but equal" within a single polity, or else upon the qualified franchise which is based not upon the principle of equality but upon the justification of oligarchical principles.

A second thesis of his article is that most of those persons who have propounded the goals of a Common Society or of Separate Development have neglected the economic implications of what they propose, with the result that their goals are unattainable on the premises from which they work. A morally justifiable solution must begin from the facts spelled out above. It must recognize the non-white contribution to the building up of the modern economy and so the claim to some of the benefits of what has been built up.

RESTRUCTURING

Accordingly the building of a Common Society would involve not only the abolition of racism, the opening up of all public institutions to all races, the introduction of equal political rights for all, it must also necessarily involve the radical restructuring of the economic system in order to eliminate the disparity between white and non-white living standards. This would mean more than a redistribution of wealth, it would mean crash education programmes accompanied by the abolition of the racially stratified job-structure. The very success of the Common Society policy is likely to be directly related to the rate at which the relative deprivation of the non-white groups relative to the white group is removed. The fervour of non-white nationalism and the extent and intensity of non-white racialism is more and more directly related to the extent and magnitude of the relative deprivation which exists in relation to whites. The Common Society then will involve social and economic equality, and the more rapidly this is brought about, the more likely is a non-racial society to be achieved. This is an argument for proceeding with social and economic changes before the political changes, but the implementers would necessarily have to include members from all race groups, and the delay in extending political rights to all would have to be a short one if the bona fides of the implementers are not to be called into question. For the implementation of the policies of the Common Society, time is of the essence, for the society envisaged is one which necessitates the consent of the vast majority of all race groups.

The natural reaction amongst most South Africans to this brief outline of the Common Society is likely to be that it is a pipe dream unacceptable to the electorate. This is the conclusion which Hoernlé came to more than a generation ago.

TOTAL SEPARATION

The second alternative is that of Separate Development, or Total Separation, or Partition, the return to the inter-racial model. It is perhaps preferable at this juncture to drop the term "Separate Development" because this is the name given to the policies of the present government, and the solution about to be discussed is different in crucial respects. I pro-

pose to use the term "Total Separation". Hoernlé defined this approach as follows:

"**Separation**, which breaks up the multi-racial society and organizes the several racial components as mutually independent social units." (iii)

Hoernlé chose the word "Separation" because the customary word "segregation" connoted white domination, and by the former word he meant "literally a sundering or dissociation so complete as to destroy the very possibility of effective domination." (iv) This means the creation of new states for non-whites, autonomous states exercising full sovereignty, and a necessary condition for this is the creation of separate economies in the newly created states such as to make them economically self-sufficient. As Hoernlé put it:

"Needless to say, such 'solution' will be no solution, unless the territories assigned to each group, allow of an adequate economic system for each group, which means for the Natives that their territories must be such that, given efficient use of the land and of the other natural resources, it becomes unnecessary for the bulk of the men to go out into neighbouring white areas for wage labour." (v)

"If Total Segregation were to be brought into being at all, it would require for its realization a long-range plan and a persistence of purpose, by comparison with which the four-year and five-year plans of Totalitarian States would fade into insignificance." (vi)

FAIR DIVISION

When the immense industrial and commercial expansion which has taken place since World War II is considered, and the contribution which non-whites have made in the building up of this achievement, (not forgetting that comparatively little has been done to develop the "Reserves" which have not even any infrastructure to speak of;) when all this is considered, it ought to go without saying that a policy of Total Separation ought to be based not only upon a fair division of land but also upon a fair division of economic and natural resources. Each racial group would have to be allocated parts of the country in which infrastructures have been developed and in which there is industrial development. The industrial areas would have to be shared out. Without going into details it might be said that, say, all of Natal and the Eastern Cape, including the ports of Durban, East London and perhaps Port Elizabeth, as well as portions of the industrialised areas of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State would have to be set aside for non-whites. Unless a radical partition of this kind were to be adopted,

Total Separation could hardly be said to be just or morally justifiable.

The spelling out of the implications of Total Separation reveals at once that the price which it will cost to white South Africans is of an order which will not be readily accepted, and the question might be asked "Is it any more acceptable to whites than the alternative of the Common Society?"

The two alternatives both imply the rejection of multi-racialism as defined. The first is based upon a concept of non-racialism, while the second would involve a return to the policy of "inter-racial" relations between the various groups. It would, as it were, constitute a return to the position which initially applied between the Dutch East India Company under van Riebeeck described above.

The examination of the two alternatives of the Common Society and Total Separation may be said to have made clear by implication that no other alternative is morally justifiable, for all alternatives which lie between these two would necessarily fall short either of the political or economic objectives of equality.

POLITICAL PARTIES

It is possible now to turn to the race policies offered to the South African electorate by the various political parties. No detailed analysis is needed to show that none of the political parties stands for the Common Society. The now defunct Liberal Party stood for such an ideal, but it fell short of spelling out the economic implications of such a policy. It is true that it did put forward a policy for the welfare state, and for the redistribution of wealth, but the banning of its leaders cut short the dialogue within the party over the full economic implications of the Common Society, and the changes that would be required in order to achieve this goal.

The Progressive Party is committed to gradual evolutionary change, and offers neither the prospect of equal political rights nor equal economic rights within the foreseeable future. In fact it might be said that the policy of the Progressives aims at the creation of a non-white middle class which will identify itself with the white population over and against the non-white proletarian majority. And inso-

far as this policy has been tried elsewhere in Africa it has been seen to fail. The Progressive Party places great reliance upon constitutional structures for shaping the future, tending to discount the fact that one of the great "lessons" of post-war history, in Africa no less than elsewhere, is the facility with which majorities can and do by-pass the legal political institutions. Political institutions are viable only when there is a general consensus of support for them. The Common Society can be reached only if the support of a majority of all race groups can be won over for it, and the winning over of this support depends primarily upon the economic advancement of the deprived groups.

The United Party policies fall far short of the political and economic goals defined above. They do not even go as far as Progressive policies, and no more need be said about them.

There remain the policies of the Herstigte Nasionale Party and Nasionale Party. Both parties describe their race policies as policies of Separate Development. The Herstigte's policies mark to a large extent a return to the pre-1948 policies of the Nationalist Party, as it then was, with white supremacy being retained throughout South Africa but with a Bantustan policy permitting of no permanent residence in the white areas by non-whites, while continuing to use non-white labour where necessary. This policy can be disregarded as coming nowhere near either of the two models we have distinguished.

CRITERIA NOT FULFILLED

The policy of the National Party, the policy which is in the process of being implemented by the government, is presented to the electorate as if it were the sole just and moral alternative, as if it were merely a variation on the theme of the Tomlinson Commission's Report. But this it is not, and in spite of the defence which has been made of this policy by members of the government, and in spite of arguments by such writers as Dr. Denis Wor-

rall to the effect that the policy provides a framework within which liberals can work for reform, this policy does not fulfil the criteria applied by Professor Hoernlé, neither does it take into account some of the arguments developed in this article.

Firstly the policy of Separate Development is based upon a theory of land apportionment which does not take into account the fact that the "Reserve" areas are historically no more than areas secured for African occupation against alienation to whites. These areas by no means include all the territory formerly occupied by African tribes. While it is true that the "Reserve" areas are being added to and consolidated, there are millions of Africans resident in areas denominated "white" who occupied those areas before the advent of white occupation, and who chose to stay as squatters or serfs after whites had established title. It is sometimes argued that such land is "white" by right of conquest, but this is not a moral argument, for it is a commonplace that "might does not make right".

It is significant that Matanzima has on more than one occasion made claims to land which is at present not part of the Transkei, and that all three of Lesotho's political parties have as one of their aims the restoration of the lost territories of the Free State, lands lost by the Basotho between 1840 and 1870 to the Boers. It is also significant that many African intellectuals refer to the Frontier Wars of the 19th Century as the Wars of Dispossession. These facts are of significance because they reveal that Africans are not content with the present land dispensation. Separate Development, if it is to be morally justifiable, will have to include an equitable land distribution, and such a distribution, it will be argued, must take economic factors into account.

SEPARATE FREEDOMS

Secondly, Separate Development is based upon the idea of granting political independence to the Bantustans in accordance with the concept of "separate freedoms". Again it is a

commonplace today that political independence, to be meaningful, must be tested against economic factors. A country which is completely dependent economically upon another country is tied to that country's apron strings and can be said to be politically independent only in the *de jure* and not in the *de facto* sense. Once again we are led to consider the economic factors.

Thirdly there is the vital economic factor. The present policy of Separate Development involves the deprivation of African of both the economic infrastructure and the economic resources to the development of which their main energies have been devoted. The South African economy has been built up by all the race groups, so that one race group can justly claim the "economic system" for itself, which is in effect what whites are at present doing in terms of this policy.

The Prime Minister, in the debate on his vote (vii), was reported as having said that the Bantustans would have as their chief export their labour. This is a direct consequence of the Bantustans being confined to the undeveloped parts of South Africa. And as long as labour remains their chief export, as long as Africans are denied officially recognized Trade Unions, and as long as they are confined to unskilled work, so long will white domination continue in South Africa. The white oligarchy will remain and continue to control the Bantustans, whatever the legal position might be.

In the Bulletin of the Africa Institute for July, 1970, Dr. Hilgard Muller is reported as having said: "South Africa is strongly opposed to any form of neo-Colonialism or economic Imperialism."

The irony is that it is precisely a system of economic imperialism which is being developed in terms of the policy of Separate Development. It could hardly be a more classic example of neo-Colonialism, and the Prime Minister's statement is tantamount to an admission of this.

LABOUR RESERVES

A great deal more could be said to substantiate the claim that Separate Development means economic Imperialism, but one example will suffice. The development of Border Areas industries is to be on the white side of the borders implying the extension of the policy of importing labour from the Bantustans so increasing, not decreasing their dependence upon white South Africa. It is difficult to see the Bantustans as much more than labour reservoirs for white South Africa.

The great danger of this policy is that at some time in the future, white South Africa will find itself in a position somewhat similar to that of Israel today, a small enclave surrounded by hostile countries dedicated to its destruction.

The great tragedy of South Africa is that whites are not seriously prepared to make the sacrifices necessary for either the Common Society or for Total Separation on a really just basis, in which the non-whites are given not only a fair share of land, but of the economic resources and structures which they have helped to build up over the past century. This is a reality. No system of systems of government based upon consent can be viable while the vast majority of people are economically deprived, so that the just solution and the stable solution tend to be necessary conditions of each other. This too is a reality.

The alternative is of course the continuance of white domination, but what of the consequences of this should non-white strength eventually be sufficient to overthrow the white oligarchy? It is quite possible that whites will be able to maintain their supremacy for a long time to come, but the longer it lasts, the more catastrophic is eventual change likely to be and the less viable the future of the whites in Africa.

(i) Sources: South African Statistics, 1968, A-11; South African Reserve Bank, Quarterly Bulletin, No. 96, June 1970, s-65. Percentage distributions estimated by Arnt Spandau, Department of Economics, Rhodes University.

(ii) Financial Mail - 25th October, 1963.

(iii) R. F. Alfred Hoernlé South African Native Policy and the Liberal Spirit: page 158.

(iv) op. cit. page 168.

(v) op. cit. page 172.

And again:

(vi) op. cit. page 173.

(vii) Evening Post, 15th September, 1970.

ISLAM AND APARTHEID

by fatima meer

The South African social structure is a "Christian" creation and is supported in the main by Christian subjects; yet no South African church today could unreservedly declare the ideologies of apartheid and Christianity to be compatible with each other. Whatever the practice in local churches, by convention in the past, and by law in the present, declarations of protest against the spirit of apartheid are increasing in each, and the recent decision of the World Council of Churches suggests that it views opposition to apartheid as a major mission. A study of the fundamental ethical assumptions of other religious systems may well reveal a universal contradiction between the spirit of apartheid and the religious ethic of the world. The conflict of ideologies between Islam and apartheid is fundamental and is based on grounds which are close to those of Christianity.

Apartheid contends that humanity is divided into a hierarchy of conflicting racial and colour groups, and that the boundaries between these groups are both natural and real and must be maintained at all costs in the interest of social peace. The implementation of its ideology requires those groups which it considers to constitute distinct races, in recognition of their different levels of civilization and standards of living, to be separated into distinct geographical and social areas, served by distinct wage, health, welfare, educational and recreational scales.

BROTHERHOOD OF MAN

Islam by contrast believes in the Divine and therefore natural brotherhood of man, and considers all distinctions and divisions between peoples to be unnatural, unreal, and opposed to the Divine Law of Tabliq bil Haq, the law of balance, beauty and truth which preserves that brotherhood, and through which God governs the universe. The Islamic concept of brotherhood is an intrinsic part of its first and fundamental principle, the doctrine of Tawhid, or the doctrine of the Unique God who is seen as standing in the relation of Supreme Father to all mankind. The implementation of Islam demands that man must strive towards salvation or God realization, that is the realization of the Supreme Father, but since it holds this to be human brotherhood, it demands that man should involve himself in action that develops that brotherhood, that is action that integrates and assimilates, action that binds and draws people together into a single unity. Barriers to interaction — social, political and economic — are thus forbidden.

This Islamic position is upheld in a number of Quranic verses, three of which are as follows:-

"Verily this Brotherhood (Ummat) of yours is a single Brotherhood".

XXI:92 Moulana Abdulla Yusuf Ali's translation.
"Men were at first but one community: then they fell to variance: and had not a decree (of respite) previously gone forth from thy hand, their difference had surely been decided between them".

Q:10:19 Moulana Abul Kalam Azad's translation.

"O mankind! we have created You from a single (pair)
Of a male and a female,
And made you into
Nations and tribes, that
Ye may know each other
(Not that ye may despise
Each other) Verily
The most honoured of you
In the sight of God
Is (he who is) the most
Righteous of you.

49:13 Moulana Abdulla Yusuf Ali's translation.

OPEN TO NON-MUSLIMS

The Quranic equivalent of brotherhood is Ummat, a concept developed by the Prophet Muhammad in the seventh century to extend the identity and unity of the tribally torn and tribally conflicting peoples of the Arabian Peninsula, beyond ties of blood and religion. Accordingly in terms of the constitution of Medina membership to his Ummat was open to non-Muslim Arabs, and Jewish tribes were specifically listed. The use of the word Ummat in verse XXI:92 is interpreted to have the widest implications, transcending national, racial, cultural and historical barriers, since it appears at the end of a long passage recording the communication of God's Divine law through the ages, through many Prophets, to widely divergent peoples. All translators of the Quran are agreed that the three verses are addressed

to the entire species of man and not to Arab man in particular. Moulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi interprets them to mean that "all races of man, Europeans, Asiatics and Africans, White, Brown and Black are equally His creation He takes thought for all alike"; Moulana Mohamed Ali adds that verse 4:13 establishes the Islamic view that "superiority of one over another in this vast brotherhood does not depend on nationality, wealth, or rank, but on the careful observance of duty - Moral Greatness"; Moulana Azad concludes that though naturally a single entity, a single family, the family of God, Ayal-Allah, mankind has become divided into self motivated class, caste and race groups and that it can overcome this tragic segmentation only through complete submission to the one Unique God.

Implicit in these verses too is the idea that man is by nature equal, and this is made explicit in the following statement:

"Verily we have honoured all children of Adam equally". 17:70

Man's natural equality is also inferred from the fact that the Divine Order, the order of Rububiyyah, is above all characterized by balance. Balance implies equality and the social order to accord with the Divine Order should be a union of social equals. Islamic theology contends that such would have been the nature of human society, had man been structured like every other order of existence, organic and inorganic, with a built-in, mechanical, and thus a natural and involuntary tendency to accord with the Divine will. Human beings, however, are invested with free will, with intelligence and the capacity to evaluate and make choices. They are thus free to submit to the Divine will and so become involved in a mal-ul-hassanah, that is good action promoting social harmony, or they may reject the Divine will, and become involved in a mal-us-sayyiah, action motivated by selfish considerations and resulting in conflict, in the separation of man from man, and society from the Reality of God.

FREE WILL

This theory also has the effect of making man, by virtue of his free will, the architect of his personality and his society, thereby freeing God from all responsibility for human

evil. Thus it is that He sits in judgement over man.

"And the nafs (self) and its perfection, he endowed it with the possibilities both of integration and disruption. He will indeed be successful who develops it. And he will indeed fail who stunneth it." (91:7-10).

Equality however, does not mean uniformity. Islam recognizes and respects cultural differences, and warns against the dangers that can arise from variations in individual talents. Cultural differences are partly due to the fact that God, though leaving man to his own resources in adjusting to the universe, is moved by concern for his welfare and so supports him with Divine Guidance, which He reveals through his Prophets. Though the essential ethic (deen) of that Guidance is the same, its form or ritual (madhab) differs from people to people, thereby accounting for differences in behaviour patterns. Concerning variations in individual talents, the Quran holds that all talents are due to God and held in trust by man on His behalf. Thus no man has the right to use his talents selfishly to promote his own



Portrait of Indian South Africans — Avon House
The Imam

exclusive interests and such "misuse" of talents is condemned as sinful.

"And Allah has blessed some of you above others in respect of capacity to earn livelihood, yet those who are blessed (with an abundance) restore not their provision to their subordinate so that they may share equally with them, Is it then the blessing of Allah which they deny?"

Quran (16:71)

Accordingly, a man may use his talents to acquire private property, but he is deemed to hold that property in trust and he has no absolute right over it. God is the ultimate owner of all land and its resources. Thus:

"And the earth He has created for the benefit of all living beings".

(Quran 55:10)

"And We have provided sustenance therein for you and for those for whom you do not provide".

(Quran 15:20)

To counteract the effects of unequal talents and hence unequal wealth man is enjoined in the Quran to keep only that which he requires for his personal use, and give away all surplus. The perfect man of the Quran, is the siddiqui who keeps no private possession beyond his immediate need and has confidence in the bounty of Allah. The Prophet and his close followers were such men.

"And they ask thee as to what should they give (for the benefit of others) say 'Whatever is surplus to your own requirements'".

(Quran 2:19).

CHARITY

To guarantee an equitable distribution of goods and services, Islam has instituted the system of Zakaat. Zakaat, translated as charity or fellow feeling, is a system of progressive taxation, which when properly adhered to results in a welfare state in which economic discrepancies and the resultant social inequalities are held at a minimum. In terms of this institution, man, under penalty of sin, must return to a central fund, bait-ul-mal, a stipulated portion of all his current earnings and accumulated capital. This is the least that he must do, apart from other acts of voluntary charity, in order to establish a modicum of balance. Just as worship is the practical process for realizing God, Zakaat is interpreted as the practical process for realizing the brotherhood of man. The obligation to pay Zakaat is second only to that of worshipping God and there are Quranic verses that nullify prayer if unaccompanied by acts of charity.

Muhammad shares with Jesus a repugnance for the wealthy, not because they are wealthy, but because their wealth is considered as gained in violence and maintained by violence, the accumulation being deemed possible only

because others have been deprived. Hoarding, monopoly and interest (riba) are rejected as evil and sinful, on the grounds that they upset the social balance and plunge society into conflict.

"They who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not for the cause set forth by Allah, unto them give tidings of a painful doom, on the day when it will all be heated in the fire of hell, and their foreheads and their flanks and their backs will be branded therewith (and it will be said unto them): Here is that which you hoarded for yourselves. Now taste of what you used to hoard".

(Quran 9:34-35).

OPPOSITION TO COMPETITION

From this one infers that Islam is not only opposed to social systems that discriminate and divide, but it is also opposed to all forms of exploitative economic competition. The economic man of the Quran is not the economic man of modern capitalism, unbridled in his economic activity, but an economic man who at every point takes the welfare of others into consideration. Thus the conflict between apartheid and Islam is aggravated by the former's partnership with capitalism.

The concern of Islam, as of Christianity, is a concern for minorities, for the deprived and underprivileged, the exploited and the poor, the destitute, the women and the children; and the first Quranic revolts were directed to these problems. The concern of apartheid is essentially a concern for the privileged position in perpetuity, and all its laws are directed to this end. Islam considers social inequalities to be antithetical to its creed and strongly denounces those who appropriate privilege and use it to dominate and exploit those whom they keep subordinate. It calls on man to develop a society of social equals which accords with the Divine Law of God and thus reflects heavenly tendencies. It may be said that while Islam works for the dignity and the freedom of the human individual, apartheid works for the enslavement of man to the forces of prejudice and fear. It is in these fundamental respects that the two ideologies are in a state of conflict.



**An address given to the
Civil Rights League,
Cape Town,
in September, 1970**

JUSTICE AND FREEDOM

by robert birley

I should like, to consider very generally some of the particular difficulties which face countries all over the world today when they endeavour either to form free societies or to preserve them. I realise that these difficulties, which to a Free Society are rather challenges, may be seen in different forms in different countries, but they are generally relevant to all societies of civilized men. And I should begin by pointing out that the State in our times is very much stronger than it has ever been before in history.

We think of the various despotisms in history and we may feel glad that we did not live in those days. We should realise that, if we were whisked back into one of them by means of a magic ring, we should probably find ourselves in many ways freer than we do in the most liberal and democratic state today. The story is told of King Louis XV of France who reigned during much of the eighteenth century. He was, to all appearances, an absolute despot. There had been no Parliament in France — in the sense of a representative assembly — for a century and a half; hardly anyone thought there ever would be one in

the future. He was ultimately in control of all official appointments. One day he was talking with some friends and the conversation turned to the appalling traffic blocks which were becoming a constant nuisance in the city of Paris. "If I were Prefect of Paris," he said, "I should ban all cabriolets in the centre of the city." It never occurred to him that as a despotic ruler over his people he could himself interfere in a local problem like that one.

INTERFERENCE

But today the government of a country interferes with our lives in ordinary everyday ques-

tions in a way which was quite unthinkable not many generations ago.

I am dealing with an immense subject and I must this evening confine myself to a very few aspects of it. I should like to consider first very shortly one which a great many people have in their minds today. One might call it the challenge presented by man's success. Another way of putting it would be the problem of the control of Technology.

If I had to choose one moment for the beginning of our modern civilization it would be the date of publication, some three hundred and fifty years ago, of a book by the French philosopher and mathematician, Descartes, and the appearance before the world of this sentence: 'I perceived it to be possible to arrive at a knowledge highly useful in life; and in room of the speculative philosophy usually taught in the schools to discover a practical one, by means of which, knowing the force and action of fire, water, air, the stars and the heavens, and all other bodies that surround us, as distinctly as we know the crafts of our artisans, we might also apply them in the same way to all the uses to which they are adapted, and thus render ourselves the lords and possessors of nature.'

"LORDS OF NATURE"

Here there appeared the first clear statement of the possibilities of Applied Science or Technology. 'And thus render ourselves the lords and possessors of nature.' We are most of us aware of the fact that the danger now is that nature — in the sense of natural objects, be they, for instance, sulphurous smoke, or chemical agents which kill fish or materials which produce when in combination or in certain conditions devastating noise — that nature looks like becoming the lord and possessor of us.

This is a problem which most of us are familiar with and I do not wish to labour it. I might just refer to two questions worth considering when we come to grapple with it. First, somehow or other we have to establish our priorities and this is not all an easy thing to do. Let me take an example. The Concord aircraft is soon to make its trial flights up and down the Irish Channel. There are those who hold that if it does so, breaking, of course, the sound barrier, it will cause great damage, perhaps irreparable damage, to St. David's Cathedral, that wonderfully beautiful building situated on the tip of the peninsula of Pembrokeshire. Let us suppose that it does cause

such damage. If so, it will presumably show that this aeroplane will, when it becomes generally adopted, do a great deal of damage to mediaeval churches and other delightful buildings all over the world. Which is more important — to have an aeroplane which will take us over an ocean in time for lunch or the safety of these buildings? I may seem to have put it unfairly. But consider what our modern civilization would be like now if we were only able to go in time for a luncheon appointment (at or after which a business deal might be discussed) for the distance it took us to do so before the invention of the railway train, or even the motor car. It would not be an easy decision to make. We have hardly begun to consider what are going to be essential criteria in our society and the sooner we do so the better.

My second point is this. It seems to me to be becoming clear that Technology can only be controlled by technologists. It is very little use someone like myself saying that the preservation of mediaeval cathedrals should have a high priority. The expert will always get the better of me. Inventions, in our modern society seem to possess their own validity. What is wanted is that the technologists themselves should feel the desirability of considering these other possible priorities. That is putting it too mildly. They must feel passionately about them passionately enough to enable them to be ready to surrender some of that power which makes them 'the lords and possessors of nature'. This raises, of course, an educational issue, and I think it is perhaps the most important one facing us today. But there I must leave it as I have some other fish to fry. But to have ignored it as a challenge to a free society would be to my mind quite unrealistic.

THE NEGATIVE TERM

The second of these challenges of which I wish to speak I might call the danger of the stereotype.

It is, I believe, largely due to the fact that our civilization has become so complicated that we find the temptation almost irresistible to depersonalize our social and political problems. This is not the only reason. I doubt whether it is the main reason in this country. And I must say that I have never met an example of this danger, the creation of a stereotype, more extreme than the constant use here of the term non-white. I do not believe that ever before in history have nearly fifteen mil-

lion people been classified together by a negative term.

However, let me turn to my own country. Not long ago I was talking with a lady from Jamaica now settled in the city of Birmingham. She told me that she was very happy. She had now a little house of her own. Her little son went to the local primary school, where he was getting on very well and was making many friends with the other children. (Here may I be allowed to pay tribute to the school teachers of my country. The trouble taken by the vast majority of them to solve our own racial problem is to my mind really praiseworthy.) When she went shopping she used to long to get back to her little house of which she was so proud. 'But', she added, 'there is one real difficulty, the neighbours. They will keep the wireless on so late at night and so loud and they will throw their rubbish about all over the place and not in the rubbish bin.' My heart sank — this was just what one was used to hearing about the immigrants from the West Indies. 'And what sort of people are they?' I asked. She replied, 'Oh, Irish, of course.'

"OF COURSE"

Not long after I was speaking at a meeting in Londonderry and I summoned up all my courage and told that story. To my relief it was received with the utmost good humour. I pointed out then that it was we, the English, who were to blame. It was we who had taught the Jamaican lady to speak of the Irish in that way. I pointed out also that the important words were the words 'Of course'. These were the genuine mark of the stereotype.

It is an easy way out of our difficulties to construct a stereotype, to think of all men and women of a particular kind, differentiated by race or colour or religion or class, as being the same. We then cease to think of them as individuals, and a great many difficulties can be avoided if we can do that. It is much easier to deny what might be regarded as reasonable and just human rights to a large group of people, thought of as all alike, than to a single individual. To take an example, I suppose I have read as many of the speeches and written statements of Hitler and Himmler, the SS leader, as most people. I cannot recollect once finding them thinking of the people whom they were ill-treating, Jews, Czechs, Poles, Russians, Gipsies or whoever it was, other than as a mass of people. Never once is there any evidence that they had in their mind's eye one single Jew or Slav. And thought of in the

mass in this way, they seemed to be all alike. It is extraordinary easy to create a stereotype and once the process has begun it seems to continue automatically.

It does no harm to consider what it must be like to be treated as a stereotype, a kind of depersonalized person, one's self. I was once taught this lesson very firmly myself. I was talking to the boys in the Matric. class of an African school in this country, when a boy asked me, 'Sir, is it true that the Nazis murdered a great many Jews?' My heart sank and I replied that it was true. 'Sir, how many?' asked someone. My heart sank even deeper as I answered, 'Well, if I say five million, I cannot go any lower.' They were quite appalled. And then I thought that I could not leave it at that, so I said, 'If I promise you that when I hear of massacres, say in the Congo (it was before the Civil War in Nigeria) I shall never say, "Oh, that's the kind of thing Blacks do", but that that was done by the Congolese will you promise me that, now you have heard what I told you, you will not say, "Oh, that's the kind of thing Whites do", but that that was done by Germans?' They agreed and we solemnly exchanged our pledges.

"SOME GERMANS"

And then I felt that I had not gone far enough. I thought of the German Ministers of Education with whom I had worked in the British Zone of Germany after the war. Two of them had been in concentration camps for nearly the whole period of Nazi rule. Another had been a Head Master when Hitler gained power in Germany. He had been dismissed a few weeks later and had lived for twelve years in poverty, getting work when he could as a jobbing printer. Above all, I thought of the little group of students at the University of Munich, who styled themselves the White Rose and during 1942 resisted the Nazi government, distributing leaflets which called on the German people to accept their responsibilities for the evil deeds of their government. Inevitably before long they were discovered; they were tried, convicted and executed by beheading. I told my class of these students and they were immensely impressed. 'Now,' I said, 'if I promise you that, when I hear of massacres in the Congo, I shall not say, "Oh, that's the kind of thing the Congolese do", but that, that was done by some people in the Congo, will you promise me, after hearing what I have told you, that you will not say, "That's the kind of thing Germans do", but that it was done by some

people, called Nazis, in Germany?' 'Certainly,' they said, and once more we exchanged our pledges.

BOGEYS

Perhaps I might add a word on another danger to a free society, because it leads to unreasonable tyrannical actions. I might call it the creation of stereotypical bogeys. One can see this in Russia where all the liberals, most of whom are now in Siberia, and also the great majority of people in Czechoslovakia, are lumped together as fascists and regarded as being probably in the pay of and certainly acting on the behest of the West German Republic. Exactly the same phenomenon is to be seen in some other countries, only for "fascists" read "communists". In a quite remarkable way they seem to be behind every undesirable manifestation. The other day in this country a leading politician explained that the pressure exerted by the "black" countries of Africa to prevent sporting engagements between South African teams and those of other nations was due to communist influence. There is another explanation which might at least be considered, that these countries wish a protest to be made against the fact that the majority of the people here, because of the colour of their skin, which is the same as theirs, suffer a considerable number of disabilities. We might even think what we should feel — in South Africa or in Britain — if in some country in the world the exact opposite was the case and a majority, made up of European persons, suffered from the same social disadvantages. Presumably if we protested we should be regarded as "fascists".

SACRIFICE

I turn now to my third challenge and in some ways I feel that it is the greatest one. I can introduce it best by quoting from a passage in one of the notebooks of the French author, Albert Camus, written by him over twenty years ago, though only quite recently published, after his death.

'I have', he wrote, 'the liveliest taste for freedom. And for every intellectual, freedom ends by being identified with freedom of expression. But I quite realise that this concern does not come first with a great number of Europeans because justice alone can give them the material minimum they need and that rightly or wrongly, they would willingly sacrifice freedom to gain this elementary justice.'

You will appreciate that by Justice in this

passage Camus meant not the justice of law courts or equality before the law, but what we might call social justice, fair and equal treatment as members of society, a proper chance in life for all men.

He continued, 'I have known this for a long time. If it seemed necessary for me to defend the conciliation of Justice and freedom, it is because in my opinion, in this resided the last hope of the West. But this conciliation can only be accomplished in a certain climate which today appears to me almost Utopian. Shall we have to sacrifice one or the other of these values? What are we to think in that case?' And he added, 'After an interval of two thousand years we shall watch Socrates' sacrifice repeated, time and time again.'

The hard fact is that in the world today the desire of most men is stronger for Justice than for freedom. Camus was absolutely right — they will willingly sacrifice freedom in order to obtain Justice. We may see this during the French Revolution! The Declaration drawn up by the National Assembly in 1789 of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen had said 'Men are born and live free with equal rights'. In August, 1791, Robespierre declared to the Assembly, 'Eternal Providence has called you forth, and only you since the beginning of the world to establish on earth the empire of Justice and freedom.' And yet only two years later he was saying, in one of the most dreadful paradoxes of all history, 'The government of the Republic is the despotism of liberty against tyranny.' Essentially that despotism was defensive. The government felt that they could only preserve liberty by denying it.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

After the French Revolution came Karl Marx and the Communist Manifesto. To him the French Revolution was a sham; it may have given political rights and freedom of expression but no deliverance from the shackles of an economic system. But the eternal law of the Class Struggle would lead inevitably in the end to the rise of the working class to shake off these shackles. This would only be made possible by establishing the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. This would be an absolute Dictatorship — as it is in Russia today — and Marx made no bones about it. Eventually, in some way which Marx never began to explain, this dictatorship would be succeeded by the withering away of the State, when freedom would be restored at last.

Let us make no mistake about it. The Russian Revolution in 1917 was a struggle of Justice, social Justice, and many thousands of men in Russia must have felt when it was accomplished that they had a chance to fulfil themselves, to take up work which would test and satisfy them and that only five years before this would have seemed quite impossible. But freedom was surrendered to secure and then to defend it. At the Sixteenth Congress of the Communist Party Stalin spoke these words, 'We believe in the withering away of the State, and to keep on developing the power of the State in order to prepare for the withering away of the State — that is the Marxist formula.' He was quite right. This was indeed an orthodox Marxist statement. But it does not need a very profound knowledge of human nature to feel that this process is an unlikely one. No doubt it is often difficult to determine how far the refusal to allow freedom is due to the fear that Social Justice will be lost if freedom is allowed and how far to a determination to defend the vested interests of the individual or party which has been brought to the top by the revolution. 'All power tends to corrupt,' Lord Acton, 'absolute power corrupts absolutely.'

ONE REAL ATTEMPT

The result in Russia has been, I feel, the establishment of what is now one of the most conservative administrators in the world. (In fact, I can only think of one other as conservative.) I think the position in Russia now, where no kind of freedom of expression is allowed and where, I may add, any kind of demonstration by students such as handing out leaflets criticising the government is suppressed immediately — anything more demonstrative is unthinkable — the position in Russia now was well summed up by Mao Tsetung in an article written in 1964 on 'Kruschev's Phoney Communism'. 'Kruschev', he wrote, 'has abolished the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union and has established a dictatorship of the revisionist clique headed by himself, that is a dictatorship of a privileged stratum. Under the rule of the Kruschev clique there is no democracy for the Soviet working people, there is democracy only for the handful of people belonging to the revisionist clique.' I do not think that there has been any significant change since then. Russia is still ruled by a technological, bureaucratic oligarchy. And I should add that I cannot honestly see any

more genuine freedom in Maoist China. In fact, the fatal decision by the Chinese to construct nuclear weapons seems to me to make the appearance of a similar technological oligarchy inevitable in that country also.

And yet in one country in very recent times there has been a very real attempt to secure both freedom and Justice together. I refer to Czechoslovakia and I consider the extraordinary months of Czech freedom from Russia under Dubcek the most important event that has happened in Europe — perhaps in the World — since the end of the War. Here we saw an attempt to create exactly that climate of which Camus spoke, one in which was possible a reconciliation of Justice and Freedom. It was defeated because the Russian government could not possibly allow it to continue. The same ideals might have spread very easily to Hungary and Poland and East Germany.

MARTYRS TO FREEDOM

But will you allow me to tell you of some martyrs to freedom whose story has never been told in the West? In the Communist half of Berlin, now cut off from the West by the Berlin Wall, is the so-called Humboldt University, one of the most famous Universities in Europe. When the Russian tanks moved into Czechoslovakia students at that University demonstrated. Some hung Czech flags from their windows; others distributed leaflets condemning the invasion. They were drastically dealt with. Several had sentences of imprisonment of as long as two years. I do not think we have heard the last of this episode in history.

'If it seemed to me necessary to defend the conciliation of freedom and Justice', we may remember Camus said, 'it is because, in my opinion, in this resided the last hope of the West. This conciliation can only be accomplished in a certain climate which today appears to me almost Utopian.'

It may well seem a discouraging prospect. But I believe that this climate is obtainable, though the process is one which is far harder to carry through than a revolution. It is by the surrender by the privileged of their privileges in order to secure a juster society. Justice — and by this you will understand I mean an equal opportunity to all men because they have equal rights — can be gained in one of two ways. It can be seized forcibly — and all history teaches us that when that happens freedom is almost certainly abandoned in the

struggle to secure and preserve it. Or it can be gained by the surrender of which I have spoken. I do not mean by this something necessarily dramatic or sudden, though sometimes, when Injustice flourishes very strongly, it may well have to be.

PATERNALISM

There is, however, one danger in this process which must be guarded against. That is the danger of being patronising in the process. It is a very real one. It may be illustrated by a very surprising statement of Christ's, recorded by St. John in his account of the Last Supper. 'And he said unto them, the Kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so.' Why not? Why not be a benefactor? The apparent paradox is of the utmost significance. The term 'benefactor' — Euergetes — had become a term of respect and then one of authority. It had done so because it had al-

ways implied patronage. May I recommend to you one of the most pregnant statements of the German philosopher, Kant? 'Nobody may compel me to be happy in his own way. Paternalism is the greatest despotism imaginable.'

Do not let us imagine that the way of the sacrifice of privileges by the privileged is easy. It is not, and that is why generally in history the only solution has appeared to be revolution — and then in that process freedom is lost.

As I said at the beginning we live in an age when the State is more powerful than ever before. The challenges to a Free Society are stronger than ever before. It has been a real privilege for me to be asked to speak on this subject to a Society which exists to meet these challenges and in a political and social atmosphere where such challenges may often seem quite overwhelmingly strong. I can assure you that there are others like myself from another country who admire the fight that you are making."

OLIVE SCHREINER'S LIBERALISM

by marie dyer



Not without honour — Hutchinson
Olive Schreiner in 1890

Olive Schreiner died in 1920, and the fiftieth anniversary of her death seems to be passing almost unnoticed in South Africa. In this country our conflicts are too permanently sharp, our political susceptibilities too permanently raw, for us to be able to give due and dispassionate recognition to controversial figures of previous generations — even, in some cases, previous centuries. Perhaps it is proper that Olive Schreiner should be remembered best as the author of "The Story of an African Farm", a work whose value and interest greatly transcend the local or contemporary. Nevertheless it seems unfortunate that her political writings should be so little attended to. "Thoughts on South Africa", the most considerable collection, remains a rare book.

Olive Schreiner says of this work in her introduction:

It is not a history: it is not a homily, it is not a political brochure — it is simply what one South African at the end of the nineteenth century thought and felt with regard to his native land: thought and felt with regard to its peoples, its problems, and its scenery — it is nothing more than this; but it is also nothing less.

It was written in 1891 and 1892; and six of its eight chapters were published as articles in Cape Town newspapers and journals from 1892 to 1900. The collection entitled "Stray Thoughts on South Africa by a returned South African" was prepared for publication with a short prefatory note, in 1896; and again with a longer introduction in 1901, but it was never actually published in her lifetime. Her husband edited it and published it under its present title in 1923.

The title and history of the book suggest a certain arbitrariness in the selection of its subject matter; and Olive Schreiner herself refers to its lack of "rotundity". It is probably as uneven in quality as any other book she wrote; but it emerges as an extraordinary document of liberalism, a liberalism achieved and defined with immense intellectual effort; wrung, as it were, from a situation in which her feelings on all sides, for all parties, were passionately involved.

SYMPATHY

She gives as justification for her attempting to treat subjects so "vital, complex and large" as, say, "The problem of slavery", "The psychology of the Boer" or "The Englishmen", the fortuitous circumstances of having been brought up in South Africa but having lived elsewhere for many years; so that to detailed and personal knowledge of South African conditions is added the advantage on returning of detachment and a fresh view. However, the capacity for true detachment, for making cool appraisals from a distance, was one that Olive Schreiner did not by nature possess. The kind of impartiality she achieves is the result of her entering with imaginative sympathy into the feelings and attitudes of protagonists on both sides, as is shown for instance (in her historical survey of the experiences of the Boers), where she refuses to apportion real moral culpability either to the Boers or the Bushman.

Those were the days of hard living and hard fighting. The white man depended mainly on his gun for food. And when the little Bushmen looked out from behind his rocks, he saw his game —

all he had to live on — being killed, and the fountain which he or his fathers had found or made, and had used for ages, being appropriated by the white men. The plains were not wide enough for both, and the new-come children of the desert fought with the old. We have all sat listening in our childhood to the story of the fighting in those old days. How sometimes the Boer coming suddenly on a group of Bushmen round their fire at night, fired and killed all he could. If in the fight a baby were dropped and left behind, he said "Shoot that too, if it lives it will be a Bushman or bear Bushmen". On the other hand, when the little Bushman had his chance and found the Boer's wagon unprotected, the Boer sometimes saw a light across the plain, which was his blazing property; and when he came back would find the wagon cinders, and only the charred remains of his murdered wife and children. It was a bitter merciless fight, the little poisoned arrow shot from behind the rocks, as opposed to the great flint-lock gun. The victory was inevitably with the flint-lock, but there may have been times when it almost seemed to lie with the arrow; it was a merciless primitive fight, but it seems to have been, on the whole, compared to many modern battles, fair and even, and in the end the little Bushmen vanished.

These are not the accents of dispassionate-ness, and if her comments do more credit to Olive Schreiner's generous tolerance than do her historical acuteness or ethical subtlety, this is because a large part of **Thoughts on South Africa** is consciously conceived as a kind of defence of the Boers. She was concerned that the imperialists and financiers whom she saw (in 1891) as self-seeking enemies of Boer independence should not influence and distort English people's understand- ing of Boer rights and Boer virtues. And she embarks gallantly on justifications of Boers as slave-owners, trekkers, farmers and repub- licans.

ARROGANT IMPERIALISM

Her appeal is constantly "if we had been they, we would have done the same" or "com- pared to other people in similar situations, they behaved well". On slavery she writes:

It certainly cannot be said of the African Boer that he continued to maintain this institution when he had reached a higher stage of develop- ment than that at which other European nations have forsaken it.

Referring to stories of cruelty to slaves, her comment is:

There is nothing new in these stories; they are as old as the times of the Romans and Chaldeans, and older than the ruin of Nineveh which they preceded To pretend we have never heard them before is hypocrisy; to be surprised at them is folly; to imply that they are peculiar to South Africa and the outcome of the abnormal structure of the Boer soul is a lie.

Again

The causes and evils of slavery are not to be studied in South Africa or America, but among the shadows within our own hearts. And this much-talked-of slavery in South Africa was but what you and I, and the man over the way, would have made it had we lived in South Africa two hundred years ago.

Her accounts of the Slagter's Nek rebellion and the Great Trek itself are written with passionate sympathy and identification with the Boers; passionate indignation against the British authorities. The trekkers emerge as proud, noble and courageous, seeking only to escape from contempt and oppression, to achieve freedom and independence, but pursued relentlessly by the unjust and arrogant imperialism and profit-seeking of Britain.

She takes a different and much more interesting approach when she comes to deal with the life and habits of the trekkers once they had settled on their lands — habits which, if the farms were remote, had not altered for several generations.

In an implicit answer to the charges that the Boers are uncivilized, primitive, ignorant, and boorish, she gives, in vivid detail reminiscent of some of the best parts of **The Story of an African Farm**, an account of a day spent on a farm by an imaginary traveller: a stranger seeking food and shelter. As he arrives

... a couple of great Boer bulldogs lie in the shade of the wagonhouse, and, rising up slowly approach with heads down and eyes half closed. The household are taking their midday siesta, and the green wooden shutters and door are closed. But as one dismounts, from behind the brick oven at the back one sees a little white and sandy head appear, and a little shoeless or vel-schoened urchin, who has escaped from the embargo of the midday siesta to play secretly in the sun, rushes into the house by the back-door and raises the cry of "Mense!"

And the careful description of his day is expanded with similarly detailed and gravely sympathetic accounts of other customs like a young man's courting procedures and the ceremony of "opsit".

"TU QUOQUE"

When she comes to consider the Boers of the two republics, whose rights are her main concern in this part of the book, she descends again into tendentiousness. She deals directly, and with varying degrees of conviction, with accusations that the Boers are cowardly, conservative, priest-ridden, bigoted, and superstitious. She comes at last to the charge which the modern liberal reader has been eagerly

awaiting:

Finally, it has been said of the African Boer that he does not regard the African native as his brother, nor treat him with that consideration with which man should treat his brother man.

Here again she relies on the defence that the Boers' attitudes and behaviour are human, understandable, universal:

Social instinct has never in the past, and does not today, except in a few and exceptional instances, spontaneously cross the colour line If, when the statement is made that the South African Boer has not treated the South African native as it is desirable man should treat man, it be meant to imply that in his treatment of the dark races his conduct has been at one with that of all the other European races, and that he has not entered on that loftier and more socialized course of action toward subject and dark races, to which it is our hope that the humanity of the future will attain, then the statement is wholly and unmitigatedly true. But if, on the other hand, it be intended by this assertion to imply that the South African Boer, in his treatment of the dark races with which he has been thrown into contact, has been less governed by just and humane instincts than men of other races under like conditions, that the English slave trader and speculator, the Portuguese adventurer, the Spanish conqueror, the Jamiaca planter have treated the African native better, then the statement is wholly and unmitigatedly false.

Particularly in addressing an English audience her case rests on a "tu quoque", citing the English slave trade, the ideas of racial vengeance in the current patriotic cry "Avenge Amajuba", the contemptuous and arrogant prejudices of many British colonists, and a comparison of conditions in the different areas of South Africa, in which she argues that although the natives in the Cape Colony are better off than those in the Boer republics, the position of the Asiatics in British Natal is "as intolerable as it well can be", and it is in the "purely British Possessions of Matabeleland and Mashonaland that the condition of the native is worst".

FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES

It is easy to attack the logic of Olive Schreiner's apologetics, and to point to irrelevancies, evasions and special pleadings. However, her main intention seems not to be to pursue conviction by rational argument, but to force her English readers to confront the Boers, their proposed opponents, as people — human, understandable, forgivable; not faceless aliens. She writes from within an avowed committal, emotional as well as intellectual, to a pro-Boer anti-war cause, and given her view of the historical and political situation, this committal can only be described as liberal.

However, the value to liberals of the book is not simply or mainly historical. In its final chapters Olive Schreiner reaches beyond the contemporary situation and reveals an extraordinary — perhaps unique — ability to discern the most fundamental issues and to pronounce upon them with a justness unclouded by her passionate partisanship. Although so greatly — even bitterly — preoccupied with the wrongs being suffered by the Boers and the injustices contemplated by the British, she realises that the relationship between Boer and Briton, however it is to be compounded, is of minor importance in comparison with the relationship between White and Black. She writes:

For the moment, the incomparably more important question, involving, as it does, the world's greatest problem of how the primitive and aboriginal peoples are to be wrought into our social system, is almost obscured by the smaller and comparatively simple problem of the union of the two European folks of the country.

She discerns, too that the best hope that this relationship will be a humane and sensible one rests not upon the noble and suffering Boers but upon the representatives of rapacious and perfidious Albion. Looking, in 1891, far beyond the immediate conflicts, she foresees a time in which Boer and Briton must come together and make compromises in some sort of amity to establish a policy; and even then — alas! to little purpose — she makes attempts to forestall the most likely and the most dangerous British concessions:

The native tribes have trusted us, have given themselves up to us; we pass them over to the Boer for the sake of union. And so we barter point after point on a matter infinitely more important to the destiny of the country, for the sake of settling the difficulties of the hour. We barter our birthright of free, open speech and the frank defence of the lines which we rightly or wrongly believe to be those of justice and mercy at the shrine of a political chimera.

It is not by watering down our civilization and robbing it of its most developed attributes, it is not by sinking to (the Boer's) level in the matters in which he is behind us, that we shall draw him into a great and ennobling union, or that we shall one day win his trust and confidence.

The just and sensible Englishmen on whom she believes that these responsibilities lie, are of course very different from either the unscrupulous English imperialists and the plundering English financiers. Among them are those whose attitudes, in her judgement, embody the most important value which the English people have to offer the world:

We love freedom not only for ourselves, but we desire with a burning passion to spread it broad-

cast over the earth; to see every human being safeguarded by it and raised to the level at which they may enjoy it; we desire freedom not only for ourselves but for humanity; and we labour to spread it. This I hold is the one great gift which England and England alone possesses; this is the quality which makes us unique among the nations of the earth; this is the gift which we have to contribute to the great common offertory of humanity.

And as herself a dedicated protagonist of these ideals, she gives uncompromising account of how they are to be pursued in South Africa:

We are not unaware of the difficulties and complexities of our position in this country, but in all matters, small and large, we know our course. We are asked sometimes, "Well, but what do you intend this country to be, a black man's country or a white?" We reply we intend nothing. If the black man cannot labour and bear the strain and stress of complex civilized life, he will pass away. We need not degrade and injure ourselves by killing him; if we cannot work here, then in time, wholly or in part, the white man will pass away; and the one best fitted to the land will likely survive; but this we are determined to do: we will make it a free man's country. Whether the ultimate race of this country be black, white or brown, we intend it to be a race permeated with the English doctrine of the equal right of each human to himself, and the duty of all to defend the freedom of it If it be asked whether we are negrophiles, we reply: "No, we are trying to be but we are not yet. The white man in us yet loves the white as the black loves the black. It would be a lie to say that we love the black man, if by that is meant that we love him as we love the white. But we are resolved to deal with justice and mercy towards him. We will treat him as if we loved him; and in time the love may come."

JUSTICE AND HUMANITY

In her own intensely subjective way, Olive Schreiner reached a kind of detached integrity that present day liberals, espousing the causes of oppressed groups, often find difficult to achieve. While painfully aware of the wrongs, the injustices, the oppressions the Boers had suffered, while fully committed on their behalf in the current conflicts, while determined that their ideas and attitudes should not be judged and condemned but be intelligently and sympathetically understood, she was nevertheless able herself, in a further analysis, not only to evaluate and reject these ideas and attitudes but to recommend publicly that they be utterly discarded. Her devotion was ultimately to ideals and standards, not nations or groups, and the insight this steady devotion enabled her to achieve is revealed in this conclusion,

written in 1910 (in a pamphlet called **Closer Union***), but no less strikingly apposite today:

If by entering on a long and difficult course of strictly just and humane treatment, as between man and man, we can bind our dark races to us through their sense of justice and gratitude; if we as a dominant class, realise that the true wealth of a nation is the health, happiness, intelligence and content of every man and woman born within its borders; if we do not fail to realise that the true crown of honour on the head of a dominant class is that it leads and teaches, not uses and crushes; if, as the years pass, we can point with pride to our native peoples as the most enlightened and the most free, the most devoted to its native land of all African races; if our labouring class can in the end be made to compare favourably with that of all other countries; and if for the men of genius or capacity who are born among them there be left open a free path, to take their share in the higher duties of life and citizenship, their talents expended for the welfare of the community and not suppressed to become its subterraneous and disruptive forces;

* Reprinted 1960 by the Constitutional Reform Society.

if we can make our state as dear to them, as the matrix in which they find shelter for healthy life and development, as it to us; then I think that the future of South Africa promises greatness and strength.

But if we fail in this? — if, blinded by the gain of the moment we see nothing in our dark man but a vast engine of labour; if to us he is not man, but only a tool; if dispossessed entirely of the land for which he now shows that large aptitude for peasant proprietorship for the lack of which among their masses many great notions are decaying; if we force him permanently in his millions into the locations and compounds and slums of our cities, obtaining his labour cheaper, but to lose what the wealth of five Witwatersrands could not return to us; if, uninstructed in the highest forms of labour, without the rights of citizenship, his own social organisation broken up, without our having aided him to participate in our own; if, unbound to us by gratitude and sympathy, and alien to us in blood and colour, we reduce this vast mass to the condition of a great seething ignorant proletariat — then I would rather draw a veil over the future of this land.

HUMAN MODELS AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

by rick turner

Contemporary radical thought attacks capitalism on the grounds that it leads to an unequal distribution of goods. But it also argues that capitalism imposes certain limitations on the human personality, and falsifies relations between individuals in capitalist society.

An economic system allocates resources in a particular way. An economic system is also a set of relations between individuals, relations of control and subordination, of co-operation and conflict. These relations find expression in certain norms of interpersonal behaviour, and underlying these norms, in certain norms of human fulfilment.

When we come to judge these relations in terms of ethical criteria, we have to decide to what extent they are natural features, and hence, of course, beyond the scope of ethical judgement, or to what extent people could act in different ways, and so could be judged for acting in the way that they do. I want to stress this point, because very often people accept as being part of nature reactions and drives which are merely the result of the socialisation process characteristic of a particular society. Even if we take something as basic

as the sexual drive, we see that although it is present in nearly all individuals, nevertheless the way in which individuals experience their sexuality, differs from society to society, as do accepted pattern of sexual behaviour.

POTENTIALITIES

That is, an individual has a wide set of potentialities, and the socialising process selects certain of these potentialities and changes them into norms. The reason why particular potentialities are selected over others must be found in the need for stability of that particular society. Of course the process of socialisation may be incomplete and may therefore not in fact guarantee the stability of the society but the point is that the dominant cultural

patterns of the society are of this nature. (Otherwise it would be a different society). In "Eros and Civilisation" Marcuse uses the distinction between "repression" and "surplus repression" to analyse this. Using his own version of Freudian psychology, he accepts that social living requires a certain amount of repression of libidinal drives, since both the material situation and the necessity of working in collaboration with other people makes some abnegation inevitable. In order to prevent frustration and conflict every time this occurs, it is desirable that the socialisation process should impose a certain amount of repression. The less gratification possible in a given social situation, the more repression is necessary.

Marcuse argues that in any given social situation one can distinguish between the optimum distribution of possibilities of gratification available with the best utilisation of the social and productive forces, and the actual distribution, which is a function of the way in which the society actually uses its resources, which is in turn a function of social organisation, and in particular of class structure. That is, in order to produce people who will accept the type of life which the society can offer them, it may be necessary to impose upon them a highly limiting set of "needs".

This argument can be reformulated by saying that in any particular society a certain 'human model' is imposed on individuals. That is, they are taught to find fulfillment in certain ways. To judge a particular society we need to see what human model is required for its continuing functioning and then compare this model with an ideal model to see what human potentialities are being suppressed. I would suggest as criterion an ideal human model in which fulfillment is found in freedom and in love. Freedom means self-determination - that is, means using one's power of reason to the full in order to understand oneself and one's world, and in order to act in terms of one's understanding. An individual remains unfree if he acts in terms of unquestioned acquired norms.

COMMUNITY

The principle of love implies that a certain type of relation with other people is a way of achieving fulfillment. That is, community with other people is a good in itself, not a way of

obtaining other goods. (The famous argument between Thrasymachus and Socrates in the **Republic** hinges on this. Socrates believes that community (or love) is a good in itself — hence that it is better to be just than unjust, better to suffer injustice than to do it. Thrasymachus believes that the goal of human existence is material consumption, and that therefore other people should be used to help one become rich.) Love and freedom are interdependent. On the one hand to love someone means to be open to them, to explore them, and this cannot occur if one reacts to the other in terms of a set of socially imposed norms. On the other hand the development of reason and consciousness which underlies freedom can only occur in interaction with other people, in community. Let us now look at the human model underlying a capitalist economy. What behaviour patterns, hence what norms of human fulfillment, are involved? The first important motive is the profit motive. The primary objective of the business man is to accumulate profit, and any other purpose he may have is secondary. In one sense, of course, this is inevitable, since if a business doesn't make profits, it cannot continue. But to say that the profit motive is dominant means more than this. It means that the objective is to control an expanded business and to acquire more consumer goods. In this situation the relationship to other people becomes instrumental. This is the second important feature. Other people are to be used as a means to satisfy one's own ends. They may be used more or less skilfully, but 'industrial psychology' doesn't change the basic relation of instrumentality. The worker has no real say in his work situation, where he is subject to the final authority of the employer. He has no say in what shall be produced, in how it shall be produced, in what will happen to the profits. That is, he merely takes orders, and so is dehumanised and alienated.

CONSUMPTION

The drive for profit is not a 'natural' drive. In many societies it plays no important role. Even in our society it is necessary to distinguish between the profit drive of the businessman and other people's search for a higher standard of living. The latter is connected primarily with consumption, while in the former case the individual is aiming not at consuming but at possessing. The desire to consume seems to be much more reasonable than

the desire to possess. However the third feature of our human model seems to be a perversion even of the desire to consume. That is, there is a tendency to see consumption of material goods as the main area of human fulfilment. Advertisements not only encourage the consumption of a particular good. Each advert also carries the message that it is through consumption that one achieves happiness. We have an economy that is good at producing individual consumer goods. However, because of the profit motive there is a continued drive for expansion. This means that markets must be found, so that people must be trained to consume the sort of things which the economy needs them to consume. People must be moulded to the needs of the economy, instead of the economy being designed to satisfy real human needs.

To summarise, the human model underlying the capitalist economy sees human fulfillment as lying in possessing or consuming material goods, and sees other humans essentially as means to this end. This denies the principle of love. It makes the sphere of work into an area where one is not expected to fulfill oneself, and the consumption norms which it imposes make men unfree by subjecting them to unexamined and non-natural norms.

EFFICIENCY

One's criteria of economic efficiency depend on one's human model. In our economy the ultimate criterion of efficiency is the difference between production cost and price expressed in material terms. However, if one assumed that one of the objectives of an indus-

try was to produce workers' satisfaction, then a factory which merely produced a money profit might be judged highly inefficient.

I do not wish to suggest that material goods are not important. A certain material basis is necessary for the expression of love and freedom. Leisure and freedom are in many ways linked, and leisure assumes a certain distance from nature which can only be ensured by a satisfactory technology. But on the one hand priority must be given to the satisfaction of collective needs, and on the other hand people must be left free to decide, without advertising and social pressure, what consumer goods they want.

Radical groups of all kinds — student groups, women's liberation groups, black power groups — are criticising western society along these lines. Black power groups, in particular, are attacking "white civilisation" not because it is white, but because it is inadequate in human terms. White exploitation of blacks is merely a more dramatic expression of white willingness to exploit other whites. That is, if, in 'western civilisation', it were not normal to treat other people as means rather than as ends, the whole vicious circle of imperialism producing race discrimination and inequality producing more inequality would never have begun.

For whites the importance of this is that what they do to blacks they do also, in more mundane ways, to one another. If we look away from the consumption-oriented business model to a model based on love and freedom, we can see the extent to which whites damage themselves in damaging others.

Mr. Terence Beard is a senior lecturer in political studies at Rhodes University.

Mrs. Fatima Meer is a lecturer in sociology

and social work at Natal University, Durban. **Dr. Rick Turner** is a lecturer in history and political science at Natal University, Durban.

Articles printed in Reality are available for republication provided that due acknowledgement is made and a copy of the republished article is sent to the address below.

EDITORIAL BOARD:

Chairman: Mr. A. Paton.

Board: Prof. E. H. Brookes, Mrs. M. Corrigall, Mr. A. R. Crewe, Mrs. M. Dyer, Mr. C. Gardiner, Miss S. J. Lundie, Mr. L. Marquard, Mr. J. F. C. Mitchell, Mr. J. Unterhalter.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: R1.00 (12/-) for 6 issues.

Send to:—

Miss S. J. Lundie,

Flat 2, Temple Chambers,
Carlyle Arcade,
Pietermaritzburg,
South Africa.