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EDITORIAL

IS THE U.P. FOR REAL?

This editorial is written over my name, because the board of REALITY wants to write about the U.P., and because the U.P. is one of the issues about which we do not have a clear and common mind. This is not because there is something wrong with our mind. It is because for 25 years no one has really known what the U.P. was.

There are very few South Africans who do not believe that political change is inevitable, but there are differing views as to what the agent of change will be. Let us consider only three of them. The **first** is that the agent of change will be black power, assisted almost certainly by external power. The **second** is that the agents of power will be black power and white power in some kind of interaction, which will presumably be a complex of conflict, compromise, and co-operation. The **third** is that the agent of change will continue to be the white man, acting through his white parliament, ruling in "white" South Africa where he will constitute only one-third of the population, and having within his borders a Coloured Parliament and an Asian Parliament, not to mention 6 000 000 black permanent "temporary sojourners," all this surrounded by independent homeland states, who will

be free, according to Mr Vorster, to make treaties with Russia, China, and any other country they fancy.

No one with any intelligence entertains the **third** hope any longer, except perhaps the Hertzogites. But I fear that some Nationalists would resort to outright white domination in a time of extreme crisis. I take it that the U.P. is beginning to understand that such an extreme crisis must never arise. That is how I interpret the latest congress.

It is impossible for me to entertain the **first** hope. Black power is a fact of my life, but I have no wish to be ruled by it, no more than I have approved of being ruled by white power for the whole of my life. I feel no compulsion to yield to black power in order to make reparation for the sins of my forefathers. Therefore it is the **second** hope which I entertain.

I should make it quite clear that the vision of black and white interaction, characterised by conflict, compromise, and co-operation, is a hope, not a prediction. But obviously the U.P. cannot go round the country peddling hope.

It has to sell policies and programmes. And the policy — so far as I can judge — is to work **under white leadership** towards some kind of federation, and this federation will have a parliament whose powers will be allotted to it by the sovereign white parliament. Finally the day will come when the white parliament hands over its sovereignty to the federal parliament. REALITY in January 1973 wrote that "it takes a lot of believing."

REALITY also wrote in January 1973 that for this to happen, three other things must happen first.

One White fear must to a large extent have disappeared.

Two The gross disparity between white wealth and other wealth must to a large extent have disappeared.

Three racial discrimination must to a large extent have disappeared.

And all this must have happened while an all-white parliament was in control. It certainly does take a lot of believing.

It is clear to the outside observer that Sir de Villiers Graaff was determined to preserve the unity of the United Party. It is my belief that for this purpose he received generous help from his left and middle, and help, how generous one does not know, from his right. After the Congress the compliments, especially to the Leader, were flowing like milk and honey. It was not the Old Guard who had won, nor the Young Turks. It was the Leader, whom the SUNDAY TIMES had been urging to retire. It was just as well for the Party that he did not, for the U.P. would have fallen to pieces.

Who really **did** win? For those of us who are observers, the answer is plain — WAIT AND SEE. Wait and see what happens in the next General Election. Wait for the speeches, in Parktown, Rosebank, Caledon, Zululand. Wait for the speakers, Cadman, Streicher, Japie Basson, Schwartz.

One thing seems certain, that the slogan **White Leadership with Justice** has had its tail chopped off. And just as well too. The animal itself is a freak, but with the tail it was grotesque. The animal is not only a freak, it is a miraculous freak, for it has announced that it is going to work for its own death. I don't sneer at this because if one entertains the **second** hope, it is the only way it can be done.

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For fifteen years I was a member, and a loyal one, of the Liberal Party of South Africa, which was outlawed by the Nationalist Party in 1968. The goal of the Party was a unitary common society with a universal suffrage. Whatever the final goal may be, I no longer believe that this can be an immediate goal. I have been compelled to conclude that if a common society is to be achieved, it will be achieved by federal means of one kind or another.

I have been forced to this conclusion by several considerations. The first is that I now believe the policy of granting self-government to the homelands to be irreversible. I

could give a dozen reasons for doubting the practicability and the honesty of such proposals, but I can no longer doubt their irreversibility; and I accept them for their irreversibility, not for their moral or pragmatic beauty. My second reason is that I believe that white power — which is one of the agents of change in the **second** hope — will never accept a unitary common society as an immediate goal. My third reason is that I cannot work for a **political** ideal that I believe to be unrealisable. I can hold a **moral** ideal that I believe to be unrealisable, because I believe that the holding of it is a powerful incentive to do and be better. But I think that working for a political ideal that you believe to be unrealisable causes deep frustration, and in some of our young people a bitterness that is corroding them.

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The charge has of course been levelled at me that I have become a stooge, a sell-out, a peace-loving dotard. The devastating charge has been made that the Government should not send expensive ambassadors to America when they can let me go for nothing. And what is more, I can deceive the Americans far better than the ambassadors! Alas, I do not recognise this terrible deterioration in myself. I see it my task — a big task at low pay — to tell white South Africa the facts of life. It is a task I see for all liberals and for REALITY. I have nothing but contempt for the current fad of sneering at liberalism. The day I apologise for liberalism, the moral deterioration will really have set in.

But it is not only a task for liberals. It is the task of the U.P., if it has any role at all. If it does not perform this task at the next election, it will be finished as a political force. It has to be as forthright in Potchefstroom as in Parktown. It has to tell the white electorate the following facts of life:

- 1) The day of unilateral white political decisions in South Africa is over.
- 2) The co-existence of 9 or 10 separate, autonomous, independent states in South Africa is a myth. In other words the "commonwealth" is a myth.
- 3) Nevertheless the progress of the homelands to self-government is irreversible.
- 4) Therefore "white" South Africa must negotiate, consult, co-operate with the homelands, in an endeavour to decide what kind of inter-relationship there is to be.
- 5) "White" South Africa must face the fact that negotiation, consultation, and co-operation, will become progressively more difficult so long as the institutions of Apartheid are maintained.
- 6) Therefore "White" South Africa must **begin** the dismantling of Apartheid.
- 7) "White" South Africa must face the most difficult fact of all — that she will be the homeland of 4 million whites, 2 million Coloureds, ¼ million Asians and 6 million Africans.
- 8) She must then begin to plan the political constitution of the homeland of which she is a part.

These 8 facts of life must be presented by the U.P. to the white electorate. But it has to present a **ninth** fact of its own. It has decided to work towards a federal constitution and a federal parliament, the powers of which will be allotted to it by the white parliament of "white" South Africa. That in the first place is going to require an amount of co-operation from the other homeland governments of an almost unbelievable kind.

But suppose it is achieved. Then the white parliament must begin to allot yet more powers to the federal parliament, until eventually the transfer of power is complete. The U.P. will go down in history as one of the most extraordinary parties in the history of parliamentary government.

BUT – BUT – BUT –
The white fear!
The gross disparity!
The machinery of apartheid!

One cannot frontally assault the first, but the white parliament that is going to phase itself out must **first** phase out the gross disparity and start dismantling the machinery.

I am convinced that the gross disparity in financial status is one of the deepest causes of white fear and black resentment. The dismantling of apartheid would certainly decrease black resentment. But will it lessen white fear or increase it?

That is a big question. But the important thing is **to be doing, and to be seen to be doing**, something about it.

I wish to make one last point, I believe it is possible to cherish an ideal goal, and to be willing at the same time to pursue it by methods not so ideal, that is by methods one would not have used had one been able to use others. I realise that this causes tensions between young and old, between black and white, between the militants and the dogged sticklers, between the radicals and the liberals, between the all-or-nothings and the all-or-somethings. In fact an all-or-nothing finds it difficult – logically and psychologically – to understand an all-or-something. There is a kind of presumption that an all-or-something has already announced his intentions of settling for a very small something. And there is a kind of nobility accredited to those who take nothing, and a kind of ignobility to those who take something.

If I had a leaning when I was younger, it was to the noble side. I remember Donald Molteno saying to me at a Liberal Party meeting, in that devastating way of his, "the trouble with you, Paton, is that you think the Liberal Party is a church."

But now I'm out to get **something**. I'm out to make white South Africa do **something** (sensible, I mean). I'm out to make everyone who can, do **something**. Therefore I am out to make the U.P. do **something**.

All that I can say to them is, do it quickly. Otherwise violence and death will be the destiny of many of us, both black and white, many of us yet not born.□

Alan Paton

FEDERATION

by Leo Marquard

I should like to congratulate and thank those responsible for calling this conference. If anything is to become of the much-talked about federation it is at such conferences as this that ideas will have to be sorted out before they are presented to the public – that is, to 14 or 15 million adult South Africans.

The word 'federation' is very much in the air these days, and I mean that in both senses: it is being talked about a good deal in rather limited circles, and the talk is often divorced from reality. This is the result, I think, of the rather loose conceptions of federation that are current. I have an uncomfortable feeling that it has become fashionable to throw off remarks at cocktail parties that, of course, what we really need is federation. more often than not with the

(Paper read at the Conference on Federation, held near East London on the 9th November 1973.)

corollary that this will fix the Nationalists or possibly even the United Party. It is rather like a doctor saying to a banned person whose passport has been taken from him: 'What you really need is to get away from South Africa for a long holiday. Why not go to the Riviera?'. Alternatively, of course, you can establish yourself as an up-to-date authority by saying, possibly even at the same cocktail party: 'Of course it's quite absurd. Federation has never worked anywhere else and it certainly won't work here.'

The reason why the feeling I have about this superficial attitude is uncomfortable is that, as you all know, federation is not going to come about merely as the result of a change of government or of a slight shift in white political power or of sloans. There is nothin' 'mere' about what is required