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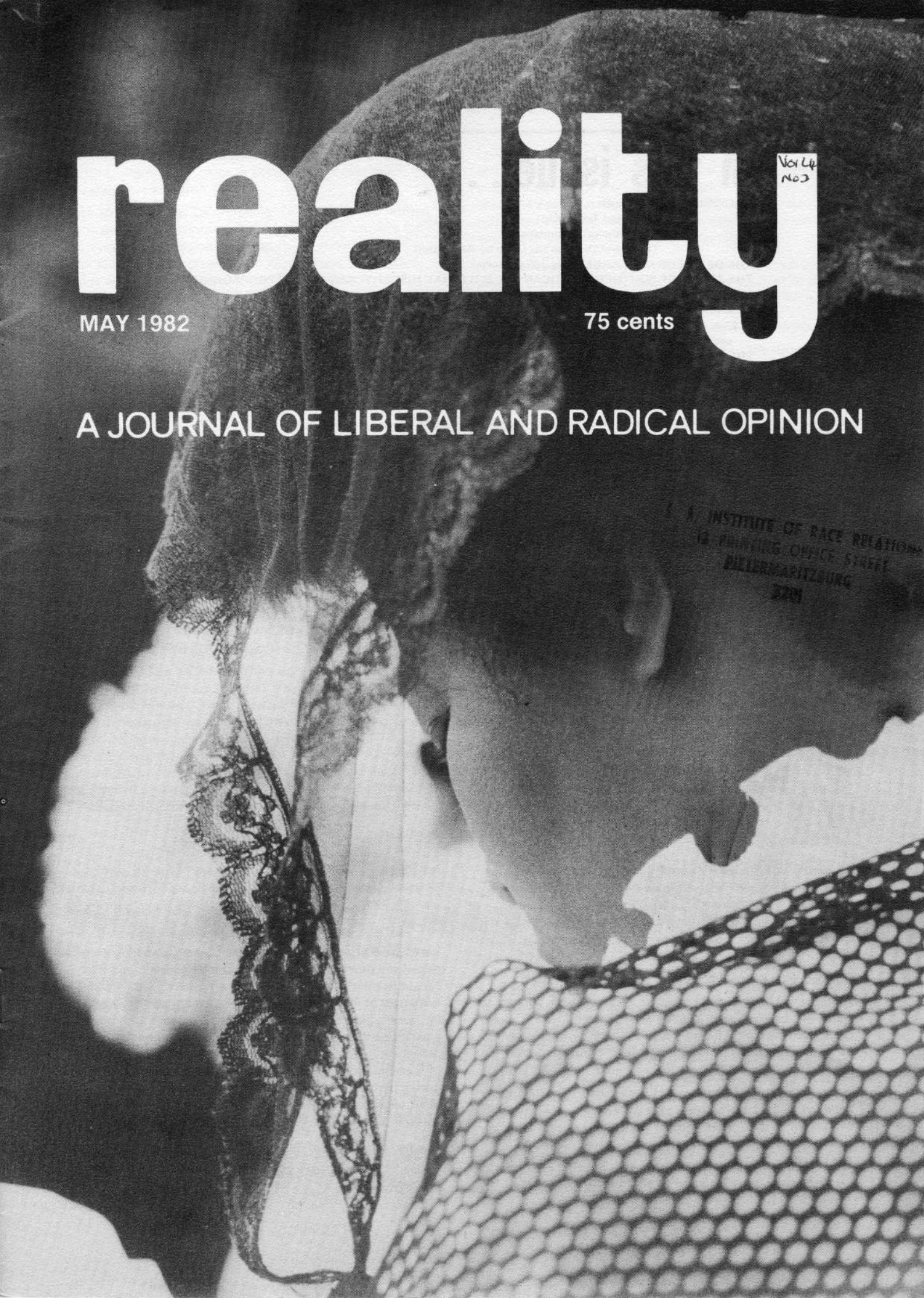

in this issue . . .

COVER PHOTOGRAPH of a mourner at the funeral of Selby Msimang, by Joe Alfers.

EDITORIALS

1. NEIL AGGETT

We would not like anyone to think that, because there was no comment on Dr. Neil Aggett's death in the last issue of REALITY, we have no thoughts on the matter. We have plenty. The only reason they were not expressed then was that that issue was already with the printers when Dr. Aggett died.

Our thoughts are roughly these.

Along with Mrs. Helen Suzman we think that Dr. Aggett was killed by the Terrorism Act and its provisions for solitary confinement under interrogation, and that whether those provisions led to his death through miscalculation, as in the case of Steve Biko, or to his suicide, hardly matters.

We think that the Terrorism Act is designed to reduce those detained under its provisions to a state where most of them will say what their interrogators want them to say. If their personalities disintegrate in the process, bad luck.

We think that the occasional death of a person held under the Terrorism Act is a source of embarrassment to the interrogators, not much more than that. After all, not one of these deaths has yet led to anyone being convicted of any crime, and there are small grounds for hope that one ever will.

We think that there are some interrogators who may even regard the deaths in detention of some detainees as a useful aid in their efforts to break down others. After the disturbances at Ngoye in 1976 a witness testified that after his arrest a policeman told him that he was going to meet a police captain "who had already killed ten people in detention". And, at the inquest into the death in detention of Mapetla Mohapi, Miss Thenjiwe Mtintso testified that, during her own detention, she had been warned by a security policeman that, if she continued to lie, she would go "the same way as Mohapi".

Finally, we think the time has long passed when our courts should refuse to accept any evidence given by anyone who has been held under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act. □

2. BOTHA AND TREURNICHT

Does the Botha/Treurnicht split hold out the hope for important, negotiated change in South Africa? Not much, at this stage, we wouldn't think.

Both Mr. Botha and Dr. Treurnicht claim to be the authentic guardians of Nationalist Party policy. The support for Dr. Treurnicht's version of this policy is already very considerable, probably greater than most people anticipated, and it will almost certainly grow. The question is, how much?

In these early days of the break, political commentators who would like to see negotiated change are hoping that this right-wing pressure will force Mr. Botha to look for friends elsewhere, even to the Progressive Party. We don't know whether Mr. Botha is psychologically capable of such a move, or whether what he regards as progress would appeal to even the most conservative Progressive . . . . . and pressure from the Right could just as easily draw him in that direction as push him in the other. However, that change is coming in South Africa there can be no doubt. It will either come by negotiation accompanied by a certain amount of violence, or after a catastrophe.

If it is to happen by negotiation, the moment at which the process started will only become clear in the light of history. We aren't very hopeful, but this break might just be it.

There are, however, two important points to remember.

We haven't got another 100 years to get to the negotiating table. And as long as those who control white power insist that they will only negotiate on the basis of Nationalist principles, we will never get there at all. □

3. THE BUTHELEZI COMMISSION

In our next issue we hope to carry a detailed assessment of the report of the Buthelezi Commission, by Professor David Welsh of the University of Cape Town.

For the moment, all we want to say is that we regard the Report as a most important and responsible document. Although it is concerned only with Natal and Kwa-Zulu it suggests a possible starting point for a shared future for all South Africans. From that starting-point, as confidence in one another grew, we could begin to build together the non-racial future which most of us want. The report has won widespread support in Natal. It has only been rejected by the Nationalist Party, which says it is in conflict with the basic principles of apartheid, by the New Republic Party, which says its policy provides the answer to everything, and by the Natal Indian Congress, which says it is committed to the Freedom Charter.

We hope these are not firm positions from which these three bodies have no intention of ever moving. After all, negotiated change can only come from negotiation . . . . . and at the end of it all everyone, no doubt, ends up with something less than they would like to have, but reasonably satisfied with what they have got.

To reach that happy point one has to start somewhere, and the Buthelezi Report could be the place to do it. □

THE GRAND OLD MAN HAS GONE

by Alan Paton

The Grand Old Man of Edendale, the ANC, and the Liberal Party has gone. H. Selby Msimang, once the National Deputy Chairman of the Party, died at Edendale on Monday the 29th March 1982, at the age of 95.

When one heard of his death, one's dominant emotion was not so much sorrow at his death, as gratitude and admiration for his life.

One was glad that he was able to see in REALITY of March 1982, that magnificent cover photograph of himself, and to read the warm tribute that was paid to him by Peter Brown. He was much loved by members of the old Party.

He can be remembered for many things, but one of the greatest was that in these days of racial alienation, and of Black bitterness and frustration, he still continued to exemplify in his life the enduring principles of liberalism: a belief in human liberty, in social justice, and the rule of law; and the wide tolerance for the otherness of people whose origin was very different from his own.

Anger he could feel, hatred never. He was what one might call a noble man. □

THE DEATH OF NEIL AGGETT

by Julian Riekert

Q. If a detainee, this man or any other, on being interrogated after he has been detained, says "I am not under any circumstances prepared to give you any information whatsoever" do you leave him alone or do you take further steps?

A. Well, he's got to be asked again.

Q. And again?

A. Yes.

Q. And again?

A. Yes.

Q. And again?

A. Yes.

Q. And again?

A. Yes.

Q. I see. The idea being to wear him down I suppose?

A. I make no comment.

Q. Well, what is the idea, you give me your comment?

A. Well, he is there to give information that's why he is detained.

Q. But he's already told you two or three times he won't talk?

A. Then he'll eventually let go . . . .

Q. Well then supposing you had a case of a suspect who was detained because you, the police, genuinely believed that he could give certain information, and if in fact your belief was wrong and this man couldn't give you information, would you keep on questioning him over and over again?

A. I would question him, yes.

Q. You would, over and over again?

A. Yes.

Q. That would be a dreadful thing to happen to a man wouldn't it, if in fact you were wrong?

A. Yes.

Q. It would be. And all that that man would be able to see as far as his future is concerned would be an endless vista of imprisonment coupled with repeated questioning?

A. Yes.

(Extract from inquest proceedings into the death of detainee L S Ngudle, who died in detention in 1963).

.....

. . . any commissioned officer . . . of or above the rank of Lieutenant–Colonel may, if he has reason to believe that any person . . . is a terrorist or is withholding from the South African Police any information relating to terrorists . . . arrest such person or cause him to be arrested, without warrant and detain or cause to be detained for interrogation at such place in the Republic and subject to such conditions as the Commissioner may . . . determine, until the Commissioner orders his release when satisfied that he has satisfactorily replied to all questions at the said interrogation or that no useful purpose will be served by his further detention . . .

(Section 6 (1) of the Terrorism Act 83 of 1967)

.....

Neil Aggett died in the custody of the Security Police on Friday, 5 February 1982. His death is the subject of inquest proceedings and so one must be very careful not to anticipate the findings of the inquest court or to make any statement which might influence the court in coming to its decision. For most of us the findings of the inquest court are unimportant. Whether it finds that Neil Aggett's death was murder, culpabale homicide, an accident or suicide, we will lay his death at the door of our security legislation, and particularly the Terrorism Act, which makes it possible for a person to be held in solitary confinement and relentlessly questioned while at the sole whim of his interrogators. That abuses might occur under such circumstances should not surprise us, for we know, or ought to know, that such abuses are inherent in the dynamics of the solitary confinement situation. South Africa is not the first country, nor will it be the last, to legalise detention without trial and all that that entails. When the rulers of any state perceive the fabric of their society to be under threat, whether the threat be real or imagined, they are likely to respond in a similar way. This is especially so where the problem is one which is not readily amenable to the ordinary processes of law. Thus it was that the British introduced detention without trial into Northern Ireland in a desperate attempt to come to grips with the guerilla warfare of the IRA. Their experience in Northern Ireland may be instructive here.

One group of detainees was arrested on 9 August 1971 and taken to an unnamed detention centre. There they were subjected to what was described as "interrogation in depth", which included solitary confinement, prolonged wall-standing, hooding, exposure to "white noise", deprivation of sleep and poor diet. As a result of this treatment the British army came into possession of a considerable amount of intelligence information which, it alleged, resulted in the saving of many civilian lives. It was this allegation which led to the justification of such techniques, subject to certain

limitations against their excessive use, by the Parker Committee which was appointed to investigate the event. A majority of the Committee held that, subject to certain safeguards, "there is no reason to rule out these techniques on moral grounds and that it is possible to operate them in a manner consistent with the highest standards of our society".

For my part, I prefer the dessenting report of Lord Gardiner, who differed sharply with the majority view. He said that:

> "If it is to be made legal to employ methods not now legal against a man whom the police believe to have, but who may not have, information which the police desire to obtain, I . . . have searched for, but been unable to find, either in logic or in morals, any limit to the degree of ill-treatment to be legalised. The only logical limit to the degree of ill-treatment to be legalised would appear to be whatever degree of ill-treatment proves to be necessary to get the information out of him, which would include, if necessary, extreme torture. I cannot think that Parliament should, or would, so legislate".

What became of the detainees in this particular instance? According to an independent psychiatrist who examined some of them after their release, three of the men had become psychotic within twenty-four hours of the commencement of the interrogation. Their symptoms included loss of time sense, perceptual disturbance leading to hallucinations, profound apprehension and depression and delusional beliefs. Of the other cases examined by him, almost all suffered from overt psychiatric illness. Anxiety, fear, dread, insomnia, nightmares and startle response were common and almost all of the detainees suffered depression. Some had also developed peptic ulcers which have a strong psychosomatic connection. The British government later paid out sums ranging from £10 000 to £25 000 in out-of-court settlements to all the detainees.

We know too from evidence given in South African security law trials that it is not necessary to apply techniques as brutal as those used in Ulster. Mere solitary confinement can have startling effects on the human personality. In one trial in Pietermaritzburg, an American expert on brainwashing techniques and solitary confinement offered the opinion that solitary confinement in an interrogative environment could, if sufficiently prolonged, result in a detainee saying anything at all, regardless of its truth or falsity. His wish would be to terminate the interrogation and to do so he would respond to direct, or even unconscious, suggestions from his interrogator. He will tell the interrogator what he thinks the interrogator wants to hear. It may take him some time after his release to realise that he has given false information. This may be an explanation for the phenomenon of detainees repudiating their evidence given under oath in court after they have been released from custody.

This expert, Dr L J West, also told the court of an experiment conducted in the United States involving a simulated prison. All the voluntary participants were screened for physical and psychological suitability and were then divided into two groups – guards and prisoners. The mock prison, in the basement of a university building, included a solitary confinement cell. The experiment was scheduled to last for fourteen days, but was aborted after only six, because the experimenters were profoundly disturbed by the changes that had taken place in the subjects. A number of persons were released before the sixth day for the same reason.

The prisoners developed a "prison mentality" and became preoccupied with the minutiae of prison life. Although they knew that they could withdraw from the experiment at any time, they did not do so but became increasingly passive and depressed. Some even attempted to smuggle notes out of the "prison". A different change was observed in the guards. They became increasingly authoritarian and began to punish the prisoners with increasing severity by withholding "privileges" like toilet visits, and imposing solitary confinement frequently. They seemed disappointed when the experiment was prematurely ended, unlike the remaining prisoners, who were delighted.

A recent correspondent to a Natal newspaper, a retired magistrate, wrote after Neil Aggett's death:

> "My first experience of the effects on a human being of detention in solitary confinement occurred many years ago . . . . I sentenced a criminal with a very bad record to a term of imprisonment which included solitary confinement and spare diet on two days of each week for the first six weeks of the sentence. This was the usual punishment in cases of the same kind . . . . At this time it was part of my duties to visit the jail twice weekly and to allow all prisoners an opportunity of voicing any complaints or grievances they might have. During one such visit, after checking the prison records, I found that one prisoner was missing. On inquiry the jailer informed me that he was in his cell undergoing the punishment of solitary confinement which I had imposed on him. I then visited this prisoner in his cell and was shocked to see the state of physical and mental degradation to which he had been reduced after 45 hours of solitary confinement in a dark cell.
>
> I decided then and there never again to impose this form of punishment. I maintained this attitude towards solitary confinement until I retired because I know it to be a cruel and brutal form of punishment."

But do we need such evidence of the harmful effects of solitary confinement?

As a South African judge observed in a case which involved the withholding of reading matter from certain political prisoners:

> "In truth, it does not require medical evidence, one way or the other, to satisfy me that to cut off a well-educated, intelligent prisoner from all news as to what is happening in the outside world for a long period . . . is a very serious psychological and intellectual deprivation indeed".

How much more so when the withholding of sensory stimulation is virtually absolute?

Neil Aggett's death came shortly after the tabling of the report of the Rabie Commission which inquired into our security laws. That report suggests the retention of the system of detention without trial permitted by section 6 of the Terrorism Act, but suggests certain safeguards which, though they may improve the situation, will not eliminate abuses. One reads the report with what Sydney Kentridge has described as "growing astonishment, amounting in the end almost to disbelief", for it makes no attempt to answer the basic questions relating to the condition in which detainees are held. The Commission did not ask, again in Kentridge's words, "How are detainees actually interrogated?

Are they physically or mentally maltreated? Why have more than 40 people died while in detention for interrogation?" This leads Kentridge to dismiss the report as "a scholarly and elaborate irrelevance".

Sooner or later those questions must be answered by the government which now rules us. It is vitally important that we should keep asking them, if only not to allow our government to seek shelter behind a pretence of ignorance of the facts. And as we ask the questions, and look at the facts as we know them, a terrible apprehension begins to grow. We ask ourselves why it is that the Government has sometimes paid substantial sums of money in "ex gratia, out-of-court, without prejudice" payments to the dependents of detainees who have died in detention. In 1971 the widow of the Imam Haron was paid R5 000. In 1979 the widow of Mr Joseph Mdluli was paid R15 000. Also in 1979, the widow and children of Mr Steve Biko were paid R52 000. Why are these amounts paid if the Government denies responsibility for the deaths? Is it possible that in a civil court, where the facts must be proved on balance of probabilities, and not beyond a reasonable doubt as in a criminal trial, the jealously guarded secret might come out? Is it because the Government cannot bear the thought of a court of law formally proclaiming the awful truth? That the Security Police have caused, directly or indirectly, the deaths of more than forty South Africans? By means of a law sanctioned by Parliament?

Yes, the questions must be answered and we must keep on asking them. We, as South Africans, who must share the burden of guilt if these things are true, have a right to know what is being done in our name and for our alleged protection. □

THE STUDY OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN PRECOLONIAL HISTORY: "BANTUSTAN PROPAGANDA"?

By C.A. Hamilton

The student of southern African pre-colonial history is increasingly forced to examine the purpose of his or her work, to assess the function and impact of pre-colonial studies on contemporary society. This is the case particularly in the face of that sort of criticism which condemns the pre-colonial historian as a producer of 'Bantustan propaganda'. The basis of such opposition to pre-colonial history lies in an objection to the ethnic divisions which have characterized and sometimes defined pre-colonial studies. These divisions are repeated and emphasised in the text-books, in which the histories of the different language groups of southern Africa are treated separately, and cultural differences are stressed. Obviously, the continued presence and manipulation of ethnic divisions presents an immense tactical problem for anybody working for change in South Africa, and it is from such a position that these denouncements are made.

Similar criticisms are made of the emphasis, within pre-colonial history, on aspects of tribal authority such as rule by a hereditary monarch or a royal lineage, and on the ideological bases and symbols of their power (for eg, amongst the Zulu, the **ubukosi** of the kingship, and the **inkatha**, the symbol of the unity of the nation; two often cited types of identification of the people with the tribal authority). This kind of emphasis is considered to contribute substantially to the legitimation of present day tribal authorities, since it provides an historical precedent for their position. It also obscures the reality of their meaninglessness today.

It is in terms of such present day effects, that the study of pre-colonial history is rejected. "History consists," in the words of Carr, "essentially in seeing the past through the eyes of the present, in the light of its problems. "(1) In this sense all relevant history must take the present as its point of departure. Consequently for those opposed to current government ideology, pre-colonial history is rejected as having no meaning or function today, in no way enabling man "to increase his mastery over the present." (2).

Typical of this sort of criticism is that recently voiced by Jan Theron, General Secretary of the Food and Canning Workers Union, of a series of history booklets. (3).

> "The books deal with prehistory rather than history — as such they are at best not particularly informative, and at worst, as regards some aspects of tribal society, eg. the role of the chief, can prevent workers from appraising the role of tribal society today.
>
> I would have thought that the object was not to counteract the myths portrayed in school textbooks but to provide a history that is alive and relevant to workers — who are the people most likely to read them." (4)

While completely accepting the negative impact of both ethnically divided histories and emphasis on traditional authority, I do not consider that this warrants the complete rejection of pre-colonial history. In this paper, I intend to demonstrate that pre-colonial history that moves well beyond ethnic divisions has been, and continues to be, produced; and secondly, that to analyse traditional forms of authority is to examine them critically, not to exalt them. Furthermore, I will suggest a multiplicity of 'relevant' functions for pre-colonial history within a present day, specifically South African and 'anti-Bantustan' context.

To begin with, the criticisms outlined in the first two paragraphs take no cognizance of current developments in the study of the pre-colonial period. Recent theses by Marxist historians focus on pre-capitalist relations of production. They are concerned to examine the extraction of surplus in order to explain certain phenomena such as the increased power of hereditary chiefs and the expansion of ruling lineages in the immediately pre-colonial period. (5) In thus emphasising relations of exploitation, these works militate against, on the one hand, panegyrical approbation and uncritical acclaim of tribal authority, and on the other hand, the consonance of interest of king and subject assumed by some to characterize tribal society. (6).

The two notions which I have challenged above, have firm origins in the surviving oral traditions (7). From there they have been uncritically appropriated, and variously utilised, giving rise to abundant censure of the kind noted earlier. The reinterpretations of pre-colonial history proposed by the Marxist historians, are often a result of subjecting oral traditions to an analysis of hitherto unimagined sensitivity. Guided by the perceptions of Jan Vansina (8), they have distinguished between the function of oral history, and its real historical content. An example which illustrates this point most clearly, pertains to the close and consistent identification of subjects with a ruling lineage, Emphasis on such consistency within an oral tradition has been shown to indicate not a common origin for the ruling lineage and its subjects but rather a disjuncture, where the oral tradition functions to mask that disjuncture, usually in order to bond together the various elements and groups of the society. Frequently oral traditions function in a similar manner to legitimate the position of the ruling lineage. The difficulty of moving beyond the level of appearance in an oral tradition, in order to effect this kind of reassessment, is particularly demanding of the modern pre-colonial historian. He must be as much a linguist, archaeologist and ethnographer as an historian, since these disciplines provide the essential background against which oral history can be re-evaluated. In such hands, "oral history certainly can be a means for transforming both the content and the purpose of history."(9)

It should also be pointed out that in these recent works on pre-colonial history, the areas of study are not delimited according to the official ethnic divisions of South Africa today. One scholar specifically notes that the subject of his thesis, the Pedi polity,

> "was a geographically fluid entity and the period under consideration witnessed marked changes in the area and peoples which fell under its sway. The subject population was not ethnically homogeneous . . . The history of the polity is a clear illustration of the fact that political and cultural boundaries were far from co-terminaries in nineteenth century African society in southern Africa."(10)

Similarly the works of another two Marxist historians, Slater and Hedges are not ethnically delimited, since they are concerned with a geographical area, which encompasses two linguistically distinct groups, Nguni and Thonga, and the intermediate dialects. (11)

The problems and phenomena approached by these researchers frequently transcend ethnic boundaries. The modern pre-colonial historian desires to present a dynamic picture of pre-colonial society. His emphasis is, more often than not, on the processes of change. He wishes to acknowledge a continuous process of social and political innovation, economic improvement, and technical change. It is his expressed intention to challenge the myth that the African past was more or less static, or at best repetitive. Such a picture, all too prevalent in South Africa, contains no element of periodisation, and frequently confuses the present culture with its historical antecedent of the same name. Uncritical acceptance of historically erroneous continuities of this sort lies at the heart of the philosophy of separate development — which sees ethnic groupings as historically and culturally immutable.

Stereotyping of the pre-colonial period in this manner has crucial implications for the ideology of the present government. The most obvious instance of this is in the constant reiteration of the simultaneous colonization of southern Africa by blacks from the north, and whites in the south. This argument is used to legitimate the continued presence of whites in South Africa in the face of colonial withdrawals elsewhere in Africa. The following extract from a speech by Verwoerd demonstrates the importance of the historical dimension in endorsing the creation of the Bantustans, and in the moulding of the ideology of Apartheid:

> "The Whiteman who came to Africa, perhaps to trade, and in some cases to bring the Gospel has remained and we particularly, in the southernmost portion of Africa, have such a stake here that it has become our only motherland. We have nowhere else to go. We settled in a country that was bare. The Bantu too came to this country and settled certain portions for themselves. It is in line with thinking on Africa to grant them there those fullest rights which we, with you, admit all people should have. We believe in providing these rights for these people in the fullest degree in that part of southern Africa which

their forefathers found for themselves and settled in. We believe in allowing exactly those same full opportunities to remain within the grasp of the White Man who has made all this possible."(12)

"Here the Bantu occupied certain parts of an uninhabited country and the Whites occupied other parts." (13)

The exposure of this myth is the particular work of the prehistorian, who has demonstrated that southern Africa has been inhabited for well over 1000 years. By 300 A.D. the first farmers were settled as far south as present day Durban. (14) The earliest Iron Age sites south of the Limpopo, such as Silver Leaves in the Transvaal, Enkwazini in Zululand and Mzonjeni in Natal have been radio-carbon dated early in the first millenium. At Broederstroom, (a 5th C site) west of Pretoria, Early Iron Age type of pottery and evidence of smelting have been found in association with negroid skeletal remains (15). From about 500 AD, numerous villages were scattered over the Lowveld and the river valleys of Zululand, Natal and Transkei. The presence of livestock bones at many of these sites indicates a long history of pastoralism in Southern Africa (16). Evidence of large settlements suggests the existence of "flourishing communities, well-adapted to the possibilities of their environment. "(17). 1000 AD (or thereabouts) marks an abrupt change in the pottery recovered, and the settlement patterns of the pastoralists. Some debate exists as to whether Bantu languages are to be associated with the Early Iron Age farmers of the first millenium, or with the later Iron Age (18). Either way, the beginning of the second millenium is the most conservative date suggested for the settlement of Bantu-speakers south of the Limpopo. The deep chronology obtained through the correlation of linguistic and archeological evidence causes some tremors in the official ideological edifice. Consequently, the evidence of pre-colonial history is permitted only a limited existence, usually in the form of legend or oral tradition, given the inherent proclivity of these two forms to telescope generations and the limitations on time depth imposed by oral, (not written) transmission. Amongst urban blacks however, even these traditional sources of history, usually related by the old folk, are seldom available, for the breakdown of family life is one of the consequences of the creation of Reserves . African history is not available to any meaningful degree in museums or monuments (19) and is given cursory treatment at school.

Misconceptions about the nature of pre-colonial Africa proliferate in our society today, amongst black and white alike. They are perpetuated by the limited and often crude 'history' that is taught in the schools, occurs in the textbooks, and is strictly determined by the official syllabus. This 'history' denies the existence of a real and vital African past in southern Africa. The negation of the history of pre-colonial times stems from assumptions about the unstructured form of early societies, presumably reliant on a precarious subsistence existence and without political institutions or activities of any significance. Hugh Trevor Roper described it thus:

"History (or African history) is the unrewarding study of the gyrations of barbarous tribes in picturesque but irrelevant corners of the globe."(20)

When and where pre-colonial history is acknowledged to have any existence at all, the focus is usually on the barbarity of tribal life, the savagery of terroristic despotisms and the associated atrocities of such regimes. The following extract from a popular history text-book gives ample indication of this attitude.

"When the Voortrekkers crossed the Orange River in 1836, they found a huge expanse of territory which had been almost entirely depopulated as a result of barbaric warfare among the Bantu tribes. The region eastward of the Drakensburg now comprising the province of Natal,had been swept almost clear of inhabitants, between the years 1812 and 1828 by Chaka, the chief of the Zulus, who had pursued a policy of extermination of other Bantu tribes."(21)

Emphasis on the destructive aspects of the Mfecane and the Tshakan regime is designed to suggest a picture of societies in violent, irrational turmoil, which only the civilising influence of colonization was able to moderate. These were the views of the early colonial authorities who were anxious to justify their extended presence in southern Africa. These views are still held by the South African government, despite the fact that they have gradually lost credence in other parts of Africa which have since been decolonized. They have been upheld because they are a crucial aspect of the 'uplift-ment' in separate development.

This is yet another foundation of Apartheid ideology that the pre-historian is concerned to shake. A combination of archaeological evidence and oral traditions suggests for the Iron Age at least, increased specialization and localized commodity production associated with trade. It also indicates substantial continuity in societies, and gives evidence of their dynamic nature and ability to adapt responsively to a changing physical and cultural environment (22). This picture of rational interaction with the ecosystem considerably negates the notion of the aimless "gyrations of barbarous tribes".

School histories however, continue to perpetuate such stereotypes, and underplay Black achievement. They characterise pre-colonial history as static. Their focus and emphasis on the advent of the white settlers suggests by implication that in pre-colonial times Blacks had reached some sort of maximum level of attainment, beyond which they were genetically incapable of advancing without assistance: White assistance. Perpetuation of outdated and confused Social Darwinism of this kind, is designed to foster an acceptance of inferior status as 'natural'. In this way, distorted historical notions are used to mould attitudes, to an acceptance of a designated policy. They are administered through the medium of Bantu Education and contribute towards ensuring a state of socialised inferiority. Through the use of what Althusser calls Ideological State Apparatuses, (23) (education, schools and the media) the threat of internal conflict is contained. History, or the lack of it, is used to pacify, inhibit and divide racial groups.

At this level, the perversion of history is considerably more insidious and all-encompassing than the mere telescoping of time depths in order to lay claim to the country. It is particularly effective in this respect, since history is an area of knowledge crucial to a person's self-perception, dignity, identity and sense of personal direction. The preoccupation of Blacks all over the world with the inadequate historical picture of their origins has been forcefully arti-

culated by the Rastafarian movement. Marcus Garvey stated it simply and effectively,

> "A people without knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots." (24)

Given the particular historical circumstances of the development of Apartheid, it falls to the pre-colonial historian to illuminate the history and achievements of Africa prior to its involuntary tutelage by its invaders. In attacking the very tenets and apparatuses of government ideology on the grounds of historical invalidity, the pre-colonial historian is able to contribute meaningfully to a process of change.

> "The justification of all historical study must ultimately be that it enhances our self-conscious, enables us to see ourselves in perspective and helps us towards that greater freedom which comes from self knowledge."(25) □

REFERENCES:

(1) Carr, E. H. **What is History?** page 30.

(2) **ibid.**

(3) The booklets referred to here are the Learn and Teach history series, which aim to provide reading material for newly literate adults, of the kind that stimulates discussion in learning groups, about existence in South Africa.

(4) Extract from a letter to Learn and Teach, 25 Nov., 1980.

(5) Many recent studies fall into this category. However, the thoughts formulated in the following paragraphs are with reference specifically to the following:

Hedges, D. "Trade and Politics in southern Mozambique in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries", unpub. Phd., Univ. of London, 1978.
Slater, H. "Transitions in the Political Economy of South-East Africa", unpub, Phd., Univ. of Sussex, 1976.
Delius, P. "The Pedi Polity under Sekwati and Sekhukhune, 1828-1880", unpub. Phd., Univ of London, 1980.
Kinsman, M. "Notes on the southern Tswana Social Foration", unpub. seminar paper presented to Wits History Workshop 1981.

(6) For example, Slater (**op. cit.**) focuses on the transition to absolutism in the early Zulu state and examines surplus extraction by the paramountcy. He highlights the distress amongst social groups whose modes of existence were reorganised in an attempt to pin down a "semi-servile peasantry" in new and more intense forms of dependence and exploitation.

(7) Oral traditions frequently reflect a picture of a society as a dominant lineage would have it appear.
Amongst the Zulu for example, the **izibongo**, or praise poems, which comprise a not inconsiderable body of oral history, function under royal patronage in order to maintain chiefly authority. In listing the ancestors of the chief, they assert the legitimacy of his reign. Successful incidents in the chiefs reign are embellished, glorified and savoured. Presumably this functions to suggest the futility of opposition, and to underline the abilities of a particular ruler. On the whole, the **izibongo** convey a picture of harmony, contentment and strength within the kingdom, even for periods when this was patently not the case.

(8) Vansina, J. **Oral Tradition; A study in Historical Methodology**, London, 1965.

(9) Thompson, P. **The Voice of the Past, Oral History**, O.U.P., 1978, page 2.

(10) Delius, P. **op. cit.** page 1.

(11) Hedges, D. **op. cit.**
Slater, H. **op cit.**

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(13) **ibid.**

(14) Hall, M "Early Farming Communities of Southern Africa; A Population Rediscovered." unpub. paper, 1981.
Also "The Ecology of the Iron Age in Zululand", unpub. Phd., Cambridge, 1980.

(15) Phillipson, D. W. **The Later Prehistory of Eastern and Southern Africa**, 1977, page 120.

(16) Maggs, T. "The Iron Age Sequence south of the Vaal and the Pongola Rivers: Some Historical implications", in **Jnl. African Hist. 21, 1980.**

(17) Hall, M. (1981) **op. cit.** page 3.

(18) Phillipson, D. W. **op cit.** and Huffman, T. N. "The Early Iron Age and the spread of the Bantu." **S.A.A.B.** 25

(19) The Stanger and Lower Tugela Museum situated in the heart of historic Zululand is a case in point. The curatrix has no knowledge of pre-colonial history. Although the museum is built virtually on the gravesite of the greatest Zulu monarch, the contents of the museum are mostly colonial memorablia—old ball gowns and regimental dress. However, the monument to the battle of Blood River, built on the site of the infamous laager, strikes a harsher note, that of the 'superiority' of fire power. Victory of the Boers is thus celebrated, with barely a passing reference to the thousands of Black lives forfeited. It is to be hoped that the recently created Zululand Monuments Commission will redress this all-pervasive imbalance, at least to some extent.

(20) Trevor - Roper, H. **Historical Essays** 1957

(21) De Kock, M. H. **The Economic Development of South Africa**, 1936, page 32.

(22) Hall, M., (1981), **op. cit.**

(23) Althusser, L. "Ideological State Apparatuses" in **Lenin and Philosophy and other essays**, 1972.

(24) Garvey, M. **Philosophy and Opinions.**, Garvey was bold and virulent in the defence of African History, and the Rastafarian movement became in his hands a creative instrument for social change.

(25) Thomas, K.

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TRANSKEI CASINO

by Vortex

1

'You don't need a document to get there.'
'But I thought it's a foreign land.'
'No no, my dear, you must get it clear:
It's all a sleight of hand.'

2

Dr Hendrik Verwoerd
sank into a trance,
a deeply creative
socio-religious daydream.
He was meditating, as ever,
upon the future of South Africa,
which he alone could foresee,
which he alone could plan and make.
Into his field of vision
there floated dimly an object,
which he recognized at once as symbolic.
But at first he couldn't make it out.
It was multi-coloured,
which suggested God's variety
It was circular,
which showed that it was mystical,
a revelation of good to come.
And it moved, dynamically,
like the horsemen of the Apocalypse.
Then his vision clarified,
and he beheld in awe
the answer to his hopes and prayers:
a roulette-wheel.

3

So this is the way the homelands work,
with many a monetary click and quirk.
In this sick air no truth can stand:
a one-armed bandit rules the land.

4.

The cars choke up the South Coast road,
all drawn by the magnet to the south;
people of every type and mode
are gobbled by a laughing mouth.

5

Behind the red ropes
in the new casino,
the women are wearing
handsome dresses,
plum-coloured, formal.
They do not smile
as they do their work.
The men, in dress suits,
are serious, sober:
nothing is brisk or brash.
The whole air
is silent and solemn,
religious even,
as it needs to be
for this elaborate ceremony
of the handing over
of cash.

6

In an odd sort of way it's all half-gay,
people seem able to relax;
the thing's not a mess, one has to confess,
and the whites accept the blacks.
But it's sad to say that your pinko-grey
(to be more precise as to hue)
seems only sane or at all humane
when some profit is in view.

7

'Let's go to the Casino
to see if we can win;
the cards are stacked against us,
but trying is no sin.'
Aha, my friend, please do attend:
that's the Holiday Inns' big sell;
and behind that dream is the selfsame scheme
for the 'national states' as well.

8

The concrete palace by the sea
in a wilderness of poverty:
it's a perfect balance, of the kind
that pleases the official mind.
Inside, there's a wealth of goodly fare;
outside, the cupboard and the field are bare.
Here, there's a constant flow of rands;
there, children beg with skinny hands.
Visiting whites are fat and free,
but blacks —— 'independent'—— bend the knee. □

STEYN COMMISSION II: HOW TO SEPARATE OUT TRUTH FROM FACT

by Keyan G Tomaselli and Ruth Tomaselli

By the time this article appears, much will have already been written about the **Steyn Commission of Inquiry into the Mass Media.** What has appeared, both in the press and journals aimed at informed readers (1), does not, unfortunately, really come to terms with the ideological implications of the **Report.** Both concerned themselves with the issue of 'press freedom' without examining the underlying values and assumptions embodied in this concept. These authors argue that the legislation proposed by the Commission continues the trend of press control which was intensified by the National Party after 1948. This desire for increasing manipulation is attributed to arrogance, oversensitivity to criticism and the National Party's "peculiar view of its own status" (2), to a concern for South Africa's national image abroad and a government need to maintain internal security through harsh and repressive measures.

It is our contention that these arguments, while valid on one level, miss the deeper politico-economic and ideological determinants which are at work in South Africa's apartheid economy. A comprehensive understanding of the Steyn Commission lies not so much in regurgitating the oft repeated history of anti-press legislation, but of situating it within the current hegemonic crisis in South Africa.

It is not the aim of this paper to provide an exhaustive critique of the Steyn Commission, for such a task would require many more pages than we have at our disposal (3). We will, however, discuss the **Report** in general and show up some of its myriad surface contradictions. These apparent discontinuities and illogicalities serve to mask a deeper ideological tendency which, although itself full of contradictions, provides the government with a convenient vehicle with which to force 'voluntary' self-regulation onto the press. More important, the Commission has provided 'evidence' of an "unholy alliance" between "powerful financial and political interests in White English-speaking South Africa . . . (and) . . . certain like external interests in the Western World aiming at a covert and indirect takeover of the whole of South Africa" (p. 764). These interests are teamed up with "radical" organizations such as the World Council of Churches, and locally with the SA Council of Churches, Black Consciousness, the Media Workers Association (MWASA) and the various mutations of Black/African/Liberationist/ Feminist theology and are argued to be aiming to replace the present government with a black ruled "radical socialist or Marxist dispensation" (p. 672).

That a Commission was established at all is significant, for this mechanism can be used to defer legislation, to legitimise restrictive measures and to test public consensus. In the case of the press, they are also used to force "self-righting effects" onto the actors they are investigating. Any illusions about the role and function of this Commission should have been dispelled through a reading of the First Steyn Commission, published in 1980. Although **The Star** (21. 8.80), for example, stated that the first Steyn Commission "gave a fair hearing to all interested parties: it reflected a balance of their views in its report" this contention is not shared by many academics, notably John Dugard who criticised the Commission's authoritarian notions of democracy (4).

In his critique of this initial Commission, Les Switzer identifies three functions which the press would have to embrace if it was to survive as a 'free' and 'independent' medium of communication:

1. The press would have to censor the activities of the state's internal and external "enemies" as **defined** by the state. This implies a shift in emphasis in the press's 'watchdog' role from the state to the "enemies" of the state;
2. The press would have to sustain and promote a positive image of the state's security and defence agencies; and
3. Above all, the press would have to mobilise public opinion in pursuance of the campaign for Total Strategy (5).

The present Commission expands these functions and tries to create a suitable ideological climate in which to facilitate increased state control over the media. To see how this is done it is first necessary to briefly examine the internal structure of the **Report.**

Apartheid: What the World Always Wanted

The underlying assumption of the Steyn Commission is predicated upon a rather confused conception of apartheid. Consider the following extract:—

> Although isolated and largely cast out of the International Community, the Inner Core of Southern African states (i.e. the RSA, the independent states recently born of its substance, and SWA/Namibia) and its peoples present a picture of apparent paradox - that of a relatively stable community in a state of flux.
>
> The newly independent states of Transkei, Venda and Boputhatswana, all erstwhile "apartheid Territory", have now become "non-Apartheid areas", a development urged on South Africa for so long and so vehemently by the international community but which remains distressingly unrecognised by the selfsame community (pp. 29-30).

This statement, amongst other things, wilfully confuses process with appearance, and tries to suggest that apartheid is a fulfillment of international prescriptions. A second exerpt will show that these "non-Apartheid areas" are apparently needed to absorb all those blacks who cannot, because of sheer numbers, be physically repressed:

> The objective reality of the South African situation is, however, that there are too many Whites for Blacks to 'chase them into the sea' and there are so many Blacks that they cannot be subjugated forcibly by the Whites (pp. 96 & 720).

The reason why whites should want to dominate blacks or vice versa is ignored, and a "no-win" situation has forced South Africa to face "reality". Inhabiting this reality is a community, a "potentially many-splendoured constellation of Peoples" (p. 99), composed of non-conforming prodigal elements who do not seem to understand that their own best interests would be served by supporting the white Nationalist fold:

> The Commission is . . . of the view that the South African population, as heterogeneous and divergent in culture as it is, does constitute a community, – a distinct and vigorous one with many common interests, albeit still so sharply divided on certain cardinal issues as to move some of its members to espouse alien ideologies and other socio-political and cultural creeds and methods including treason, terror and subversion in an effort to effect rapid and drastic change in South Africa, or even to overthrow and destroy all the major facets of the present order here pertaining (pp. 29 & 182).

And so the **Report** continues, the South African reality being continuously threatened by a Total Onslaught orchestrated by Soviets, Marxists, politicised theologians, Black Consciousness, far-left academics who are still struggling with basic definitions, misguided liberals of the John Dugard ilk and radicals of the nature of Bishop Desmond Tutu.

Critic Bashing Made Easy

Where the Commission's argument is too thin to stand up to scrutiny, and since its authors are for the most part unable to understand most of the arguments put forward by critics of the first Steyn Commission and the status quo in South Africa, and unable to refute the arguments they can understand, the Commissioners have responded in the only way they are able - that is to trivialise and belittle concepts, arguments and individuals with which they know intuitively they cannot agree. The **Report** admonishes liberal authors in terms of their supposedly inadequate curriculum vitae's and lack of experience in political science and practical politics (eg. pp. 35 & 196), rather than on the basis of their arguments. More sycophantic conservatives whose support of the first Steyn Commission lent a certain credibility to that Inquiry are preferred. Indeed, it seems that much of the first volume is an effort to discredit Dugard and the liberals he stands for. He is criticised for his grammar and expression (pp. 56-7) and is obliquely accused of being an "anti-Afrikaner racist and gross denigrator of the South African judiciary" (p. 57). Academic critiques of Dugard are quoted at length to further cast doubt upon the validity of his writings. Opposing arguments are blandly accepted and held in evidence against him without the Commission itself assessing the relative merits and demerits of the debate, which is clearly much wider than the **Report** admits.

The use of one sided arguments is a hallmark of this **Report.** Apart from plagiarising large amounts of already published academic material drawn from the liberal-humanist school, it pointedly avoids the more critical studies, research and publications of many South African journalists and academics. It relies almost entirely on a very narrow spectrum of South African journals and even within these, has avoided the very material which would have caused the Commissioners to reassess their point of view. The Commission furthermore tries to mobilise the terminology of the radical left against its originators, but in the process trivialises its own position by robbing such terms of their content and aetiology. The Commission then attempts to use what is merely an empty shell to pound non-existent theoretical positions.

Anything to the left of Nationalist ideology is vehemently attacked with whatever quotes, misquotes, religious sentiment or ruse proves handy at the time. The Commission's arguments, apart from being eclectic, disjointed and discontinuous, are nothing more than crude Nationalist ideology clothed in the garb of quasi socio-legalistic semantic contortions. Scattered throughout the **Report** is a plethora of jargonising guaranteed to intimidate the wary journalist and unsuspecting public. Recurring terms such as "practical statecraft" (eg. p. 34), phrases like "mind-set and the upwelling left-liberal enmity" (p. 62) and non-existent words such as "tasked" (Vol 4), "thrombosed" (1340), "Victimologies" (608) all serve to give a spurious intellectuality to the **Report.**

Superficially, and in ideological terms, the **Report** (or some parts of it) appears to make sense, but on a deeper analysis, it falls prey to its own criticisms of the press, individuals, and organizations it is castigating. It fails to distinguish between fact and ideology, myth and process and cause and effect. Terms like "Conflictual Matrices", "Threat Factors" and other crude categories conveniently conceal actual conditions under discussion, while journalistic conventions and styles are belittled with vigour. The Commission equates "investigative journalism" with "muck-raking", both of which are a product of "new journalism". Offsprings of this non-objective journalism are "advocacy journalism", "personal journalism" and "commitment journalism". All these approaches are united in their "anti-establishment" stance and are characterised by "involvement" (p. 155). Worst of all, they aim "to discover truth, not merely fact" which is proof of "their rejection of objectivity" (p. 142).

Clearly, the Commission abhors this trend which has been given respectability by the Watergate and the local "Info debacle" (pp. 139 & 142). Thus, professionalism (or control) is equated with "objectivity" and "freedom (with responsibility)", while propaganda is argued to be the result of non-professionalism, particularly by black journalists who see themselves as blacks first and journalists second (p. 706). Whereas committed journalism distorts the "hard, tangible and exploitable images of reality" (145), "professionalism . . . guarantees media freedom and independence" (p. 161). Other definitions offered but not developed involve grammatical juggling which has become part and parcel of Nationalist and SABC ideologues who call themselves linguists. The intensity of the Total Onslaught, for example, can be measured in terms of vertical and horizontal axes. Apparently, the "Conflictual Matrix" is related to this, but since less than six lines are offered in explanation we must assume that this formula has an ideological basis obscured by mathematics.

Metaphor: The Theological Connection

The Commission constantly reveals its politico-evangelical purpose through its heavy handed use of metaphor and simile. Biblical imagery creeps up from behind adjectives and nouns and supports the Total Strategy in almost every sentence, for example:

> . . . South Africa is confronted by devilish ideologies which, figuratively speaking, plant political landmines and lay cultural and spiritual booby traps in order to overthrow the existing socio-political order (144).

Unable to indict its theological opponents in South Africa directly, the Commission resorts to smear by association and tries to unleash theological terror via metaphorical engineering. In an attempt to identify the South African Council of Churches with the WCC, the Commissioners provide sufficient imagery to script an academy-award-winning satanic horror movie:

> The WCC's "Council Conduct" amounts to "Clerics of the Councils"clad in the Cloth, clutching the **Reversed Cross** and animated by the precepts of the "Theology of Liberation", entering the Arena of Mundane Politics, and employing the Cross in its "Battle-Axe" role to help them achieve their POLITICAL goals. (Emphases, capitals and quotation marks in the original) (pp. 82 & 582).

Discussing the Social Gospel under the heading of "The Fateful Seed", the Commission, nary a theologian amongst them, comments:

> The movement whereby the Gospel was sought to be secularised and collectivised was the seed whence sprang the thorny, and as to certain of its branches, also poisonous growth of Political Theology, which has now started bearing the sinister and unhappy fruits of Theologised Politics (499).

The Commission's own politicised evangelism is emphasised in its choice of words like "epilogue" in place of 'conclusion' (p. 104), "brethren" (p. 48) for 'colleagues' and "excommunication" for 'sports boycotts' (p. 297), to name a few. Simultaneously, the Commission tries to hide its own zeal behind the use of quaint and romantic euphemisms such as "gentlemen of the Cloth" to describe ministers of religion who - incidentally - should be ministering to their flocks on a vertical and not a horizontal plane. These horizontal 'social gospellers' are really nothing more than Soviet proxies and liberal misfits who are (perhaps unwittingly) aiding the leftist press and black journalists in the "process of socio-political demolition . . ." (p. 125). This tenuous thread of pseudo-theological mumbo jumbo is tied together with a series of garbled headings spewed out by a jargon machine: "The Unctuous Pariah-making Politico-Theological and Journalistic "Fashion" " (p. 722), "The potentially lethal theo-political force" (88), and so on.

It seems that Bishop Desmond Tutu is held responsible for most of this.

The Good, the Bad, the North, the South, the East, the West . . . .

In an effort to come to terms with the complexities of reality, the Commission reduces the complex processes operating in the world to a series of simplistic binary opposites, for instance, "First World-Third World dichotomy of rich versus poor or White North versus Black South" (p. 66). As with most orthodox economic theorists who postulate these dualistic theories, the Commissioners make the mistake of imposing breaks where there are, in fact, connections. They are unaware of the relations between these so-called geographical areas and seem to think that the "Rich North" attained its wealth without at the same time denuding the "Poor South". The poverty of Third World countries is considered to be an original state resulting from the backward techniques and static social relations which characterise their indigenous inhabitants. That these conditions are conversely argued to be a result of the process of active underdevelopment by colonial and neo-colonial countries is simply not comprehended. The Commission's lack of understanding is further highlighted by its misinterpretation of at least one author (6) who argues for the causal connection between neo-colonial exploitation and the underdevelopment which characterises the world's poorest nations.

In the same way, the Commissioners are able to close their eyes to the process of apartheid which is based on cheap labour drawn from 'backward' homeland areas in South Africa. The rhetoric of 'separate development' is designed to obfuscate the physical and social inter-connections and economic inter-relations which dualist theory tries to mystify. But even the crudest dualists have nothing on the Steyn Commission which provides a litany of opposites rarely matched in dualist thought: "an irreversible anti-Black White racism, as well as an irreconcileable Afrikaner-English, Marxist-Capitalist and First World-Third World conflict as acknowledged complicating factors . . ." (p. 174). This statement indicates a complete lack of analytical rigour and the use of bi-polar opposites in this manner conjures up unscientific emotive overtones.

Extrapolating the Commission's semantic associations, it becomes clear that "Rich, White (mainly Afrikaner) and Capitalism" = good; while "Poor, Black and Marxism" = Bad.

The Black Press: The Road to Revolution

The Commission is never quite sure where it stands in relation to the captive black press. While supporting the banning of **World, Weekend World, Post** (Tvl) and **Weekend Post** (Tvl) in terms of "the principle" but not "the manner" of restriction, as necessary security measures (p. 19), it lauds the English press for "rendering a very valuable service . . . to the South African community by informing it constantly of Black opinion and aspirations" (p. 139). It accuses MWASA of operating under the banner of Black Consciousness and of "radicalising Black Journalists for the purpose of using them as political 'shock troops'" (p. 92), but at the same time claims that black radical thought should not be "ignored or suppressed" but "fairly and adequately dealt with" (p.887).

Simplistic and spurious correlations between the supposed revolutionary black press and social responses permeate the diatribe on this press: "It is significant that Soweto returned to normal after the banning of the **World** and other organizations" (pp. 121 & 1055). No discussion about other repressive measures such as the use of police who killed over 700 people during the riots is mentioned. No description of what constitutes "normal" is offered – just a bland observation which ignores all the other variables which were operating at the time. **The Steyn Report** also does its best to misinterpret the Cillie Commission (7) which absolved the press of all blame in the causation of the riots (p. 121).

The black press stands accused of contributing to "unstable conditions", of being "unsympathetic to the Government's steps for reform", of incitory actions imposed against "institutions of its own people" (such as the

government-imposed Community Councils), of having "abolished the principles of journalistic objectivity" and of aiding the English press in "socio-political demolition" (p. 125). Having discussed the 'black' press on the level of the sublime, the Commission now moves into the ridiculous. It complains that there is no "truly independent black press" in South Africa. This is despite the fact "that there is among Blacks a need for a truly independent Black press which can express the feelings and aspirations of Black opinions and perceptions, especially the moderate majority" (p. 130). Such a press is required, amongst other reasons, because "the Afrikaans press and SABC have failed to report adequately on the hopes and aspirations, suffering and frustrations of the Black community" (pp. 1286 & 128).

The constant harping by the Commission on the mythical black "moderate majority" suggests that it has totally misread the role and function of the captive black press. The arguments put forward by scholars of the left (who remain unread) that this captive press was not radical in the true sense of the word, in that it supports a continuance of capitalism and its consequent class structure, modified only by the removal of "hurtful discrimination" went unheeded (8). But then, when people like Bishop Tutu and Dr N Motlana are categorised as 'radicals', it becomes difficult to persuade the Commission that within the wider spectrum of black thought such individuals represent moderate political opinions.

'The Facts': Their Ideological Derivation

The Commission, which accuses journalists of not separating 'facts' from comment, consistently claims that liberal arguments are "not borne out by the facts" (eg. pp. 24 & 52). Conversely, the Commission's point of view is always 'supported by the facts', even their slanderous strictures and emotive conclusions. These seem to refer to some set of undeniable reality which exists in its own deified plane. This hallowed reality is visible to some (like the Commissioners) but not to others. It is an independent entity. This reality has nothing to do with contexts, circumstances or interpretations.

What the Commission is really saying is that 'the facts' are pre-existent. They are built into their assumptions and world view and form the basis of 'the taken-for-granted' which informs the Commission's frame of reference. Clearly, what the Commissioners consider 'facts' are really the "values" and "ideologies" of the dominant group. 'Facts' are rooted to contexts and interpretations and their decipherment is largely influenced by an individual's ideological perceptions, his/her way of seeing the world and what he/she takes for granted in it.

The Commission most certainly takes apartheid for granted, as if it were a natural state for humankind to evolve ("a dynamically developing and expanding democracy"— pp. 126, 188ff & 245), divinely sanctioned and threatened by Western and Soviet evil.

'Facts' should not be confused with 'truth'. The Commission has no intention of allowing journalists to discover "truth". It is their job to report facts, not the truth, to reinforce prevailing ideologies and to eliminate conflicting perceptions of 'the same realities'. This "perceptual credibility gap" (p. 913) is the result of "faulty image of reality" caused by a malicious English press whose reports feed the negative external image of South Africa. If journalists cannot or will not report they will be "professionalised" into doing so since the "presenting of more than one possibility or alternative" (see eg. p. 1278) is akin to "climate-setting" which confuses readers and casts doubt upon the credibility of newspapers.

Conclusion

The errors, contradictions and spurious suppositions in the Steyn Commission are so glaring that a critique of its **Report** is like erecting a straw man and setting him alight. If it was not for the very serious implications of this Inquiry, the foregoing analysis would have been a totally self-indulgent exercise.

Throughout the **Report** runs a basic contradiction: on the one hand the "Inner Core of South African States" is conceptualised as a single unified community, dualist analyses notwithstanding, while on the other, the Commission is at great pains to outline the irreconcileable differences which exist between the different sections of the South African population. The true community of South Africa is thus identified as being synonomous with the interests of the National Party. All else is seen outside the interests of South Africa. **The Commission intuitively realises this truth but hopes to set a climate whereby the 'facts' obscure it.**

The Commission sets a background, an understanding and interpretation of matters relating to the media which may or may not have a direct relation to reality. Nevertheless, the Commission's **Report** will be used by the government as a definitive source for future debate and legislation, not only in terms of immediate legislation the government will try to push through on the strength of the Inquiry. Just as it is now impossible to refer to any sort of labour issue unless it is done against the background of the Riekert and Wiehahn Commissions, so too the Steyn Commission will gather unto itself a sense of authenticity and authority.

It will be used as a constant threat against the press. It will become the source for definitions of reality; and future debate will concern itself not so much with actual conditions, but against the perceived background provided by the Report. Having been ascribed this stamp of authority - no matter how contradictory or inaccurate the Report - the pieces can be extracted from anywhere in the Report and quoted at dissidents with impunity.

The Report reads like a script from The Goon Show, but this should not lull us into neglecting its sinister content.

Having obscured fact and truth and endorsing a news environment in which certain criticism is permissible, provided it is not supported by 'the facts' (9), the Commission provides its **coup de grace** - the rendering impotent of Anglo-American's indirect ownership and control of the two major English press groups, SA Associated Newspapers and the Argus Company. No single shareholder will be allowed to own more than 1% of the total shares issued. Majority shareholders should be given three years to divest their holdings.

This makes possible the interpenetration of Afrikaner capital of the English press through individuals who already have holdings in Afrikaans and Nationalist media concerns.

The Steyn Commission and the possibilities of ownership and control which result from its recommendations will result in an immeasurable ideological return for the tax payer's money. Why waste R12 million on a government-sponsored newspaper when you can capture the entire opposition press for the cost of a Commission of Enquiry (R201 000)? □

Notes and References

1. See, eg., **SA Outlook,** 1982 (forthcoming); **SA International** (forthcoming) 1982. See also **The Journalist,** February 1982 pp. 6 - 7.
2. Stewart, G. 1982: in **SA Outlook op. cit.**
3. The Steyn Commission Report is to be the subject of a special issue in a forthcoming issue of **Critical Arts: A Journal for Media Studies** (July 1982, Vol 2 No. 3).
4. The two references listed are Dugard, J. 1978: **Human Rights and the South African Legal Order,** University of Princeton Press, Princeton. and Dugard et al, 1979: **" The South African Press Council: A Critical Review,** Univ. of Witwatersrand. The latter reference given by the Steyn Commission does not exist. It should, in fact, be Adelman, S. Howard, J., Stuart, K and van Eeden, A. 1979: "The South African Press Council
5. Switzer, L. 1980: "Steyn Commission 1: The Press and Total Strategy", **Critical Arts,** Vol 1 No 4, pp. 41-44. The reference to the Commission is: Republic of South Africa. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Reporting of Security Matters Regarding the South African Defence Force and the South African Police Force. RP 52/1980.
6. See, eg., Higgins, R. 1980: **The Seventh Enemy — The Human Factor in the Global Crisis,** Pan Books.
7. Republic of South Africa. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Riots at Soweto and Elsewhere from June 16 to February 28. Cape Town, 1980.
8. See, e.g., Switzer, L. and Switzer, D. 1979: **The Black Press in South Africa and Lesotho: A Bibliographical Guide to Newspapers, Newsletters and Magazines, 1936-1976.** GK Hall, Boston; Whitehead, M. 1976: "The Black Gatekeepers". B.A. (Hons) Thesis, Dept. of Journalism, Rhodes University, Grahamstown. This Department also has a wealth of other research data which refute the Commission's interpretations.
9. Stewart, G. 1980: "Serving the Governors", **SA Outlook,** June, p. 4.
— A Critical Review", Centre for Applied Legal Studies, Univ. of Witwatersrand. Dugard is the Director of the Centre and contributed only an "Explanatory Forward" to the publication.

THE URBAN FOUNDATION : ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE

By Robin Lee

Introduction

In April 1982 The Urban Foundation will have been operative for a full five years. It is thus appropriate that an attempt should be made to review its activities and assess its position in the South African scene. Peter Wilkinson's article in the last issue of **Reality** addresses itself to this task with considerable perception and some sympathy. There are, however, certain emphases that the present writer — and I think many members of the Foundation — would dispute. I hope that these points of difference will emerge from the account offered, and do not seek to offer a point-by-point critique of the article.

Two points do however require comment at once as these determine the general tone of the article which, in a way, probably reflects Wilkinson's frustration with an organization like the Foundation. I refer to the markedly apocalyptic tone ('. . . the Foundation stands poised at the moment of its crisis . . .') and the strong "either . . . or" nature of the analysis presented. Most of us associated with the Foundation would not find either acceptable: and this in turn is indicative of the pragmatic and gradualist approach that characterises the organization and its activities.

A positive view

Those themes are perhaps the best starting points for a positive view of the Foundation. The organization started life in 1977 with a marked project-orientation; however it has, over time, shown signs that it is capable of adapting to changing circumstances. The original emphasis upon a multiplicity of physical projects (1) is being modified into an integrated approach designed to bring about "structural change" in South African society. In other words the emphasis is now placed upon improving the quality of life by aiming at fundamental causes, rather than treating consequences.

This change of emphasis has not been an easy process. It has involved extensive internal discussion and negotiation; commissioning and interpretation of considerable research; and the introduction into the organization of a structured planning process. The first indications of this process emerged in the Executive Director's speech at the Annual General meeting in June 1980 when he said:

"This organization believes in a process of peaceful change. . . Change is not brought about by a single thrust. Indeed it is our belief that the cumulative effect of our efforts and others who actively promote peaceful change can make a positive contribution to a more just dispensation". (2)

Linked with this increased focus on structural change are two other important developments within the Foundation. First, it is placing a much stronger emphasis upon the

"negotiating role" – that is, preparing the basis for and making representations on issues of national significance. As Wilkinson has indicated, this type of activity was undertaken by the Foundation from the start in its efforts to promote the 99 year leasehold and the Code of Employment Practice; but a more systematic and purposeful contribution has been made in respect of the Grosskopf Committee considering the Urban Areas Act, the HSRC Investigation into Education, The Viljoen Committee on housing in Soweto and (more recently) the Welgemoed Commission on urban passenger transport. Indeed, it is safe to say that the UF has evolved something of a "methodology" in these activities, involving a synthesis of basic research, consultation with a range of interest groups and formulation of proposals through a sequence of drafts refined through repeated rounds of discussion. For instance, the Foundation's submissions to the de Lange Committee were based upon the sustained involvement over a full year of 300 persons from all communities. A submission developed in this way has a reasonable chance of reflecting real issues and grievances.

Secondly, in attempting to influence structural change, the Foundation is focussing its project activity on a limited number of priority areas and planning significant projects or programmes in those areas, on a scale relevant to the scale of the problem. The priority areas for 1982/4 have been identified as education, housing and business development.

Structural change

An organization that aims at "structural change" should have a reasonably clear and shared understanding of the concept itself. The Foundation interprets the concept to refer to changes – through reform – in the structures and the institutions of the society, carried out in a systematic manner with defined goals in mind. It would include changes in discriminatory laws, practices and administration, and in social and economic relationships. In the case of the Foundation the goal or purpose of these changes has been defined as ". . . the establishment, of a society founded upon justice and the explicit recognition of the dignity and freedom of individuals".

The Foundation seeks to pursue structural changes in the socio-economic field, and does not directly involve itself in political or party political issues. Behind this orientation lie two implicit assumptions about the nature of change. First, that incremental but systematic change offers equally valid potential for reforming a society as does immediate and radical change; and, second, that change **can** occur in dimensions other than the overtly political before, during and after necessary political change. Most of the social and economic issues addressed by the Foundation do in fact have political implications; this is well understood within the Foundation, without compelling the organization into the fixed ideological position "either political change or . . . nothing".

Unlikeminded

This brings us to a further characteristic of the Foundation that is usually ill-understood by rigorous academic analysts. Unlike many other interest groups, the Foundation is composed of "un-likeminded" persons; persons of differing temperament, political allegiance and community origin, but aimed to represent the best feasible spectrum of South African opinion willing to work constructively together in pursuit of agreed goals. In this regard, the Foundation might be said to represent a form of "open pluralism" as described by Degenaar:

"Open pluralism also recognises cultural diversity, assumes the effectiveness of consociationalism and hopes to overcome group conflict by means of cross-cutting group affiliations and to create mutual trust in order to build an integrated society". (3)

Operating in this manner, the Foundation does not have to clarify and define an agreed single position on each and every national issue..Areas in which agreement and co-operative effort **are** possible must, of course, be identified, developed and, in time, multiplied; while areas of potential conflict are not avoided or ignored but placed later on the agenda, as it were, as successful negotiation of them depends on the "mutual trust" built up in areas of more immediate common concern. Once again, then, one of the "either . . . or" choices put by Wilkinson is not accepted by the Foundation. It is not a case of **either** working with the "new, democratically organized community movements" **or** "working through the existing channels of power". Varieties of relationship are possible in this area and can be explored. The Foundation is prepared to work with any community group genuinely concerned with developing its community. It is not for the Urban Foundation to define the "community leadership" of admittedly and understandably fragmented communities, and then to decide to work only with those. Opportunities must be assessed and taken on merit at the time.

Private Sector

Wilkinson devotes considerable attention in both his political analysis and his discussion of the Foundation's activities to the question of the "private sector". He appears to assume that the private sector comprises commerce and industry and (more surprisingly) that it is a single, relatively unified entity. The Foundation does not accept either of these views. For us the private sector certainly **includes** commerce and industry; but it also includes professional associations and individuals in private practice, voluntary associations of all kinds, trade unions, churches and individuals acting in their private capacity. It is both an altogether more inclusive category, and less liable to the severe analysis of economic motive that Wilkinson gives it, when he virtually equates "private sector" with "capital". It is important to stress this point, since the private sector embodies what is perhaps the central value represented by the Foundation, that is, the value of **voluntary** association. The Foundation is based on the assumption that valuable contributions to change can be made by a spectrum of groups formed by voluntary association and these groups represent a significant counterweight to the power of the "public sector" – namely political government and state administrative structures. In many ways the "democratically organized community movements" referred to by Wilkinson are established upon the same principle of voluntary association, and thus **as organizations** their role in society is similar to that of the Foundation. (Their specific goals may, of course, vary).

Linked to this value also are the values of individual autonomy and dignity, and the freedom of individuals to form associations in the pursuit of both individual and community goals. The voluntary association represented by companies in commerce and industry is but one aspect of these free-

doms. Once again, this leads to a modification of the "either . . . or" approach. It is surely an unacceptable polarisation to maintain that the entire private sector is either co-opted into the "total strategy" or it is not. Fragmentation of possibilities along a spectrum is quite possible, and this creates opportunities for action by a variety of groups within the "private sector".

Conclusion

In essence then the Foundation would see more value in the latter part of Wilkinson's analysis where he refers to "tensions" between various elements in its make up and in the society in which it operates. However, these are surely "creative tensions", providing the rationale for and the dynamic of the organization itself. As these elements change in strength and direction, so the organization must respond, and a judgement upon it must be based upon the degree to which it identifies and deals with these tensions in the future. In the South African situation it would be foolhardy to predict success: however, awareness must be the start of the process. □

Robin Lee is a Director of the Urban Foundation and has worked for the organization since inception. The opinions in this article are his personal views and do not necesarily represent Foundation policy.

REFERENCES

(1) The following table gives an indication of the scale of project activity of the Foundation in the period March 1977 to February 1981. Financial figures are in R000's. Number of projects are indicated in brackets.

Project	National	Eastern Cape	Natal	Transvaal	Western Cape	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total
Housing	500 (1)	596 (13)	2914 (7)	3448 (16)	614 (7)	8072 (44)	34	5498	30
Education & Training	502 (5)	2011 (29)	2015 (53)	2500 (33)	1141 (38)	8169 (158)	34	6625	36
Community Facilities	75 (2)	153 (23)	1120 (31)	1597 (47)	1623 (37)	4568 (14)	19	4220	23
Health Services	–	78 (5)	27 (3)	1008 (7)	93 (8)	1206 (23)	5	342	2
Research	91 (8)	86 (9)	–	228 (13)	41 (11)	446 (41)	2	227	2
Other	594 (10)	15 (3)	266 (20)	198 (15)	411 (23)	1484 (71)	6	1315	7
TOTAL	1762 (26)	2939 (82)	6342 (114)	8979 (131)	3923 (124)	23945 (477)	100	18277	100

(2) Supplementary remarks issued with the Annual Report 1979/80 : 5 June 1980. Mr Steyn went on to identify the granting of freehold title and the creation of a "unified administration of education" as priority structural change objectives for the Foundation.

(3) Degenaar, Johan : **Reform: quo vadis** : to be published in **Politikon**, June, 1982.

Z.K. MATTHEWS : A REVIEW OF FREEDOM FOR MY PEOPLE.

by Alan Paton

This book, FREEDOM FOR MY PEOPLE, the autobiography of Z. K. Matthews, edited and supplemented by Monica Wilson, is a welcome addition to the pitifully small collection of books that deal with the lives and times of our black political leaders. I knew four of them well, and they could be compared in intelligence and stature with any of our white political leaders. But their lives and fortunes were totally different.

Albert Lutuli and Z. K. Matthews were tried for treason under Prime Minister Strijdom, Lutuli was banned from public life under Prime Ministers Malan and Strijdom, and again under Prime Ministers Verwoerd and Vorster.

Robert Sobukwe after Sharpeville was sent to prison for three years, and by special Act of Parliament was detained for six years after that, this happening under Verwoerd and Vorster.

Nelson Mandela was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1964 at the Rivonia Sabotage Trial. Of the four men he is the only one living and is still on Robben Island. Lutuli while still banned died in 1967, Z. K. Matthews while Botswana's Ambassador to Washington died in 1968, Sobukwe while still banned died in 1978.

The four most powerful white men of these times denied to the four most eminent black men any opportunity to play any meaningful part in the life of the country that belonged to them all. The four white men condemned the four black men to a life of unremitting opposition. To be tried for treason, to be banned and silenced, to go to prison, that was the lot of any black person who worked for the political and social emancipation of black people. In the last few decades of our history this has been the inescapable lot of any black politician. To be black, to be a politician, to become influential, these were the passports to a hard life of sacrifice. It remains only to add that not one of these four men ever turned his back on such sacrifice.

This book is the edited autobiography of one of the four, Z. K. Matthews. The story of his childhood and young manhood is fascinating. What were its characteristics? First, the possession of parents who would make any sacrifice for their son. Second, the possession by the son of a hunger for learning. Third, the possession by parents and children of a deep religion and an unswerving adherence to principle and to high standards of conduct. And lastly, the gradual awakening of the young man to the condition of his people, and a growing sense of his inescapable responsibility. Matthews says of the help given him by his father and brother: "I know only that it was an offering of the spirit that is forever beyond repayment. " He felt the same deep gratitude towards his mother.

Matthews writes another fascinating chapter about Fort Hare, to which he went in 1918. He thought Alexander Kerr was a great principal, and had a great admiration for Professor Davidson Jabavu. He thought Bishop William Smyth was a kind of saint. He fell in love with Frieda, daughter of the distinguished minister, the Rev. John Knox Bokwe, became engaged to her in 1925, and married her in 1928, even though her uncles did not at first like the idea of her marrying a foreigner. It was a long and happy marriage.

Matthews watched, without passing judgement, the slow emancipation of Edgar Brookes from his white South African chains. He never thought of Christianity as a "white" religion. His passion for the politics of emancipation was pure and steady. He was not attracted to emotionalism and demagoguery. Matthews never forgot some words written to him by Alexander Kerr when he graduated and left Fort Hare to become the headmaster of Adams College High School.

> You may be tempted to cut yourself off from the rest of your people, or, on the other hand, to an unthinking advocacy of what the mob clamours for. But I am sure you will examine all things with a clarity of intellectual reason.

Had he lived long enough, Kerr would never have been disappointed, for Matthews was to become one of the most sane, most gifted, most respected figures on the entire South African stage.

Monica Wilson has rendered a great service to the political literature of our country. The book relates how Matthews went back to teach at Fort Hare, how he became a member of the Native Representative Council, how in 1955 he became Acting Principal of the University College, how he was arrested for treason on 5 December 1956, how in 1959 the charges against him were quashed. One of the noblest deeds of this noble man was to resign from Fort Hare within two years of retirement. He wrote that it was a "most bitter choice". Ten others resigned with him, among them Sibusiso Nyembezi, Selby Ngcobo and D. G. S. Mtimkulu.

It remains to record that of the four outstanding leaders mentioned earlier, Lutuli, Matthews, Sobukwe, and Mandela, two of them received some reparation for the selfless and difficult lives that they had led. These two were Lutuli and Matthews. In 1961 Lutuli was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, and in 1966 Matthews was appointed by Seretse Khama as the Ambassador from Botswana to Washington. He thus ended his days living in a community which accorded him a deep respect, something which he had received from a mere fraction of his white fellow-South Africans.

Monica Wilson asks in her closing sentence: "what is wrong with South Africa that she continues to drive out, imprison, or destroy such sons?"
What indeed? □

JOHN WESTERN'S OUTCAST CAPE TOWN

(University of Minnesota Press, 1981. xvi + 372 pp., maps, illustrations.)

Reviewed by M. G. Whisson

In his generous foreword, Robert Coles declares, "When the reader has finished this book he/she will know how South Africa's outcasts live." He/she will not, of course, as Western deals specifically with the Cape Town area, overwhelmingly with the "Coloured" rather than with the Black African population, and with the resettlement camps and "homelands" not at all. But the reader will have experienced far more than empathy with those who were driven from their homes by the Group Areas Acts or who have been harassed from shack to shack across the Cape Flats. He will have confronted the central moral issue of South African politics with an inescapable logic.

In the great debate between the nationalists and their opponents, the nationalists' case has rested on a moral pragmatism which may be summarised roughly as follows. Historical circumstances have put together groups of people whose languages, ways of life, material expectations, appearance and culture differ so greatly that ultimate justice and peace can only be achieved through the unambiguous definition of separate spheres of interest, allocations of space and political institutions. To pretend that the Xhosa can lie down and eat potatoes like the Whites (or fish like the Coloureds) is as fanciful in this world as Isaiah's vision of the lion and the ox living in harmony. Where possible the solution to this problem is to be attained through separate independent states, where not possible through separate districts and institutions in the urban areas. Western, a human geographer,sets up a hypothetical model of how an enfranchised group would organise a metropolis in such a way as to ensure not only segregation, but also (and primarily) domination i.e. a conscious attempt to maximise its political advantage. Such a model produces a segmentary plan, the centre being monopolised by the enfranchised, boundaries between the groups being enhanced by arterial roads, railways, industrial belts or even open space, and the segments ordered in such a way that the groups defined as being most distant socially from the enfranchised are in segments with the least common boundary with the ruling group. This is not "apartheid", but the spatial dimension of "baaskap."

What emerges from the ideal type model, when compared with the actual group areas of Cape Town is an 80% correspondence. Put another way, while the representatives of local groups, churches and, notably, Donald Molteno, argued the case for District Six, Mowbray, Wynberg and the other affected areas on a piecemeal basis, the planners were esentially unconcerned with the details or with the individuals concerned, and the hearings did no more than provide them with a short term estimate of the political strength of white opposition in an area largely outside the National Party sphere of influence. Without ever becoming shrill, Western spells out the simplest possible explanation for the "racial" geography of Cape Town today, and deals in turn with the explicable and the inexplicable deviations from his model.

From the macro-analysis of Cape Town, Western proceeds to a detailed account of the experience of the people of Mowbray, a "brown spot" which had grown up before the expanding metropolis swallowed up the ribbon of villages which had developed between Table Bay and False Bay. A hundred or so families with close kinship ties and over a century of unbroken residence in the area were "disqualified" and scattered over the growing Coloured Group Areas. A few mourned their lost homes until they died. Most of those who were able to buy their own homes, while resenting the insult of disqualification, have come to terms with their new environments, welcome the additional space and standard of living at home, and fear mainly the street gangs which lurk in the sub-economic areas and occasionally invade the home owner estates. Those who could not afford to buy their way out of the City-Council-owned ghettos have suffered far more in every imaginable way – in access to amenities, cost of fares to and from school or work, grocery bills, personal safety, contacts with friends and kinsfolk, and in self-esteem. Western tabulates and calculates like any mindless social surveyor, but he also penetrates much deeper into what it feels like to be a victim of the Group Areas Act. He has a good ear for apposite comment, a good eye for symbols, and sensitivity to the suffering of the many strangers who accepted him as a friend.

The final section of **Outcast Cape Town** looks more closely at the real outcasts in the region – those whose homes are unambiguously in the area, but for whom there is no legal space and/or no money to buy legal space. The growth of shanty towns and the draconian measures undertaken by the state to remove them are simply described. Despite the awfulness of what they are doing to the tens of thousands of individual victims, the officials of the Administration Boards and their political masters remind one of the Walrus and the Carpenter.

> "If seven maids with seven mops swept it for half a year, Do you suppose," the Walrus said, "That they could get it clear?"
> "I doubt it," said the Carpenter, and shed a bitter tear.

Not only will they fail to clear the sandy wastes around the mother city, but, if Western's demographic arithmetic is sound, they will be faced by increasing numbers as the millenium reaches its last decade. Just as the houseproud ladies who were driven from Mowbray to the Flats lament that they cannot keep the sand out of their council cottages, so will the Commissioners of the Administration Board lament, ever more loudly, that they cannot sweep away the human dunes blowing in from the thirstlands of the Eastern Cape. And each new effort they make, each new turn of the legal screw, achieves, and will achieve, no more than a further exacerbation of the racial tension and hatred that the whole policy is supposed to prevent.

The tale that Western has to tell is as familiar as it is dreadful, but what he has achieved in his account is a vital measure of detachment and theoretical rigour, a use of statistical and empirical material worthy of Muriel Horrell, and a command of evocative language which our legion of creative "writers" might envy. If at times he rambles, and makes comparisons which tell us more about the breadth of his reading or his assessment of his American readership than about the issue, he can be forgiven, for this is a first work, produced with style and remarkable expedition. □

MANGANYI'S LOOKING THROUGH THE KEYHOLE

(Looking through the Keyhole: N. Chabani Manganyi (Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1981))

Reviewed by J. S. Cumpsty

Every now and again one reads a book dealing with themes central in ones own interest by an author in a different, albeit cognate field, and is greatly enlivened by the experience. Such was my experience in reading this collection of essays by Professor Manganyi.

The sub-title – Dissenting Essays on the Black Experience – in many ways does less than justice to the universal applicability of Manganyi's thinking and the way in which, while remaining wholly committed to the black experience in general and the black South African experience in particular, he has so climbed above this as to be able to discuss the problems at the level of the absurdities present in humanity's existential situation and in the symbols through which men seek to construct their ontologies. It is significant that I read the greater part of the book in Israel while researching changes in Jewish religious symbolism and found it so relevant to that situation that I became quite unreasonably impatient when the author returned to discuss and protest specific aspects of the South African black experience.

The need for the student of a situation to be committed to it and the need for one caught in a situation to climb above it in his thinking are constant themes of this collection. We are told that to know the truth of ones own situation is not yet to be a philosopher.

There are so many particular themes in this collection, responsible architecture, black housing, migrant workers, Africanization of the universities, the role of the social sciences in social change, the roots of polarity in white ontology, that one is constantly surprised by the way in which the essays cohere, but they do so because the significance of the symbolic is never far from the centre of the author's concern and central to his interest in the symbolic is what he calls the paradox of culture and identity. The symbolic identity that the individual inherits and/or creates for himself is achieved by marking himself off from other individuals in his culture and yet is dependent upon his belonging to that culture and sharing in its symbols. Likewise the shared symbolic identity of a community depends upon its ability to distinguish itself from other communities and yet also on being a part of the wider reality comprised of itself and those other communities. If the lines of demarcation are too firmly drawn the reality of the total frame of reference in which they are drawn and from which they gain their significance diminishes in the ensuing fragmentation.

From such a central concern all manner of questions arise and the book explores many of them. The interview with Ezekiel Mphahlele not only sets the scene of the collected essays in South African black experience but also makes plain that however unsatisfactory we may judge the context and quality of our upbringing to have been, therein lie our roots. We may go on from thence, but to deny them or have them denied for us would involve the most traumatic unselfing.

Manganyi then explores the role of the writer in the creation and development of appropriate symbols in a developing community and the fruits of inhibiting such imagination. He explores in terms of his own discipline of psychology the costs in mental health of the clash of cultures, the need for the western form of the discipline to learn from the African experience and the possibility of a therapeutic culture.

The significance for black identity of migrant employment, the qualities of private and public space and of tertiary education, are dealt with specifically as is the black response to the situation.

While the polarity in white ontology is undeniable and evidence of its outworking is to be seen all around us, I find the explanation of its roots and indeed its evaluation in the essay "The Body-for-Others" less than convincing. In the entire book it is only in the first part of this essay that the logic of the discussion might not be readily discernible to the non-specialist reader.

Just as this collection is not limited to black experience, so it is not limited to dissent. Throughout there are positive and specific suggestions for improving the situation but beyond this, the level at which the problems are dealt with encourages every one of us to climb out of our entrenched positions.

I have chosen to review this book in terms of the theme which seems to me to hold it together; there are however many gems of particular insights scattered throughout and the whole is eminently readable. □