



Dr ALAN PATON

Alan Paton, internationally acclaimed author of *Cry, The Beloved Country*, liberal and lifetime foe of racism and apartheid, died this year. In his last book, *Save The Beloved Country*, (Hans Strydom Publishers), a collection of some of his most famous articles and speeches since 1965, he wrote on disinvestment under the titles: *An act of Immorality* and *My nightmare*.

In *An Act of Immorality in Leadership SA* in May 1985 he explained: "I take very seriously the teachings of the Gospel, in particular the parables about giving drink to the thirsty and food to the hungry. It seems to me that Jesus attached supreme - indeed sacred - significance to such actions. Therefore, I will not help to cause any such suffering to any black person ... I am told that this is a simplistic understanding of the teachings of the Gospel. Let it be so. That is the way I choose to understand them. I am also told that I am ignoring the views of those black South Africans who support disinvestment. Most of these black South Africans will not be the ones to suffer hunger and thirst. Many of them are sophisticated, highly educated, safely placed. I also know sophisticated and highly educated black men and women who will have nothing to do with disinvestment. I choose to associate myself with them. I am told that, although I believe my views to be moral, they are, in fact, immoral because I will not take the side of those black people who want disinvestment. This is a new interpretation of morality to me, that I ought to adopt certain views because some influ-



ential black people hold them. I do not hold these views because they are acceptable - or not acceptable - to either black people or white people. I do not consider that the welfare of black people or the welfare of white people are the supreme considerations. The supreme consideration to me is the welfare of my country and therefore the welfare of all its people ... There is an often-heard declaration: "We do not mind suffering. We are used to suffering." But this again is often the declaration of those who will suffer least. To put it briefly, my conscience would not allow me to support disinvestment. For I must ask myself - and my readers who are concerned to do what is right - how long must the suffering it would cause go on before the desired end is achieved? A month? Two months? A year? Five or 10 year perhaps?..."

Dr Alan Paton :

"There is only one firm statement that I can make on disinvestment, that I will have nothing to do with it. I will not, by any written or spoken word, give it any support whatsoever."

MY NIGHTMARE

In another short piece entitled *My Nightmare*, Dr Paton writes that in a dream he becomes President of the World Disinvestment Campaign. The job queues grow longer. Unrest breaks out. A tall woman carrying a child and dressed in black comes to see him. "She looks like a sculpture of the Sorrow of the World. She gives me the child and I see that it is dead.

- Why do you give this to me?

- BECAUSE IT IS YOURS

How can it be mine? I have never seen you before?

- YOU TOOK ITS LIFE, THEREFORE IT IS YOURS.

She goes out of the study and calls to me. She points to the waiting women.

- THEY WILL BRING THEIR CHILDREN TOO.

"...when the police have taken away the body of the child I come to a decision. I get into my car... and I buy something I have never bought before. It is a gun. I go home and go into my study with the drawn blinds. There, surrounded by all the hundreds of books and papers that I wrote for the World Disinvestment Campaign, I shoot myself to death..."



INHLABAMKHOSI

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