

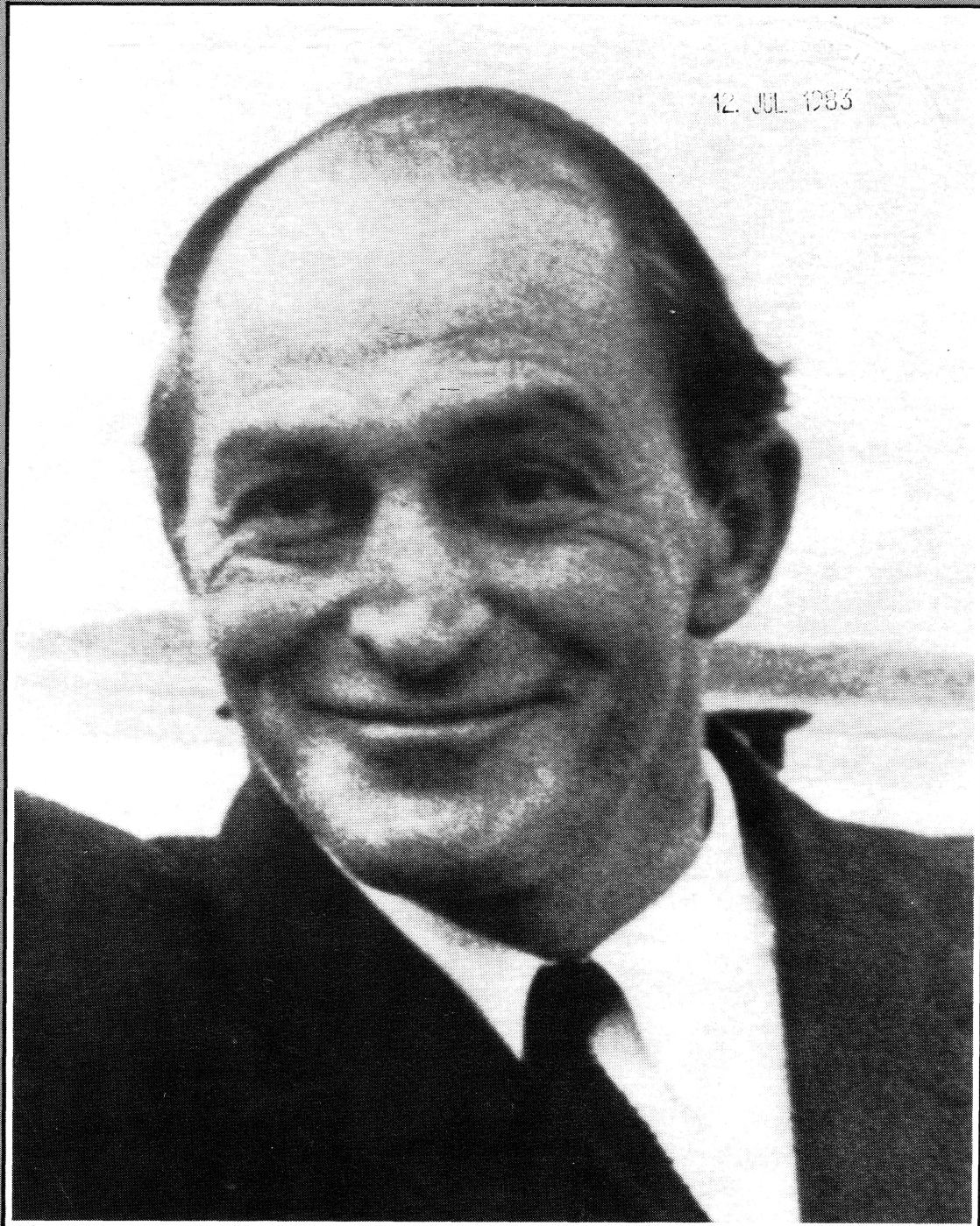
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# reality

July 1983

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A JOURNAL OF LIBERAL AND RADICAL OPINION



**Professor Raymond (Bill) Hoffenberg  
93rd President of the Royal College of Physicians**

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COVER PICTURE (taken on Bill Hoffenberg's departure from South Africa in 1969) — The Cape Argus.

Articles printed in **Reality** do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Editorial Board.

## EDITORIALS

### 1. BILL HOFFENBERG

Sixteen years ago Bill Hoffenberg was a lecturer in the University of Cape Town's Medical School. Today he is the President of the Royal College of Physicians. Few people can have been so dramatically assisted to the highest office in their profession by a government they so detested.

Besides being a lecturer at UCT Bill Hoffenberg was a member or supporter of the Defence and Aid Fund, the Liberal Party and the National Union of Students. None of these was particularly radical in the sense that the world understands that term, but they were anathema to the Nationalists. They banned the Defence and Aid Fund, forced the Liberal Party to close because of its non-racial membership, and continue to persecute NUSAS to this day. They also banned Bill Hoffenberg, making it impossible for him to continue with his teaching, and eventually forcing him to leave the country for the United

Kingdom, where his great talents as doctor and person have now received their just reward.

His honour has delighted all Bill Hoffenberg's old friends at home but it has reminded them of the great damage the banning system has done to our country. Bill's ban shattered his life, and when he rebuilt it, it was to serve the United Kingdom, not South Africa. Nobody even knows how many thousand other lives bans have shattered. And who can estimate what all those lives, lived out fully and freely here, might not have done to help resolve our problems? The waste of time and human potential has been incalculable.

We suspect that the new President of the Royal College of Physicians would gladly swop that distinguished post for almost any teaching job in a medical school in South Africa. It would be nice to be able to hope that, before he relinquishes it, we would be able to welcome him back to the kind of South Africa in which he would like to teach. □

## 2. AFTER THE BOMB

Has the drift to political violence in South Africa now become an uncontrollable slide? We ask the question not only in the light of the Pretoria bomb blast and the Government's reaction to it, but in the light also of a new readiness to turn to violence at other levels of our political life. Consider the following catalogue of only some of the better-known incidents of the recent past.

Griffiths Mxenge, Durban lawyer and ex-ANC member, was kidnapped and later found brutally murdered. That was eighteen months ago and there has still been no arrest. Saul Mkize was shot by a policeman while leading a protest meeting against the Government's plan to destroy his freehold Driefontein community. Since then two other members of that community have died in detention.

The once peaceful Durban township of Lamontville is now racked with factional violence. Harrison Dube, leader of a campaign against government proposed rent increases, was shot to death outside his home by two masked gunmen. At his funeral a teacher, accused of being a police informer by some of the mourners, was attacked by them and killed. The following week, at the funeral of yet another young man shot at a demonstration, part of the crowd did their best to kill a leading member of Inkatha, and ended the day by dancing on the grave of the teacher murdered the week before. Outside Cape Town the squatter communities have once again been driven out of their meagre shelters as the worst of winter sets in, and with greater vigour and ruthlessness than ever before. Throughout the country the incidence of deaths from arbitrary and reckless use of their guns by the police increases steadily.

The Rule of Law, which once seemed to hold sway in South Africa, has taken a battering these past 35 years, so one should perhaps not be surprised to see the law of the jungle taking over, not only amongst the Government's supporters but also amongst its opponents. And, as the Pretoria bomb and the retaliatory raids on Maputo remind us, it is not only at the local level that this is happening. Those, of course, were merely the latest and grimmest in a sequence of incidents stretching back beyond the first SADF raid on Maputo, each of which has either claimed or threatened innocent lives. An eye for an eye has become the order of the day, and what more destructive slogan could there be than that? As Gandhi reminded us, all it can lead to is total, mindless blindness on both sides.

Can this slide to a South American kind of anarchy be stopped? It certainly won't be by the Nationalists' new constitutional proposals, which merely entrench the cause of the bombings, the exclusion of black South Africans from the machinery of power. The proposals do worse than that. They perpetuate the illusion in the minds of the Government's supporters that it has a policy, which the new constitution will embody, which can satisfy black aspirations. Unfortunately for them apartheid, whatever it is called and in whatever form it is presented, will never do that; and until that simple point is recognised, and the Nationalists are willing to talk about an alternative, the bombings will, we suspect, continue and spread.

Is there any prospect that the Government, having extracted its measure of vengeance for the horrors of the Pretoria bomb by its Maputo raids, will now really sit down and think about the consequences of where it is leading us all to, black and white? Or is it so blinded by its own propaganda that it sees every act against it and every criticism of it as part of the total, Moscow-orchestrated onslaught on it?

A future composed of an escalating series of mindless reactions to mindless acts is the last thing that any country needs, so what do we do to divert our country from that course? If we were all Gandhis we would know what to do and do it, but our history since 1948 has shown us that we have no Gandhis here. The role of us lesser mortals who reject violence, either because we have experienced it and didn't like it, or because we reject it as a solution to any problem, or because we do indeed think its probable consequences are too ghastly to contemplate, may turn out to be an unspectacular one. Unless new and effective means of bringing non-violent pressure to bear on the Government can be devised, our task may be the humble one of plodding on; keeping the light of sanity burning; trying to brake the slide to indiscriminate violence; keeping alive the ideal of a future South Africa where rights and responsibilities are shared by all. Not a spectacular job, for sure, but not one to be scoffed at either. For one day, in their desperation, the Nationalists may be forced to turn to just such people, to help save them from the disaster of their past, and to mediate for them with the black South Africans whose rejection has, since 1948, been the cornerstone of their policy. □

# THE QUOTA BILL

by A.W. Stadler.

The Department of National Education has drafted legislation which changes the form of the government's racially-based university admissions policy. The system of ministerial exemptions which has operated since 1971 will be replaced by a racial quota system. The operative clause in the new bill (clause 9) is simply an enabling one which does not even mention quotas, and in theory it could enable the Minister to remove race from the criteria for admission to South African universities.

No one believes this is the intention of the bill. Indeed, while some university administrators believe there are administrative conveniences in the proposed system, others are deeply uneasy about it, not only because it continues to affront the principle of university autonomy and the right claimed by the "open universities" (Cape Town, Natal, Rhodes, and Witwatersrand) to admit students solely on the basis of academic criteria, but because of some of its other implications. Among these implications is the threat of financial sanctions over universities which exceed the quota set by the Minister. At present, a black student who succeeded in registering at a university without getting ministerial permission would be penalised, not the university. The new bill meets the difficulty of ensuring that universities will observe the quota by combining the enabling clause referred to earlier with the clause in the present act which states the conditions for the determination of the state's subsidy to universities. This sanction is not explicitly stated in the bill, nor has the issue been raised in public, but it seems the logical way of applying sanctions in a situation in which it would clearly be absurd to try and select culprits from among students of a particular race in a group which is larger than the approved quota.

Another worry is the possibility that the quota might be varied from year to year either to reward or punish particular universities. The quota could also be used to allocate students to different universities in a way that would favour the government-sponsored Vista University for blacks, which has just opened its doors.

The notion of a racial quota is repugnant to many university people because of its associations with the universities of Tsarist Russia and countries in eastern Europe in times long past. (Perhaps the one thing that might facetiously be claimed on behalf of racial quotas is that the Nazis did not use them: they simply excluded Jews from the Universities.) Above all the "open" universities are worried by the likelihood that they will be involved in the detailed administration of a racially based quota. They can at present claim quite legitimately to have clean hands, though a purist could argue that they know the race of their students and are thereby compromised.

The universities have responded to the proposal rather slowly. So far there has been none of the drama which attended the passing of the Extension of University Education Act in 1959. The reasons for this are complex — among them, simply that for more than 20 years the universities have become inured to a whole series of intrusions by the state. In any case, the four English-speaking universities have issued a joint statement rejecting the proposal outright as a matter of principle. The statement does not debate the relative demerits of two objectionable systems.

## THREE STAGES

We can identify three stages in the development of state intervention and control over South African universities during the past quarter century. Each stage corresponds to a major thrust in government policy. During the first stage, lasting roughly from the mid-1950's to the end of the 1960's, state intervention took the form of excluding blacks from the so-called white universities and establishing separate ethnic universities, mainly in the homelands. That stage corresponded to the development of total separation, **apartheid** in its Verwoerdian formulation. The ethnic universities meshed perfectly into the political strategy underlying the development of the homelands states. As the policy of apartheid established a privileged elite in positions of power in the homelands, so too did the universities provide a milieu for the training of a subaltern class of administrators and teachers.

The second stage was marked by the system of ministerial exemption formalised in 1971. It matched the attempts made in other areas to make the administration of apartheid more flexible; it did not mark a shift in the purpose of the state. The main framework of apartheid had been achieved; within that framework flexibility was needed to deal, for instance, with the problems of minority, like the Indian community of Johannesburg, who became the main beneficiaries of the policy of ministerial exemptions during the 1970's.

The third stage, marked partly, but only partly, by the proposal to introduce a quota system at the universities, reflects the extremely complex set of developments in state reconstruction which has loosely been termed "total strategy." Before looking at the logic of this strategy and its implications for universities, it is worth emphasising that each stage has involved an effort by the government to generate a policy for the universities which corresponds to its overall policy for the state as a whole. The second point to be stressed is that each stage in the development of government policy is cumulative and

continuous with the previous stage, though it also should be recognised that each stage is marked by a certain degree of provisionality. In these terms, total strategy is not fundamentally a departure from earlier developments. Total strategy is a total strategy for the defence of the existing political order. Nevertheless, the changes it contains are likely to be revolutionary; we could sum up its contradictions in the phrase from Lampedusa's novel, **The Leopard**, in which a character says: "If things are going to stay the same around here, things are going to have to change."

Unlike earlier phases in the development of state policy, which were, as far as universities are concerned, essentially regulative and coercive, the phase we are entering is not in essence simply concerned with imposing a form of external controls over the universities, though these are part of it. In general, we will miss much of the meaning of total strategy if we see it simply as a set of repressive controls. Total strategy reflects, in part, an effort to elicit the cooperation and cooption of social and political institutions. It should be remembered that the strategy evolved out of the recognition that repression alone could not guarantee the survival of the South African state. It is only apparently a paradox that this insight was achieved by the military, whose main business is repression, and which therefore has an extremely acute understanding of the limits of repression. Total strategy is aimed at the legitimisation of controls as much as controls themselves. The system of total strategy is extremely complicated, and it is by no means possible to isolate a single determinate principle which explains its implications for universities.

## NO GUIDELINES

One might think that one would find some guidelines in the pronouncements of the President's Council, but as far as I can see that ruminative corporation has said nothing about universities beyond stating its approval for the De Lange Commission. It could be argued that the proposed quota system represents a tactic for reconciling the De Lange Commission's objective of providing "equal opportunities for education . . . for every inhabitant, irrespective of race, colour or creed . . ." with the existing structure of apartheid in every level of the educational system. To pursue such a policy would require a more flexible and collaborative relationship between the state and the universities. The De Lange report itself provides an interesting set of ideas about the implications of total strategy for the universities, for it is quite explicitly committed to creating an educational system concerned with developing manpower and integrating and coordinating the educational system as a coherent instrument of state strategies.

Some other elements of a strategy can be found in the earlier reports of the HSRC; for instance the plan for research in the human sciences, produced in 1980, attempted to identify and explore what it called "national problem areas." Such areas were defined broadly as ones which threatened the welfare, happiness and prosperity of all inhabitants, i.e. "causing group conflict, impeding the realisation of human potential, impoverishing the quality of life, hampering the optimal exploitation of the country's natural and human resources, and endangering the security of the state." It also made clear that research would be combined into a national research effort, an effort which would be directed "towards the needs of

the decision-maker among others . . ." These provide some hints about the implications of total strategy for university research. One might sum up the broadest features of total strategy in the following terms: (i) to centralise and rationalise state power and decision-making within a powerful central institution (the executive presidency) and to develop a close collaboration and liaison between state policy makers and the security forces;

(ii) to coopt particular groups and institutions into new political structures; (iii) to depoliticise policy and decision-making arenas by making them inaccessible to popular control and pressure through a variety of devices; for example, through the institution of ethnic parliaments with partial and limited powers, the development of class-biased franchise and delimitation systems in local and regional levels. Such devices would enervate and fragment opposition to a powerful and technically competent set of institutions in the central government.

## LEGITIMATION

It was mentioned earlier that the premise of total strategy is that repression and coercion were insufficient to achieve the goal of social peace, or as I would prefer to call it, legitimisation. The universities are, or could become, important instruments of legitimisation for a number of reasons.

Firstly, universities have always been agents of legitimisation by providing opportunities for the upward social mobility of limited numbers of gifted, ambitious or aggressive members of subordinate classes. A degree provides a route out of the working class. The opportunities so provided have always been limited, but the fact that they exist provides a safety valve which can help in generating legitimacy. Universities have also been involved in educating the professions which are involved in producing welfare — medicine, education, planning and so on. Welfare functions themselves are crucial in achieving legitimacy, and indeed in generating some of the conditions for economic growth at certain stages of economic development. It has been argued that the growth rates achieved in the United States and Europe during the 1950's and the 1960's were largely explicable as a consequence of the expansion of the "welfare/warfare" state.

In the current stage of this country's history, welfare problems are escalating at an alarming rate. We see the consequences in areas like Transkei and Kwa-Zulu of generations of under-development in the rural areas. The welfare crisis coincides, not fortuitously, with the intensification of crises in other areas; with mounting and more open confrontations with the state; with pressures on wages (which stimulate the search for labour-saving measures); with growing social conflict and disintegration, and, consequently, an escalation of the security forces' demands on state revenues.

The current pressures on the universities could be seen as an effect of some of these issues, for they potentially can be harnessed into efforts to generate physical and human capital, research and development which facilitates and reduces the costs of producing this capital; and the development of technical and managerial skills.

Personally, I believe the universities do have social obligations, but that they cannot be properly or adequately discharged within the framework of an authoritarian strategy designed to perpetuate apartheid. □

# COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS: UNOMPILO IN THE VALLEY OF A THOUSAND HILLS

By Irwin Friedman

In the rural areas of the world it is clearly evident to most that Medicine has failed. It has failed for several reasons, but perhaps the most poignant has been that in its attempts to personalize and humanize medicine by providing "only the best", it has placed itself out of reach of nearly all poor rural people.

In order to tackle some of the most basic shortcomings and inequities in care among rural populations, it has been suggested that the people themselves could help to provide for their own health care and thus decrease their dependency on outside health care systems with their high costs. While this idea met with an initial howl of protest from most professional groups, it has nevertheless become evident that community groups are keen to play an increasing role in the promotion of their own health. Members of communities who have become involved in these health activities are known by many different names including titles such as Village Health Agents, Village Health Workers, Community Health Aides, etc. The generic name for all these types of health workers is Community Health Worker. In the Valley of a Thousand Hills the Community Health Workers have elected to call themselves ONOMPILO, a name derived from the Zulu word PHILA to "be in good health."



*Regular monthly weighing.*

There are several reasons for believing that Community Health Workers can be successful in health promotion. In the first place, the Community Health Workers are of the community and live among the people. They are easy for people to contact, are familiar with the terrain, culture, language and specific problems of the area. With their special sympathies for the members of their own community and provided the Community Health Workers themselves believe in the value of the health programme, they seem more able than trained professionals to elicit support for the programme. This has had particular significance in the field of health education where previous approaches have not been particularly successful. As they are either volunteers or paid by the local community, they are always accountable locally for their behaviour, not to a remote bureaucratic government. Compared to other professions, their remuneration, if they receive any remuneration at all, is low, keeping the cost of health care within the means of the poor. Furthermore it is possible for many more individuals to participate, providing better coverage, particularly in remote areas. This has meant that health issues previously felt to be problematical, even impossible, have become manageable. When these benefits are weighed against the enormous cost of training skilled professionals, such as doctors and nurses, the recurrent cost of their salaries, and the reluctance of highly-trained professionals to work in rural areas once trained, it is evident that the training of large numbers of Community Health Workers should be a high priority in the developing world.

## ONOMPILO IN THE VALLEY OF A THOUSAND HILLS

For those unfamiliar with the area, the Valley of a Thousand Hills is an area of KwaZulu bordering the Pietermaritzburg-Durban corridor. It is an area famed for its scenic beauty and renowned as the area of operation of the Valley Trust Socio-Medical Project, which for over three decades has been a nucleus of health promotion in the area.

The landscape is characterized by numerous plateaus, hills and valleys, the steep hills being broken in places by granite outcroppings and steep ravines. Prominent in the area is the Nyuswa plateau, referred to in Zulu as InKangala, and said once to have been fertile and to have produced tall and soft grass which was a delicacy to stock and also used for thatching. This has given way, however, to a stunted hard grass known as Ingongoni, said to be evidence of impoverished soils. The life of the people has in many ways mirrored the changes in the veld. The abundant life of yesterday has given way to the harsh realities of poverty and underdevelopment in the twentieth century. Until the arrival in 1951 of the socio-medical complex comprising the Botha's Hill Health Centre, Valley Trust and Don McKenzie Centre



*Sister Shange and Onompilo including Isangomas*

(a TB Hospital), malnutrition, tuberculosis and other diseases were rife. While these diseases still occur in the area, there appears to have been a decline since these projects were initiated. As an extension to the work and to further consolidate the philosophy of securing active involvement from the local people, the Community Care project, aimed at training Community Health Workers was launched as a joint project in 1980.

As with most new ideas, several people, mostly professionals, felt sceptical about the idea of Community Health Workers in the Valley of a Thousand Hills. It was argued for example that the idea had been tried elsewhere and failed, that people would not work without being paid and that it probably required the training of a nurse at the very least to promote health. So strong, however, has been the response of the Community to the introduction of the modest training programme, that it seems most of the misgivings will prove to be baseless.

From several studies that have been undertaken in the area to determine the major health problems and the needs of the people, it has been established that gastro-enteritis, respiratory diseases (including tuberculosis), other infectious diseases, injuries and accidents are common causes of illness and death in the area. Malnutrition, although less overtly present than was previously the case, still appeared to be an associated factor in the severity of much of the illness. These illnesses are further compounded by related problems such as illiteracy, poor knowledge of agriculture, water and soil conservation, poverty, inadequate technology and potentially harmful traditional practices and the inequity of the society at large.

It was clear that if Community Health Workers were to assist they would need a very broad background. It was also clear that most of the major problems were virtually completely preventable by improving conditions and

knowledge in the community. Better and more abundant food, clean, plentiful water supplies, and improved living conditions would probably be of greater utility than would increasing the availability of medicines and traditional medical services. Hence it did not seem a priority to incorporate into the idea of the Community Health Worker the therapeutic role of other 'barefoot doctors' whose major role was to dispense medicines and other curative treatments. Not that these skills should not be taught, but to emphasize their importance in contrast to the importance of promotive skills would merely result in mimicking the worst aspects of modern medicine, which has consistently failed to deal satisfactorily with diseases that have simply remedial causes.

#### AVAILABLE RESOURCES

It has been the feeling that considerable impact can be made on the occurrence of many common diseases, by teaching the community strategies of dealing with these devastating illnesses by improved use of locally available resources. Malnutrition, for example, has been tackled by encouraging breast feeding, promoting knowledge of what constitutes a well balanced diet, and giving advice on how this can be achieved using foods that are readily available locally. Gastro-enteritis, the major killer in the area, has been attacked by attempting to improve water supplies, hygiene and sanitation. Furthermore, in an attempt to reduce the mortality from the disease, the early use of oral rehydration solutions, made in the home using simple substances such as glucose or sugar, salt and fruit juice has been encouraged. Tuberculosis has been confronted by the introduction of sound nutrition and a strenuous effort made to achieve adequate early treatment of infected individuals.

Community Health Workers have therefore been trained initially in simple health promotion skills. To this has

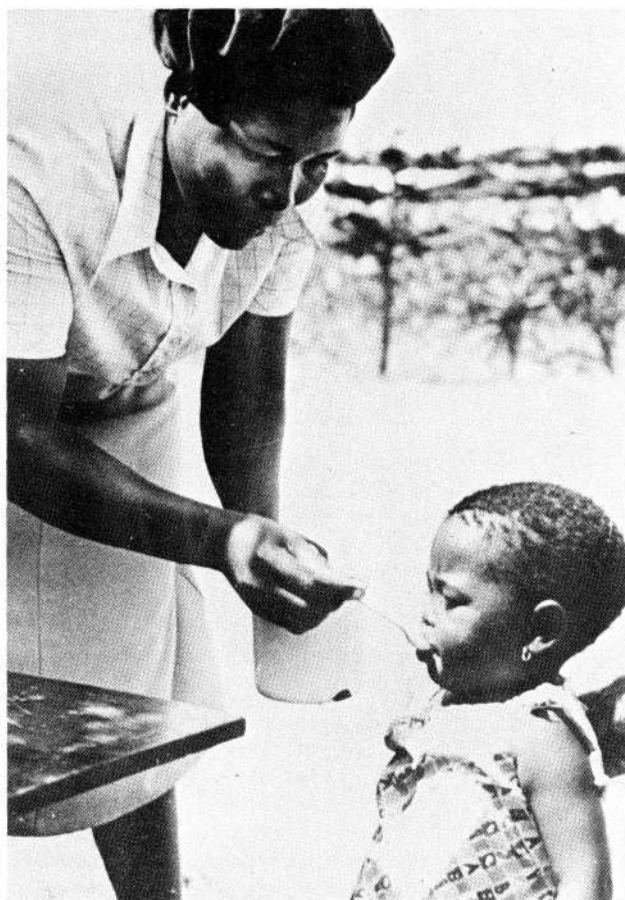
been added a knowledge of how to teach literacy. First Aid was also taught, as well as how to deal with social problems. Not only has each new skill taught been of value in that it could be used to assist members of the community, but it has been a very real step forward in the education of the individuals concerned, most of whom have lacked previous opportunities for advancing their own education as adults. For the majority, this was the first available adult education programme and their first opportunity to acquire a basic training. Added to this incentive was the knowledge that health in the family and community would improve and particularly that the lives of children could be saved. Remuneration for work undertaken, has therefore never become an issue. Quite the reverse, the voluntary nature of the work has dignified the status of the Community Health Worker and removed the stigma of any surreptitious motives being behind the programme.

There are currently about two hundred voluntary Community Health Workers organized among themselves into eight different care groups in an area of about two hundred and fifty square kilometers. It is of interest that the majority of Community Health Workers are women, particularly middle-aged women with families, indeed some of the most influential women in the community. They have the time and maturity to appreciate the significance of caring for their families. As housewives rather than breadwinners, it is not their primary responsibility to earn income. They are also relatively deprived of educational experiences and the opportunity to expand their functions as their families leave home, provides an outlet for their desire to be useful. There are nonetheless, also many younger women and some men. Community Health Workers are therefore not exclusively women. In some of the areas, the men have begun to participate by assisting the women to build a literacy school and centre for the activities. In other areas, men have participated directly by assisting with water supply and sanitation.

#### TYPES OF PEOPLE

Some of the Community Health Workers are of great interest in that they represent examples of the types of people that have become deeply involved and committed to the project. One such person, is Mrs Alvina Bhengu, an Isangoma or traditional practitioner who has incorporated very successfully the knowledge she has acquired into her practice. What is of great importance is that she has, by personal demonstration, convinced herself of the efficacy of using the home-made oral rehydration solution to treat diarrhoea and abandoned the traditional idea of using an enema to "wash the poison out". She does this now not because she believes what she was told in this regard, but because she observed that several dehydrated children with sunken eyes and depressed fontanelles recovered when given oral rehydration fluids. Furthermore she has noted that children with Kwashiorkor improve when given a diet rich in body building and protective foods. (i.e. proteins, vitamins and minerals respectively.)

Another interesting personality, Mrs Magdalen Dladla, the matron of a successful creche, has used her knowledge to the benefit of the children, while at the same time popularizing the idea of creches in the area, not only to improve the diet of the children of working mothers, but to provide an environment to stimulate the intellectual development of children in the pre-school age groups.



*Oral rehydration therapy.*

Several others, housewives such as Mrs Mweli and Mrs Nxele have become inspired literacy teachers. One of the Onompilo, a rural woman with a mild mental disability, has surprised even her teachers by her determination and has become a very patient literacy teacher, teaching not only members of the community to read and write, but some of her own colleagues to do so as well. It is a credit to her courage, that the chairlady of her own group has been taught by her to write, gaining a sense of dignity and pride in the process.

Currently the Community Health Workers are learning home nursing while they assist practically in the Health Centre, Medical Ward at the Don McKenzie Centre and Valley Trust. They are also, on an increasing scale assisting the community by advising on a wide range of matters. They weigh children and monitor their growth, advise mothers on infant feeding and immunization, provide simple first aid and rehydrate children who have diarrhoea.

While it is impossible to trace the success of the project to any one individual or organization it is difficult to imagine that there could have been any success whatsoever without the dedicated and imaginative professional work of the first two sisters who initiated the project and carried through the ideas, Sisters Doris Mbhele and Beauty Shange. Similarly without the faith and funding by TOC H, a humanitarian group of war veteran workers, the project would be little more than an idea. But in the final analysis it is the volunteers from within the community itself, that have outstripped all expectations and set in motion a project that appears to have a significant potential for the promotion of health in the area. □



## UNOMPILO

Magciwane nawe kufa  
Sengi uNompilo manje  
Bengisithekile iminyaka  
Nizitika ngegazi labafowethu  
Ngingakafundi ngezempilo

Gciwane lofuba  
Thatha ezakho izikhali  
Nami ngithathe ezami  
Ngiqinile ngihlakaniphile  
Sengiyazi ngezimpawu zakho

Kufa ake ume kude  
Kengifundise umphakathi  
Ukuze ungibonge ngobuqhawe bami  
Ngizobafundisa ngezenhlanzeko  
Hawu kumnandi ukuba uNompilo

Bumnyama nawe kungazi  
Hlukanani nami manje  
Angiyena owakwenu  
Sibane kuphela kithi  
uDOKOTELA, uMHLENGIKAZI, UMLIMISI,  
NAMI u"NOPHILO"

*Magdalen Dladla*

## THE HEALTH WORKER

Listen Germs, and you as well Death,  
I am now a Health Worker.  
For years I've been in hiding,  
You were living off our brothers' blood  
While I hadn't yet learned about Health.

Germs of the chest,  
Take your weapons!  
I, as well, will take my own,  
I am strong and I am wise,  
I know about your signs now.

And you Death keep off!  
Let me teach the community  
Who one day will praise me for my  
endeavour,  
I will teach them about cleanliness,  
Oh! It's good to be a Health Worker.

Darkness, and you as well Ignorance,  
Away with you now!  
I am no longer one of your people,  
There are just four of us in our area,  
The Doctor, the Nurse, the Agricultural  
Adviser,  
and me, the Health Worker.

*Magdalen Dladla*

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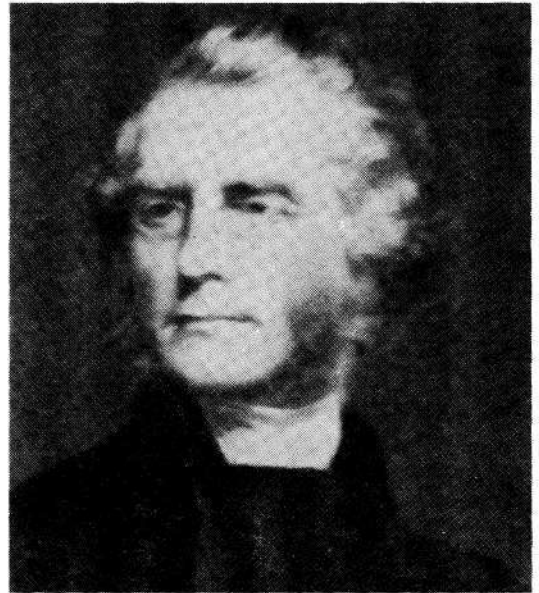
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# COLENZO: SUCCESS OR FAILURE?



An extract from the conclusion of *The Heretic: A Study of the Life of John William Colenso, 1814-1883*, about to be published by the University of Natal Press and Ravan Press.

by Jeff Guy.

What assessment can be made of John Colenso's life after one hundred years? In terms of what he himself set out to achieve the answer must be that he failed. The plans to spread light through Natal by means of missionary enterprise were abandoned many years before his death. The project to reform his church from within and thereby enable it to incorporate in its teaching the historical and scientific findings of the age ended with Colenso's name being associated, not with a New Reformation, but with pedantry and fruitless, debilitating controversy. The following stanza from *Hymns Ancient and Modern* is said to refer to Colenso's writings and the repercussions they had in the Church of England:

Though with a scornful wonder  
Men see her sore opprest,  
By schisms rent asunder,  
By heresies distrest,  
Yet Saints their watch are keeping,  
Their cry goes up, 'How long?'  
And soon the night of weeping  
Shall be the morn of song.<sup>1</sup>

Matthew Arnold described the Bishop of Natal as "that favourite pontiff of the Philistines"<sup>2</sup> and Browning wrote these dismissive lines:

The candid incline to surmise of late  
That the Christian faith may be false, I find;  
For our Essays-and-Reviews' debate  
Begins to tell on the public mind,  
And Colenso's words have weight:<sup>3</sup>

Colenso was banished from the religious world which meant so much to him. His victories in the courts, which he believed established his rights within the Church of England, had little practical effect: legal decisions could do nothing in the face of doctrinal antagonism, and when the missionary societies withdrew their financial support it became impossible for Colenso to minister effectively. Most hurtful of all was the fact that his biblical criticism — his contribution to religious scholarship upon which he worked to the end of his life with scrupulous attention and which he saw as his intellectual legacy — was first attacked, then dismissed as tasteless and slight, and finally ignored. Mrs. Colenso's hope that her husband "should live to see some appreciation of his labors" was never fulfilled. When she read in the 1870s that the English

bishops were moving towards a more liberal position on the question of scriptural inspiration Mrs. Colenso wrote,

Yet they don't come forwards as they ought, and say — you were right and we were wrong and we retract all our hard words against you! Oh no — we always knew that — only you expressed it so coarsely, we were shocked at you! Just think of the violent abuse which has been poured out upon him for making it plain to the common people that Moses did not write the P.(entateuch) and that the various and many un-divine things, diabolical rather — or rather things belonging to a savage age — which the P. contains, did not come down from the Supreme, from a supernatural and supernal sphere. And now not a word of just or generous apology, or confession, but they go on talking of Colensoism as if it were the equivalent of Atheism, or of the lowest materialism.<sup>4</sup>

And in the last decade of his life Colenso was forced to watch distaste overtake the Africans whose cause he had adopted as his own, and suffer the charge that he was directly responsible for the bloodshed.

## CONSOLATION

Just before he died Colenso did receive one small consolation, in the form of a public tribute made, in the teeth of abuse, by Arthur Stanley, Dean of Westminster, at a meeting of the SPG:

Speaking to you as a Society for the Propagation of the Gospel I am ashamed that these questions should occupy your attention, relating as they do to one who, as a propagator of the Gospel, will be remembered long after you are all dead and buried. I know everything I say will be received with ridicule and contumely. Nevertheless, I say that, long after we are dead and buried, his memory will be treasured as that of the one missionary Bishop in South Africa who translated the Scriptures into the language of the tribes to which he was sent to minister; the one Bishop who, by his researches and by his long and patient investigations, however much you may disapprove of them, has left a permanent mark upon English theology, — yes, though you may ridicule, I say the one Bishop who, assailed by scurrilous and unscrupulous invective unexampled in the controversy of this country, and almost in the history, miserable as it is, of religious controversy itself, continued his researches in a manner in which he stood quite alone, and never returned one

word of harshness to his accusers; the one Bishop who was revered by the natives who asked him to intercede for them with the Government, and that without reference to any other Bishop in South Africa; the one Bishop to whom the natives came long distances to place themselves under his protection, or even to have the pleasure of looking upon his countenance. I say there will be one Bishop who, by his bold theology – (interruption) – there will be one Bishop who, when his own interests were on one side and the interests of a poor savage chief on the other, did not hesitate to sacrifice his own; and with a manly generosity, for which this Society has not a word of sympathy, did his best to protect the suppliant, did not hesitate to come over from Africa to England to plead the cause of the poor and unfriended savage, and when he had secured the support of the Colonial Office, (unlike other colonial Bishops) immediately went back to his diocese. For all these things the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel appears to have no sympathy; but, you may depend upon it, in the world at large, wherever Natal is mentioned, they will win admiration, and posterity will say that, among the propagators of the Gospel in the nineteenth century, the Bishop of Natal was not the least efficient.<sup>5</sup>

While there has been recognition in the hundred years since Colenso's death it has usually been qualified, and nothing like that which Stanley predicted on this occasion. Once time had softened the reality of Colenso's presence, colonial Natal was able to incorporate the Bishop into its gallery of quaint Victorians who, gaitered, waistcoated or bonnetted, trip through the pages of the colony's histories or, when the circumstances demand it, defend civilisation with grit and determination. Colenso's reputation amongst Africans remained high for many years. In the 1890s some Zulu ministers were reported to have said "there was no white man living who was a safe guide for native African people'. Bishop Colenso . . . 'was the last of the race of true white man friends, and . . . no living white man, whether carrying guns or not, would in the end, when war came, be friends of black men.'" <sup>6</sup> In 1900 John Kumalo, who had been educated at Ekukhanyeni, stated that he believed that the school had closed because it had worked in the interest of Africans: "These things displeas the European and the school afterwards ceased to exist. Nothing which espouses our cause ever seems to prosper. Colenso himself did not prosper". Kumalo continued,

Colenso left no message except the earnestness he threw into his work . . . . The original missionaries opposed Colenso, and used their influence against him. In these circumstances he gave no message but he left us an energetic example. His deeds on behalf of the natives, his questionings, discussions, the briefs he held, were themselves of the nature of light; they tended to produce light; they tended to glow. The circumstances in which he laboured may pass and vanish from view, but his example is a beacon of light.<sup>7</sup>

#### RESPECT

Tributes in the twentieth century to Harriette Colenso often depicted her as continuing the work begun by her father. Thus Sol. Plaatje dedicated his classic **Native Life in South Africa** "To Miss Harriette Colenso", "in recognition of her unswerving loyalty to the policy of her late distinguished father". Today Colenso is still remembered with respect – although there are those who reject him as one of the many whites who protested at, but still participated in, African subjugation and were unable to break with the process of racial oppression in South Africa.

Studies of the different aspects of Colenso's life are often sympathetic. Nonetheless theologians, while they find it easy to accept the principles upon which Colenso's biblical criticism was based, are still disturbed by his universalism. Colenso's intervention in African affairs is considered, at least by the liberal scholars who have dealt with it, as wholly admirable: by supporting the Hlubi and the Zulu royal house Colenso is seen to have made amends for his extreme religious views and to have situated himself within the tradition of Christian protest in South Africa. As a book, co-authored by a prominent liberal scholar who was to be ordained as an Anglican priest, has it:

Colenso was a great tribune of African freedom. There were others who preceded him such as John Philip in the Cape, but in his day and generation he fought a good fight and in this respect at any rate he kept the faith . . . . (He) set a tradition which has never died out since, though it has never been more than a voice of a minority in South Africa. Bishop Reeves and Father Huddleston may have little in common with Colenso, the theologian, but they are in the direct apostolic succession of Colenso, the tribune.<sup>8</sup>

However this view is dangerously misleading. It fragments Colenso's life in order to have the political activist without the controversial theologian: it conflates South African history by approaching all protest against racial injustice as if it had the same roots. It is a judgement which can only be made by someone unaware that religious belief is a multi-faceted social phenomenon and not only a personal conviction, and it ignores the fact that devout religious views can also be an expression of social forces in the continuing struggle for power and domination.

#### IMPERIALISM

The context within which Colenso's life has to be placed before an adequate assessment can be made is that of imperialism. His youth and early manhood were contemporaneous with the great material achievements in England in the first half of the nineteenth century. He was part of the tremendous movement of people, ideas and capital from Europe to the non-European world, which led to the domination of the lives of the people whose land was invaded. Far from being a tribune of African freedom Colenso assumed the superiority of his religion, his church, his culture, his political and economic system, and saw it as his God-given duty to subordinate the lives of Africans to the demands made by his perception of the world.

At the same time Colenso was able to escape many of the accepted crudities and brutal assumptions implicit in conventional imperialist attitudes. He was a humane and intelligent man, with the confidence that is needed to resist accepted ideas and practices. He believed that, in spite of differences, there existed in all human societies an awareness of the truth and a knowledge of the good. Progress and enlightenment should come to Africa through a process of building, not one of destruction. It was the task of the teacher to make contact with the God in all men and allow the light to shine with greater intensity. It was this approach, together with a real sympathy and the insights gained through his ability to communicate in the Zulu language, which allowed Colenso to develop a view of African society which was radically different from that of the ordinary colonist and official. He was able to appreciate the predicament of those Africans who found biblical stories simply preposterous. He was able to see how the

missionaries used fear to drive the heathen towards Christianity. The same impulse and insights which led Colenso to reject the psychological terrorism of hell-fire preaching in the 1850s led him, in the 1870s, to protest vigorously against physical terrorism. Nonetheless, while critical of certain features of colonialism, Colenso was not able to move from the conviction that the imposition of English rule, in its political, economic and ideological aspects, was a great and glorious step in the history of Africa.

### THE TRUTH

Underlying this conviction was Colenso's belief that the essence of his role was that he was a witness to "the Truth". The quotation with which he prefaced his works on the Pentateuch read:

Not to exceed, and not to fall short of, facts, — not to add, and not to take away, — to state the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, — are the grand, the vital, maxims of Inductive Science, of English Law, and, let us add, the Christian Faith.

His missionary writings, his preaching, and his political work, were all made in the belief that the indisputable facts which his work revealed would touch the good in the "English People" and turn them towards "their old principles of truth and justice".

Yet Colenso's lived experience — as a missionary, biblical critic, and as a critic of colonial and imperial policy — demonstrated time and again that the presentation of the facts, the exposure of false doctrine, and the publication of detailed accounts of cruelty and oppression, were not sufficient to bring about reform and remedy injustice. The depth and solidity of Colenso's convictions enabled him to act with great strength and courage but at the same time created rigidity and inflexibility in his character. The man who was so aware of the need to consider religious beliefs and scriptural writings in a historical perspective was unable to view his own present as history. He never began to realise that the highest ideals and the most rarified spiritual beliefs can be instruments in the exercise of power and have to be confronted as such if they are to be changed. While Colenso's faith gave him the confidence and courage to act, it also restricted his view: his liberal convictions, his faith in the English commitment to justice and the transforming power of the Truth were out of place in the context in which he lived and worked.

Unable to identify the social and historical forces which created the issues so offensive to his humanitarian conscience Colenso always had to explain the defeat of his projects as the consequence of the failure of individuals to do their duty and stand by the truth as Christians and Englishmen. Colenso's history was marked by painful ruptures with those who had been his closest friends: these breaks were indications of the distance that he was progressing: but he never travelled far enough to be able to look back and see the wider context in which these quarrels had taken place. The continued acceptance of what was demonstrably false as religious truth was for Colenso the result of the cowardice of the English bishops, and the personal animosity of Gray and Wilberforce. The horrors of the 1870s and 1880s in Natal and Zululand were the result of Shepstone's obsession with personal prestige, Frere's duplicity, and the weakness of Carnarvon and Kimberley. Violence was an aberration, not an intrinsic feature of the system. Untruth and injustice prospered not because of the structural de-

mands of a particular political and social situation, but as a consequence of the moral frailty of those who held power.

### VALUES

However it has been the intention of this book to show that Colenso was more than a brave man caught up in his time and unable to distance himself in a significant way from his social and political environment: that he can in fact be considered as one of those Victorians whose "victories (were) many times more noble than their defeats."<sup>9</sup> On the question of passing judgement upon historical figures E.P. Thompson has written:

Such judgement must itself be under historical controls. The judgement must be appropriate to the materials. It is pointless to complain that the bourgeoisie have not been communitarians, or that the Levellers did not introduce an anarcho-syndicalist society. What we may do, rather, is identify with certain values which past actors upheld, and reject others. We may give our vote for Winstanley and for Swift; we may vote against Walpole and Sir Edwin Chadwick.

Our vote will change nothing. And yet in another sense, it may change everything. For we are saying that these values, and not those other values, are the ones which we intend to enlarge and sustain in our own present. If we succeed, then we reach back into history and endow it with our own meanings: we shake Swift by the hand. We endorse in our present the values of Winstanley, and ensure that the low and ruthless kind of opportunism which distinguished the politics of Walpole is abhorred.<sup>10</sup>

John Colenso, I have tried to suggest, was a man to whom we can reach out in this manner, endorsing in our present his fight for scientific achievement against theological obscurantism, and his struggle against the duplicity, the brutality and the violence of racial oppression.

### RELIGIOUS ASPECT

It is easier for me to do this in connection with the political aspect of Colenso's life than it is with the religious one. As far as the latter is concerned I can only speak as an outsider. However, even a casual acquaintance with contemporary religious debate shows the relevance of Colenso's thinking to issues of great concern to many Christians today. Colenso can be situated firmly within the traditions of modern religious humanism. His assertion that the scriptures must be considered as historical documents is widely accepted. His belief that the God in all men is revealed through their lives forced Colenso first into social and then into political action, as it has done and is doing to so many of the courageous and committed men and women in the struggle against tyranny. Colenso also adopted a wider ecumenism which even today would be considered advanced.

Some of the links between Colenso and contemporary religious thought appear to be fairly direct. Mervyn Stockwood in his analysis of the significance of the controversies in which Colenso played a major role describes Colenso's worst fears:

A century ago the Church made a tragic mistake. Faced with the advance of scientific knowledge, the Church, without making a serious attempt to understand what was happening, went into opposition. The attacks by leading Christians on Darwinism and biblical criticism were not only laughable but tragic. The result was a pitiful war between Religion and Science — a war which need never have taken place, but which, because it did take place, has done untold damage and is

responsible for much of the irreligion in the country today."

Colenso wrote in 1863:

I respectfully protest against the language which the Archbishop of Canterbury has, apparently, applied to all those, who read my books with interest, by summing them up under three categories, as either 'ignorant,' or 'half-informed,' or else 'rejoicing in anything which can free them from the troublesome restraints of religion.' The object of my whole work is to bind the consciences of men more imperatively than ever by the law of true Religion, which is the law of life and happiness. But, inasmuch as multitudes have already broken loose from the restraints of that traditional religious teaching, which they know to be contradicted by some of the most familiar results of modern Science, now made the common heritage of every educated English child, I believe that I have only done my duty, as a Minister of the National Church, in endeavouring to reestablish a permanent union between the teachings of Religion and Science, and to heal effectively that breach between them, which otherwise will assuredly widen day by day, with infinite injury to the Church itself, and to the whole community.<sup>12</sup>

John Robinson cited an article on Colenso in the preface to his famous *Honest to God*, and he shares with Colenso the view that religious questions must be presented in terms which the age can understand notwithstanding the protests of the traditionalists. Their published sermons reveal a common concern over particular issues of religious controversy. And Colenso would share Robinson's admiration for Maurice, and endorse without qualification Robinson's statement that "theological freedom" and "social responsibility" are "the twin pillars of the Anglican ethos in which I most deeply believe."<sup>13</sup>

John Hick, a thinker "sensible to the living insights of non-Christian religions", in a recently published lecture, "Is there only one way to God", quotes a Sikh prayer

There is but one god. He is all that is.  
He is the Creator of all things and He is all-pervasive.  
He is without fear and without enmity.  
He is timeless, unborn and self-existent.  
He is the Englightener  
And can be realized by grace of Himself alone.  
He was in the beginning: He was in all ages.  
The True One is, was, and shall forever be.

Hick continues, speaking of a Sikh doctor and friend,

Now, for me, to say to such a person as Kusdevah Singh, through whom the love of God is so powerfully at work: You are not on the way to God, because there is only one way, which is my way — to say or think this would not be spiritually realistic or responsible. It would require a deliberate blindness to the presence and activity of God in ways for which our traditional theology has not on the whole prepared us.<sup>14</sup>

John Colenso would agree wholeheartedly. He himself, one hundred and twenty years previously, ended the first part of his study of the Pentateuch with a very similar Sikh prayer in order to demonstrate the presence of the Living God in all religions.

### HISTORICAL CONTENT

But of course we must be careful. We have always to be aware of the historical content of Colenso's religious tenets. For example when he spoke of the Fatherhood of God and

the Brotherhood of Man, as the fundamental principles of his religious faith we must remember what a father and brother were to Colenso as a member of the bourgeoisie in the mid-nineteenth century. For him the family was a stabilising and conservative influence in a world disrupted by revolutionary change: it was a hierarchical structure, the father demanding of his sons, not only love, but obedience and the unquestioned recognition of his authority. Colenso's universalism and the belief that God's love was present within all human beings implied the need for respect between individuals, but not equality. Communities, and the individuals within them, were ranked and it was the duty of some to lead and of others to follow. When Colenso spoke of the Brotherhood of Man this was an expression of selfless commitment to others, but it was not an egalitarian ideal.

The same risk of conflating history and ignoring the context of Colenso's life is present when we consider his political activities. Colenso's humanitarianism found expression within the traditions of nineteenth century English liberalism. Furthermore it is obvious that the situation at the time when capitalism was being established in South Africa was vastly different from the contemporary one. Nevertheless, at an important level, there is a continuity in South African history which, in spite of these differences, does give Colenso's life a contemporary significance. The continuing theme of racial brutality and violence, and the participation of the state in this, is striking. The reasons for this are complex, but include the fact that capitalism in South Africa was forced into being and towards maturity in a colonial situation by means of physical, fiscal and legislative coercion, together with the acquisition of state-power by a racial minority and the demands that this makes on those who exercise authority. As a result, in their outward aspect, many of the issues which bishop Colenso confronted continue to have meaning in the present, some of them as immediate as the reports in today's newspaper.

### BRUTALITY AND DEHUMANISING

For example, Colenso attempted to expose the brutality which took place behind the walls of the gaol. He tried to expose the manner in which servants of the state, when under attack, can protect themselves through the construction of self-supporting evidence. He was also smuggled the scrawled note about conditions in detention. Colenso suffered the attentions of the informer and the spy and the consequences when their highly irresponsible information is passed to the authorities. He refused to accept the findings of the show trial and the board of inquiry whose examination of the evidence is so scrupulous that responsibility for the act of glaring injustice cannot be fixed.

Most significant of all, because he was able to gain some insight into the colonial world as it was perceived by the colonised, Colenso lighted upon an essential feature of the exercise of political violence — the need to dehumanise those against whom inhuman action is to be taken. The enemy is no longer a celibate, man-slaying gladiator, dressed in skins and feathers and chanting some barbaric war-cry. He now tends to be depicted as a mindless puppet, manipulated by a foreign power which unscrupulously exploits ignorance for its own advantage. But the means by which this dehumanising process is continued is similar: the falsification of history, hints at some dark and secret

plot, the exploitation of fear and insecurity and the manipulation of public information. Colenso was able to identify and publicise the manner in which this was done one hundred years ago in the violence which prepared the ground for the founding of modern South Africa. The need to expose this process of falsification remains as urgent as ever. It is part of the long struggle for justice. We cannot of course use the principles upon which Colenso

based his actions: with hindsight we can see their limitations. But many of the issues which he confronted and attempted to rectify remain with us and have still to be eradicated. In this sense Colenso's mission was well begun, it has been taken up by others, and must be completed. Consequently the final assessment of Colenso's life can only be made in the future — the answer to the question whether his battle for justice was a success remains an open one. □

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#### POEMS BY LEONARD KOZA

##### THE WIND

A monstrous wind howls through grand  
fig trees of centuries beyond.

Rocking enslaved seeds to liberation  
from the stifled grown branches.

With scattered seeds underground,  
old mother tree couldn't trace their  
whereabouts until green infant  
heads emerged out of the soil to bear  
fruits of her own.

Cunningly old mother tree martially  
cut the roots through which food  
flowed to uplift the infant trees.

Armoured the old tree battles to  
keep the monopoly of bearing export  
fruit to herself while the isolated  
infant tree develops along its own  
legislated lines to bear small fruit  
for domestic consumption only.

##### THE UNKNOWN

His clock wrestling in his throat with dumpy sound-throbs.  
He lay soundless between the weeds,  
waiting for the second to lift his machine-gun  
direct at creeping  
figures in Tropical jungle.

Just then a glib feeling arrested his precise  
attention when a snake crossed his wrist,  
slow-motionly disappearing in a hole not far away.

With his mind temporarily released from guerilla-warfare,  
he was again nearly rattled to bits when the thunderous  
roar of the wilderness King echoed along silenced banks  
of Zambesi which has become  
the new Blood River of Africa.

##### I, THE DUPLICATE

I am shadow of what I'm not allowed to be —  
Living of what I should die, but die not.

Nightly my tummy is puffed with hunger  
inherited by my black colour.

Even my mind can discharge no FREE thoughts,  
neither can my tongue entertain, FREE speech.  
My ears can hear only what is whispered in a faint  
separated voice.

I breathe only to keep death alive.  
I am free to live without freedom.

Even a peaceful march can be a death-march as the  
"over-staffed" police force give real criminals a long leave  
by dishing out bullets and teargas to the hungry marching  
for bread.

At birth it was a separate ward baptized in a separate church  
in a separate Township.

I had a separate education,  
at work a separate uniform with separate time-table  
and pay-packet.

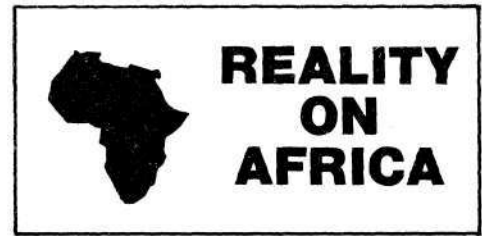
After work it's homeward in a separate coach,  
through a separate subway or over a separate bridge  
in order to fight "inflation".

And when I die?

Just a separate grave.

My whole life is separate because according to the Law,  
we're not real humans,  
but a duplicate of it.

# UGANDA: et in Arcadia ego . . .



by Kenneth Ingham

Uganda became independent with a better balanced economy than did any other British dependency in Africa. It did not have the oil potential of Nigeria and it did not plan to develop large-scale industry. But it produced a wide variety of export crops — coffee, cotton, tea and sugar — which did not interfere with subsistence agriculture as cocoa growing did in Ghana. There was little prospect of untold wealth, but no-one need be in want. There was already a large class of substantial, well-educated, indigenous land-owners whose labour needs were amply met both by people from other parts of the country who relied on wage labour primarily to embellish the subsistence standard of living derived from their own land or herds, and by immigrants, notably from Kenya. The labour requirements of the towns — which were few in number and, apart from Kampala, were small — were supplied in a similar fashion. After independence the revenue from export crops increased appreciably and there were no serious effects from a fall in world prices like that which undermined Zambia's income from copper. Why then did Uganda encounter disaster within the first decade of independence?

Attempts to supply an economic explanation distort the picture. President Obote's so-called socialising programme was not an attempt to appease a clamorous demand from those who felt they had come too late to the feast to benefit from the fruits of independence. Nor was it the cause of a sharp reaction against the government from those who had done well since independence. Such feelings may have been present but they were wholly subordinate to the political issues which determined the course of events.

## NO LEADER

Uganda, like the other former colonies and dependencies, lacked any strong feeling of national identity. Unlike other new nations it lacked also a universally accepted leader upon whom to focus the people's loyalty. Uganda had never even had a unified independence movement. While the political leaders of half the country sought a democratic system of government leading possibly to the establishment of a republic, the kingdom of Uganda, occupying a quarter of the country's area and accommodating a third of its population, wished to retain its traditional monarchical system and to respect its well established identity. The remaining quarter, consisting of smaller kingdoms, was divided in its

loyalties. Its political spokesmen appeared to incline towards a democratic programme, but glanced frequently over their shoulders to see the reaction of their traditional rulers. A further decisive factor was the absence of a common language. Kiswahili had never made much progress in Uganda and English was understood only by a few. Consequently, political leaders could not campaign effectively outside their own districts. One other factor must be taken into account. Under the enlightened governorship of Sir Andrew Cohen from 1952 to 1957 the idea of self-government, and later of independence, for Uganda, became so clearly the target of the colonial administration that even the binding force deriving from the presence of a common enemy was absent. Meanwhile, the deportation of the Kabaka (ruler) of Buganda by Cohen, after a dispute over the degree of cooperation a governor could expect from Buganda under the terms of the 1900 agreement between Britain and Buganda, distracted attention from the independence movement and focused it upon the rights of the Buganda kingdom. Consequently, Buganda's reluctance, ostensibly on grounds of annoyance with Britain, to participate in a national legislature in the closing years of colonial government, while annoying to the British administration, was potentially disastrous for the prospects of a united, independent Uganda.

## NO UNITED OBJECTIVE

The attempt to plaster over this division by offering Buganda federal status within Uganda could not conceal the lack of a united objective. Nor was federal status for Buganda the only problem, for the lesser kingdoms — Bunyoro, Toro and Ankole — also sought and were given a similar status. While few former dependencies had any clear plan — other than to put an end to colonial rule — none, save Nigeria, had the additional burden of a constitution which made the formulation of a unified plan almost impossible. It was not, in Uganda's case, the federal nature of the constitution which created the problem, but the fact that Buganda in particular, and the other kingdoms to a lesser extent, could not accept subordination to a national legislature in which their wishes might be overruled. British administration, while providing an overall framework of government, had inadvertently encouraged the growth of separate identities. This was not the result of any policy of divide and rule. It sprang from a well-intentioned if rather muddled

desire to honour agreements, to promote local traditional institutions — and to avoid undue expense. This had strengthened the distinctive characteristics of those peoples already possessing unified systems of government. Further, by using Baganda agents to extend British overrule throughout the protectorate, the colonial authorities had inadvertently encouraged a desire to emulate Buganda's distinctive characteristics among the other peoples of the country.

This legacy of division the late colonial administration bequeathed to its successor. It is true that a group of educated Baganda, many of them Roman Catholics who, for historical reasons, had been unable to play a full role in the politics of the kingdom, were prepared to work for a more democratic form of government for the whole of Uganda. These had formed themselves into the Democratic Party and had established branches, principally consisting of Roman Catholics, in other parts of the country. But their following in Buganda was slight. The vast majority of the people, either from loyalty to the traditional government, or in some cases from fear of their chiefs, supported the movement calling itself Kabaka Yekka (the Kabaka alone).

### ALLIANCE

It was the common desire to defeat the Democratic Party which led Milton Obote's Uganda People's Congress and Kabaka Yekka to enter into an alliance which brought them jointly to power at the time of independence. Clearly this was an alliance of incompatibles which prime minister Obote tried *intelligently but vainly* to cement by offering the Kabaka the role of President of Uganda in order to reconcile the Baganda to participation in a larger political unit. Even the title "Republic" was avoided to accommodate Buganda's monarchist sentiments. Instead Uganda was officially described as an "independent sovereign state."

In spite of these measures a split in the alliance was inevitable. The issue over which hostilities came to light was that of the so-called "lost counties", certain districts annexed by Buganda with British assistance from Bunyoro in the 1890s during the formative years of the protectorate. The colonial government had been aware that this was a question calculated to arouse passions after independence. It might well have solved the problem by means of a referendum before handing over the government to the Ugandan leaders. Instead it had been agreed that a referendum should take place after independence. For Obote the issue was essentially a digression, because the districts were and would remain part of the new state of Uganda. To the Baganda and Banyoro their ownership was a matter of pride — not, it should be said, primarily of economic significance. Obote's determination to go ahead with the referendum led to a further division between his party and Kabaka Yekka, and in August he dissolved the alliance. When the vote proved favourable to Bunyoro, the hostility between Buganda and Obote's government was sealed.

### FRICTION

The following year the UPC proposed legislation to make Kabaka Yekka illegal. By this time several KY members of parliament had defected to the UPC as, too, had some of the leaders of the Democratic Party in an attempt to bridge the tribal divisions that were becoming increasingly obvious. Friction between the government and Kabaka Yekka con-

tinued, however, and early in 1966 Obote suspended the constitution. Another constitution was adopted by parliament in April under which Obote himself became president and the privileges of Buganda were abrogated. The Buganda council rejected the constitution and ordered all Uganda government troops out of Buganda. Since the centre of the Uganda government was within the Buganda kingdom this could not be accepted and government forces attacked the Kabaka's palace. The Kabaka himself escaped and fled to England. In 1967 another constitution was introduced which abolished the kingdoms and divided Buganda into administrative districts. Nothing now could produce a settlement between Buganda and the Ugandan government, while former supporters of Obote in the other kingdoms were also alienated. Tension grew. Assassination attempts against the president further exacerbated relations. Obote became withdrawn from events and his suspicions gave licence to his less disciplined supporters to take reprisals against people allegedly hostile to the government.

Throughout this time the economy remained buoyant. External aid flowed on a generous scale. A variety of new developments took place for the general benefit of the community. In October 1969 Obote published his charter of the common man which, while ostensibly aimed at closing the gap between rich and poor, was primarily a plan to acquire control, on behalf of the people of Uganda, of large-scale foreign banking, commercial and manufacturing concerns. He promised, however, that compensation would be paid and that for want of trained Africans to run the various activities expatriates would be encouraged to remain in posts. The "socialist" elements in this programme were exaggerated by the British government, while Obote's nationalistic aims were overlooked. Together with the president's opposition to the supply of arms by Britain to South Africa his "socialism" aroused much criticism if not active hostility in Britain. His overthrow in 1971 was, therefore, acclaimed both in Britain and in Buganda, and also by some in other parts of Uganda who were horrified by the growing lack of control over the armed forces and by the increase of violence throughout the country.

### IDI AMIN

The sudden rise to power of Idi Amin, Obote's successor, was the clear result of the divisions which had grown up in Uganda. Obote had become increasingly dependent upon those sections of the army which he believed were, for tribal reasons, loyal to his government. Idi Amin, in whom he had placed particular trust, had been secretly building up his own support in the army by enlisting men from his own tribal area which extended over the Uganda border into Zaire and the Sudan. The loyalty of these men was, consequently, to Amin and not to the government. He had, simultaneously, been getting rid of his opponents — in one instance by murder — and he had also been embezzling funds from the sale of military supplies to dissidents in Zaire. When Obote challenged him he threw down the gauntlet in the president's absence at a Commonwealth conference in Singapore.

By the swift disarming of those elements of the army still loyal to Obote, Amin took sole charge of all military power in the country. His coup was greatly assisted by the jubilation of the Baganda at the overthrow of the man whom they deemed to be their main enemy. Their



jubilation quickly turned to dread when Amin showed himself to be an arbitrary, incompetent tyrant, incapable of administering the country and prepared to murder anyone who voiced any dissent. An attempt to win approval by ordering from the country all Asians who were not citizens of Uganda appealed briefly to the concupiscence of those who envied the Asians their virtual control of the lower, middle and some of the upper levels of trade. It was soon seen, however, that the spoils were not to be distributed to the people as a whole, but were to be given to Amin's armed hoodlums and members of his immediate entourage who quickly squandered their gains and destroyed the country's trade.

### **EFFECT ON PRODUCTION**

The loss of the Asians, coupled with the terror spread by Amin's rabble, had a swift effect upon the country's production for export. No-one felt safe with a valuable crop on his land. Nor was it easy to export anything that was produced when a breakdown of relations with Kenya took place because of the government's inability to pay for services and the threat which Amin's regime posed to stability along the borders. This led to the closing of the railway link with the coast. Nevertheless, the people living at a distance from the towns and from the main roads were cushioned against the worst effects of Amin's rule by the fertility of the soil. In the countryside food was still produced in sufficient quantities. Only in the towns was it in short supply, and these shortages gave birth to an active black market and to a breakdown of respect for controls which was to have serious repercussions after Amin's overthrow.

While the absence of widespread poverty or starvation may have delayed any popular uprising against Amin the more politically minded elements in the country who had escaped assassination, and those who had fled to other countries for fear of assassination, were plotting means to overthrow the government. But the absence of any united aim beyond the overthrow of Amin made coordinated action difficult. While many who had formerly criticised Obote were prepared to admit that he has probably the best leader Uganda could produce, there was a sufficiently numerous and powerful element which could never accept him.

### **COMMITTEE**

The committee which eventually led the attack on Amin in conjunction with the armed forces of Tanzania had all the merits and all the disadvantages of any similar group. It contained a rich collection of talents and an equally rich variety of objectives. Yusuf Lule, who became president after Amin's overthrow, was an intelligent man of great charm, but he lacked the toughness to control the rest of his group. He had, however, the merit of being a Muganda who was acceptable to many of his fellow Baganda without giving offence to the rest of the country. His overthrow and succession by Godfrey Binaisa was inevitable, though regretted by many who respected Lule's virtues and were prepared to overlook his shortcomings. Binaisa was a tougher man, but for the Baganda traditionalists carried the stigma of an earlier association with Obote. In any case, the committee lacked the unity to act decisively to restore law and order. They also did not have an adequate police force and were compelled to rely on a Tanzanian army which all too quickly found itself no longer acclaimed as a

triumphant ally but instead was seen as an alien presence. The banning of all political parties in August 1979 was intended to promote a united effort to restore the country's stability. It was a vain gesture, both because of the obvious divisions even among the ruling committee itself, and because political parties simply could not be eliminated.

The parliamentary elections which took place in 1980 were certainly not conducted according to Marquess of Queensbury rules, in spite of the presence of an external observer team. The intrigue was not all on one side, though the success of the UPC and the restoration of Obote as president meant that the accusations were mainly levelled against the victors. The continuing inability of the new government to restore law and order, particularly in Buganda, and the excesses of a still untrained and poorly disciplined army in areas suspected of a residual loyalty to Amin gave encouragement to the opposition. Obote himself was willing to accept constitutional opposition in parliament and the Democratic Party tried to provide that opposition. Small guerrilla units dedicated to the overthrow of the government and operating mainly in Buganda continued to make the return of stable administration difficult, however. Relations with Kenya had to be conducted with caution because of Obote's friendship with Tanzania, with which Kenya was on less than friendly terms. President Nyerere, too, was anxious to terminate his military involvement in Uganda to cut down costs.

### **MORE SETTLED**

Gradually a more settled state of affairs has been taking shape, except in the north-western districts, the area in which support for Amin was strongest. Even in Buganda guerrilla activities have become more sporadic and food supplies are beginning to return to Kampala. The decline of the black market is a slow process because, with the recent stunning but realistic devaluation of the currency, foreign imports have remained in very short supply. Shortages, and the corruption they encourage, are a serious obstacle to peaceful administration, while a too heavy-handed attempt to control disaffection readily provokes hostility to the government. This is particularly true in Buganda, where urban problems are more acute and where Obote remains for many a worse scourge than Amin.

For the future the government's first objectives must be to ensure discipline and restraint on the part of the forces responsible for law and order and to encourage the production of export crops so as to provide foreign exchange. It is fortunate that much of the country's coffee and cotton are grown in the eastern districts, the most settled area and the one with readiest access to Kenya and the Indian Ocean ports. If the government can achieve credibility in the pursuit of its main objectives the sheer fertility of Uganda can swing the balance in favour of recovery. It is a formidable task, and many who might help are still watching nervously in exile to see if their return might be possible without undue risk either to their personal security or to their professional or financial prospects. Their predicament is a genuine one, for those who have struggled through the horrors of the Amin era and the difficulties of the last four years might not welcome competition for advancement or economic gain from those who had left the country. The overall problem of Uganda is one of confidence, not of resources — or even effectivley, of their distribution. It has a complex historical legacy to overcome. □

# “GANDHI”

reviewed by John Passmore.

Sir Richard Attenborough's epic production "Gandhi" is a victim of its own documentary technique. For this the British producer can hardly be faulted as the nature of the subject — a towering 20th century personality — is bound to undermine the viewer's sense of dramatic authenticity.

Attenborough was not in the happy position that Shakespeare and Schiller found themselves in when writing their respective historical dramas, "Richard III" and "Maria Stuart".

In those plays historical veracity was of little consequence. Shakespeare could transform the English king into a virulent deformed exemplar of evil with impunity as Richard's actual life and royal career did not — bar the princes in the Tower — loom large in the public imagination.

The climax to "Maria Stuart" is the meeting between Elizabeth and Mary. In terms of the play it matters little that Mary and Elizabeth never actually met. Both Shakespeare and Schiller wished to present the public with a dramatic evocation of particular issues central to the problems of the day. The central figures in "Richard III" and "Maria Stuart" are symbols, characters in a play and not faithful historical reproductions.

Historical veracity is essential to any documentary representation of a particular personality, hence the weakness of "Gandhi". Attenborough can interpret a little here and emphasize (or de-emphasize) a little there but he cannot depart in any major way from the recorded history of the life of Mohandas Gandhi.

No actor can ever hope to portray a historical figure in a documentary film with much success even if that actor (in this case, Ben Kingsley) is a very fine one. Gandhi was a man charged to a very great degree with a particular personal dynamism. He was, therefore, his own greatest actor. The documentary nature of the film demands that Kingsley be infused with that self-same dynamism — become Gandhi — and that's not possible.

The "willing suspension of disbelief" cannot take place and knowledgeable viewers are always conscious of the fact that they are watching a terrific impersonation of Gandhi by Ben Kingsley just as Alec Guinness' brilliant impersonation of Hitler in "The Last 10 Days" left us filled with admiration for the impersonator. At no stage did Guinness the actor merge with Hitler the Fuhrer.

I seem to have belaboured the point but it affects the entire film. A documentary such as this has to compress the best part of 78 years into 3½ hours in a coherent manner. All but essentials must be pared away. When you have highly skilled actors helplessly relegated to impersonating Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, Jinnah, etc. (and forced to "talk" compressed chunks of history for the sake of documentary coherence) the conversation sounds contrived.

Surely the intelligent Patel, the sophisticated Nehru and the shrewd Jinnah never engaged in such simplistic conversation when formulating the resistance campaigns against the British? The "pared away" nature of the film and the problems connected with replicating historical

personalities in a documentary drama have a very damaging effect in terms of the quite crucial themes of passive resistance and "Satyagraha". Gandhi/Kingsley's pronouncements pertaining to this unique form of resistance are delivered into a tensionless cinematic vacuum which reduces them to pert Dickensian mouthings.

Such were the insurmountable handicaps Attenborough faced when making the film and we can only sympathize with him.

Where Attenborough stumbles of his own accord is in his interpretation of certain events and personalities. Three aspects of the film spring to mind.

One of the major criticisms levelled at the Mahatma was the fact that he never, to my knowledge, actively championed the oppressed peoples of South Africa regardless of ethnicity. The march of 2000 Indians into the Transvaal and the passive resistance campaign aimed at the new Asiatic registration laws were inspired and organized by Gandhi but he did not attempt to incorporate blacks in a common protest.

However, in one scene where Indians are marching in defiance of the Acts, a group of blacks look at them in amazement. The clear inference is that the black labourers would be similarly inspired. This struck me as an offensive example of the "gloss-over" technique. The second interpretation concerns Gandhi's use of "Satyagraha". "Satyagraha" — soul force in which extreme pressure is brought to bear against the powers-that-be without recourse to violence — was a fundamental tenet of Gandhi's resistance. That cannot be denied. Nevertheless, Gandhi was shrewd enough to realize that the British had to be denied the opportunity to use arms against civilian protesters. Impassioned crowds versus the Maxim gun is no contest.

The wily Gandhi realized that a small but militarily mighty colonial presence would be utterly frustrated when faced with massive but amorphous pressure. Armed insurrection can be localized. Satyagraha resistance disqualifies military intervention. In terms of the struggle for independence, "Satyagraha" was a strategic device as well as a philosophical concept. Far too little of the wily, cunning Gandhi is shown and far too much of the beaming saint. Gandhi was both and to remove one dimension of his character represents negligence on the part of Attenborough.

Thirdly, Attenborough's most serious historical abuse lies in his presentation of Jinnah.

Mohamed Ali Jinnah was certainly narrower and more nationalistic than Gandhi but for three decades he strove for Hindu-Muslim unity. It was with great reluctance that Jinnah abandoned the cause of unity in 1940. Despite their differences he supported Gandhi at a number of crucial moments. To portray him as little more than a singularly ill-tempered popinjay does the cause of historical veracity considerable violence.

Valid but less important criticism can be levelled at the sometimes rambling nature of the film. Selective editing would have been a blessing here. The roles of many of the characters (reporters, adoring disciples, photographers,

helpers at the "ashram") come across as fatuous inter-  
polations in the script.

What then makes "Gandhi" a memorable and moving ex-  
perience despite itself?

The film's greatest achievement is that it reminds us of Gandhi,  
the man, at a time when we could do with all the reminding  
that we can get. From all accounts Mohandas Karamchand  
Gandhi was a placid, even a placatory man. His was not a  
thrusting and aggressive personality. All too often such a  
person can, over a period of time, implicitly condone a wide  
variety of abuses. For Gandhi individual human life and  
freedom were sacrosanct. Any diminution of human free-  
dom had to be met with the greatest possible resistance  
except violence, as violence automatically impugns the ideal.  
From that position Gandhi would not budge. No amount  
of physical duress could undermine his tenacity in this  
respect. What to so many of us is the high ideal was, for  
him, the bottom line. His insistence on human freedom  
informed his life to the point where he believed that  
oppressors would relent once shown the folly of their ways.  
It is hardly surprising then that he radiated love and warmth  
to those who imprisoned him for 2338 days of his life.

Gandhi's championship of Indian independence was always  
bound up with his concept of human rights. His energies  
were directed to combating the ugly products of frus-  
tration, chauvinistic nationalism and sectarian conflict.

The Mahatma's offering of the premiership of India to  
Jinnah was an act perhaps without parallel. Never, to my  
knowledge, has the leader of the largest and most powerful  
section of the population voluntarily offered political sway  
to the leader of a less powerful minority.

The greatest quality of the man was his support of the poor.  
Gandhi aimed at the closest possible identification with  
them, particularly that most socially wretched and exploited  
of peoples, the Untouchables. Renaming them "Harijin"  
(children of God) Gandhi strove to arrest their plight. This  
persistent striving became almost frantic towards the end  
of his life. It is to Gandhi's credit that India has slowly  
begun to move away from the horrors of caste and enforced  
social deprivation.

Given his ideals it follows that Gandhi considered the 1947  
India/Pakistan split as the crowning failure of his life. Given  
the difference between the nature of the man and the nature  
of the world he lived in, it is tragic, ironic but unsurprising  
that he should be murdered in front of the people who at  
his prompting, had embraced "Satyagraha".

Near the beginning of the film we see Gandhi being thrown  
off a white train at Pietermaritzburg.

Noting the nature of South Africa some 80 years on one  
need hardly add the dreary postscript that some things  
never change. □

## **TOWARDS A CERTAIN FUTURE: THE POLITICS AND ECONOMICS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA –**

By Robert I. Rotberg (David Philip, Publisher,  
Cape Town, 1981)

reviewed by G.H. Oldham

Robert Rotberg's book shows the author to be knowl-  
edgeable, perceptive and insightful about the problems of  
southern Africa. The book is divided into three parts and  
deals separately with South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe.  
It is, perhaps, a little unfair to review the book so long  
after publication because political developments and  
other events have tended to outrun some of the authors  
forecasts and predictions. For this reason the review  
concentrates on Rotberg's analysis of South Africa.

His theme is, as far as South Africa is concerned, that  
responsible and decisive leadership by the ruling oligarchy  
which sets the country on an evolutionary reform path  
may be sufficient to avoid racial conflict, or armed struggle  
and eventual revolution. Time, however, is running out.

The next chapter examines the ascendancy of Afrikaner-  
dom and the structure of domination. The latter depends  
on control or distortion of State institutions, rigidifying  
the enforcement of separation, control over information,  
military spending and police organisation including security  
apparatus such as detention and banning.

The point the author wants to drive home, however, is that

real power is vested in a ruling oligarchy — a small group of  
men around the Prime Minister. The political system is  
beyond the reach of interest groups, public opinion, the  
parliamentary opposition, the press and other instruments  
of change. Rotberg further alleges that local branches of  
the Nationalist Party 'can rarely oppose the party hierarchy  
effectively; few are sufficiently brave or assertive to try'.  
He obviously did not anticipate the breakaway of the Con-  
servative Party led by A. Treurnicht. In fact the existence  
of a growing right-wing opposition seems to undermine the  
theme that the oligarchy may have the power to become  
a modernising force because of their independence from  
the electorate. P.W. Botha has found unexpectedly strong  
resistance to even the present proposed constitutional  
changes.

The intention of separate development may be seen as the  
maintenance of white prosperity and privilege. The response  
of the underprivileged has taken a number of different  
forms: non-violent and violent. After looking at some of  
these responses in his third chapter, Rotberg concludes  
that in the near term the A.N.C. is not strong enough or

sufficiently organised internally to promote a revolution. His sympathy obviously lies with people like G. Buthelezi who advocate negotiation. The problem is that the ruling oligarchy seem completely unable to accept the need for negotiation with black leaders other than within a separate development framework. Leading members of the cabinet have stated categorically that the present constitutional amendments will never be extended to include blacks. It is therefore difficult to see how an evolutionary process of change can be instituted when the majority of the population are not involved in any form of consultation or negotiation. Social change in the form of better housing, health and educational services in urban areas will not be sufficient to allay black anger and discontent.

### ECONOMIC STRENGTHS AND VULNERABILITIES

The next chapter deals with South Africa's economic strengths and vulnerabilities. The country's economic prospects give rise to a number of issues. First, is the economy capable of growing at a sufficiently fast rate to create employment and rising incomes for a rapidly expanding population? Secondly, how vulnerable is the economy to trade sanctions, a fuel embargo or disinvestment? On the other hand would the western industrial economies be severely damaged if South Africa withheld base minerals from world markets? Africans constitute some 70 per cent of the economically active population. Since 1976 economic growth has been slow and intermittent. There appears to be a rising pool of unemployed – however defined. There is an increasing lack of economic opportunities for blacks, particularly so in those areas far removed from the urban agglomerations. As far as manufacturing is concerned the limited size of the domestic market together with high capital and skilled labour costs make South African products uncompetitive internationally. Export earnings have thus become increasingly dependent on gold and other primary products. This makes the economy susceptible to world-wide booms and recessions. The mining industry depends heavily on migrant labour but by the end of the seventies some 70% of migrants were from South Africa itself or the nominally independent homelands. The mining industry has thus reduced its vulnerability to foreign governments which might intervene to prevent workers being recruited for South African mines. During the same time the white to black earning ratio was reduced from 17:1 to 6,2:1.

In terms of total energy requirements only 30 per cent of South Africa's needs have to be satisfied by imports. The transportation sector, however, is heavily dependent on oil inputs. South Africa has no regular or official supplier but an analysis of tanker movements suggested large amounts of crude oil are reaching the country from the United Arab Emirates. The completion of Sasol II and III, underground stockpiles, relatively high fuel prices and other conservation measures have made South Africa, in the short term, much less vulnerable to an oil embargo than in earlier years.

On the other hand, South Africa is ranked at least third in the world as a supplier of nine significant minerals including manganese, chrome and platinum. These minerals are vital to western industries but constitute only a small part of South Africa's gross domestic product. Faced with economic sanctions South Africa could threaten to withhold such base minerals from world markets. A policy of resource denial, however, would remain dangerous as the

political and economic consequences cannot be foreseen with any degree of certainty.

### DISINVESTMENT

Rotberg also looks at the vexed question of disinvestment. Rather than dispose of their South African investments many foreign corporations have altered their operating practices and attempted to conform to codes such as the Sullivan principles. The application of these principles, however, will not placate opponents of investment and proponents of sanctions. It seems clear that a large volume of disinvestment coupled with trade or supply sanctions would have an adverse effect on South Africa's growth and development. The author questions whether the political impact would equal the economic impact. He suggests that the government may not give a high priority to affluence but rather be more interested in the maintenance of its power. The conclusion is that economic means are unlikely to provide the main motivating force in bringing about political change.

In the final chapter of this section the author questions whether or not policies can be devised which reconcile South Africa's future with its past. The key question is 'by what means, in what form, to what extent and how soon is the political participation of the majority to be achieved?' Rotberg wants P.W. Botha's government to be bold, imaginative and decisive and the white electorate to sacrifice privilege for security. He seems to be warning that Afrikaner Nationalism cannot in the long term continue to dominate and suppress African Nationalism. Whether or not this is the correct way to view South Africa's historical development may be open to question. Nevertheless, unless the ruling oligarchy is prepared to implement real change and grasp the central issue of political representation of Africans it faces a bleak future. There is likely to be a prolonged period of low-level violence, sabotage, industrial unrest and rioting. The hostility of the rest of the world may grow and South Africa is not invulnerable to fuel embargos, simultaneous external and internal conflict, disinvestment and white emigration.

What is not clear is how the process of reform and change is to be initiated and carried forward. A powerful executive president might be able to bring about policy changes by fiat but ultimately if reconciliation is to occur all parts of the population need to be involved in the process of negotiation and decision making. A new society should aim not to substitute new for old injustices, lessen the quality of life, destroy the economy or create new social and ethnic conflicts. The policy of separate development and the homelands as presently conceived cannot provide answers to the future problems of South Africa.

Rotberg sees some signs of progress in the removal of discrimination and attempts to give political expression to Coloureds and Indians but these initiatives are regarded as too restrained and too limited. He leaves the whole question of the future form of government open and argues that outright partition, confederalism, cantonalism and federalism should all be examined for their potential contribution to answers to South Africa's dilemma.

The book is well worth reading because of its objectivity, scope and the amount of information it contains. However, it does not contain much which is new or original but it does draw together a number of concepts and ideas which those in favour of moderate but progressive reform may favour. □