

15 Adam's Court
33 Carlisle Street
Durban

June 14, 1971.

An open letter to the 'Fakir' of the "Leader" and the 'Sadiq Alli' of the "Graphic", and all those people who share his viewpoint.

It is disconcerting to note that Sadiq Alli has become so puerile in his comments on the 'Indian Community'. It is also disconcerting to note that as the Fakir he can be so trite and make such inane and petty comments as to other people's behaviour.

This same very confused and indistinct character is a well-known, professional man. I would like to, through the medium of your paper, make a few comments about this man's thoughts and a few comments about the Indian people, in general.

His column in the 'Graphic' of the June 11th sets out very impressively the progress of the 'Indian Community' in terms of educational advancement. Ironically, the column is headed 'lest we forget'.

Yes! lest we forget there are 19million oppressed people in South Africa. Here are some facts about them :-

1. Blacks pay for all schooling; for whites, schooling is free and compulsory.
2. Per capita expenditure on white education is eight times that for Africans; average of R114 for whites and R13-50 for Blacks.
3. The average pupil-teacher ratio for whites is 21:1 ; for Blacks it is 60:1.
4. On an average the white monthly income is about 10 times that of the Black.
5. All skilled and professional jobs involving white and black have never payed the same rate for the job.

Sadiq Alli talks of the great progress made by the Indians- a load of bunkum. All that has happened is that this fascist white government has taken ten years to give one sector of the oppressed mass something that is theirs by right, and is not a 'privelege' or progress. It is so easy to see that the government is making ~~xxxx~~ capital of the fact that there are ignorant people like the Sadiq Alli who regard what is a right as a privelege. Or does the Sadiq Alli believe that the whites are the only ones entitled to these rights and the Indian must regard this as a privelege ?

It is disappointing to note that this man can say, "Whatever its failings, the state has made a massive effort at providing school accomodation. " '.....a massive effort...'? Please, Mr Fakir, you give yourself away ! It would appear, from your tone, that even you seem to think the Indian and consequently the whole black mass, are a problem.

In fact, your whole article sounds like that of some liberal white sitting in his armchair, and paying token gesture to the Indian people. It should be no effort at all to provide, in fact, it is the duty of the government to provide for the people of the country - if this government regards them as people.

Apparently, Sadiq Alli, you donot seem to concern yourself with the broad mass of opressed people, rather you make every attempt to dissociate yourself and the Indian people from that 19 million I spoke of earlier; and this is a failing of a large percentage of the Indian people - we fail to see ourselves as a part of the opressed mass. Always, we try to think that we are a little more priveleged than the African or the Coloured. By doing this, we play right into the hands of the Government who are employing the method of divide and rule.

And it is people, like the Fakir who sell not only their own souls, but also the souls of the Indian Community. All these people are selfishly motivated - they are trying their level best to become white. Unfortunately for them, whatever they say, however much they fawn, and however much they fall prostrate at the feet of the white-man and his government he will use them to achieve his own purposes and then, when he can use you no longer, he will discard you, just as the Germans used the Jewish businessmen against their own Jewish people. You may snigger at the comparison but compare yourself with the Jew in the pre-war Jewish ghettos. Generally, that type were referred to as the 'sell-outs'.

How much of poverty the Fakir and his kind are aware of, I am not sure. But, when they try to force their own affluent standards onto the large majority of the Indian people it would appear as if they know naught. Cushioned into luxury, these affluent people do not see the plight of the hundreds of thousands of Indians who suffer the hardships of the poverty-struck millions in South Africa.

The time has come when you must decide (~~when you must decide~~) whether you are going to become the 'priveleged' lackey of the white man or are you going to identify with the opressed mass of South Africa.

Time has passed for the Indian to retreat into his hideaways behind temple doors and mosques; our passivity and our sectionalism must be broken down. The idea that we are a people with a rich heritage is for Indians in India not those in Africa. We have a new history to write; a new heritage to develop - and that lies in Africa, not with the whiteman and his prejudices but with our fellow sufferers - the Coloured and the African.

These references to ourselves as the 'Indian Community' or the 'Bantu' or the 'Coloured' is trite and are creations of the government made to separate us from each other. If you argue that we created it ourselves then we are guilty of practicing our own apartheid. 'Bantu' when translated means a person. An Indian is one born in India. Coloured is a creation of the Government. An African is one born in Africa. And we are all born in Africa and let us not forget that. We are all Black South Africans.

Finally, Mr Fakir or Mr Sadiq Alli, it would be advisable that you do either of two things; one is to stop writing all together; the other is to have a complete rethink about your future attitude in respect of your articles. You have taken it upon yourself to write these columns in both papers, therefore, it is incumbent upon you to reflect to comment and to maintain a certain dignity about articles. But please do not use your column to preach the propoganda of the nationalist government.

And please donot sell the souls of the black people. Sell yours but not the others. We can ill-afford to at any time like this. People like you Mr Fakir have become redundant to the future of the black people. It is best you keep quiet.

As a final general comment, the teaching of the older generation must be discarded for they were based on selfish motives, concerned only with making money, getting a good education, building beautiful homes and keeping your mouth shut. The future is in the hands of young people who are not afraid to stand by the concepts of morality, human freedom, justice, trust, and unbiasedness. The first step in this direction has been taken by the South African Student's Organisation (SASO). Take example from them and fearlessly make inroads into areas where contact and new avenues of thought have hitherto been left untouched.

" a black voice"

*all references to black mean all sectors of the black people.

strini moodley

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