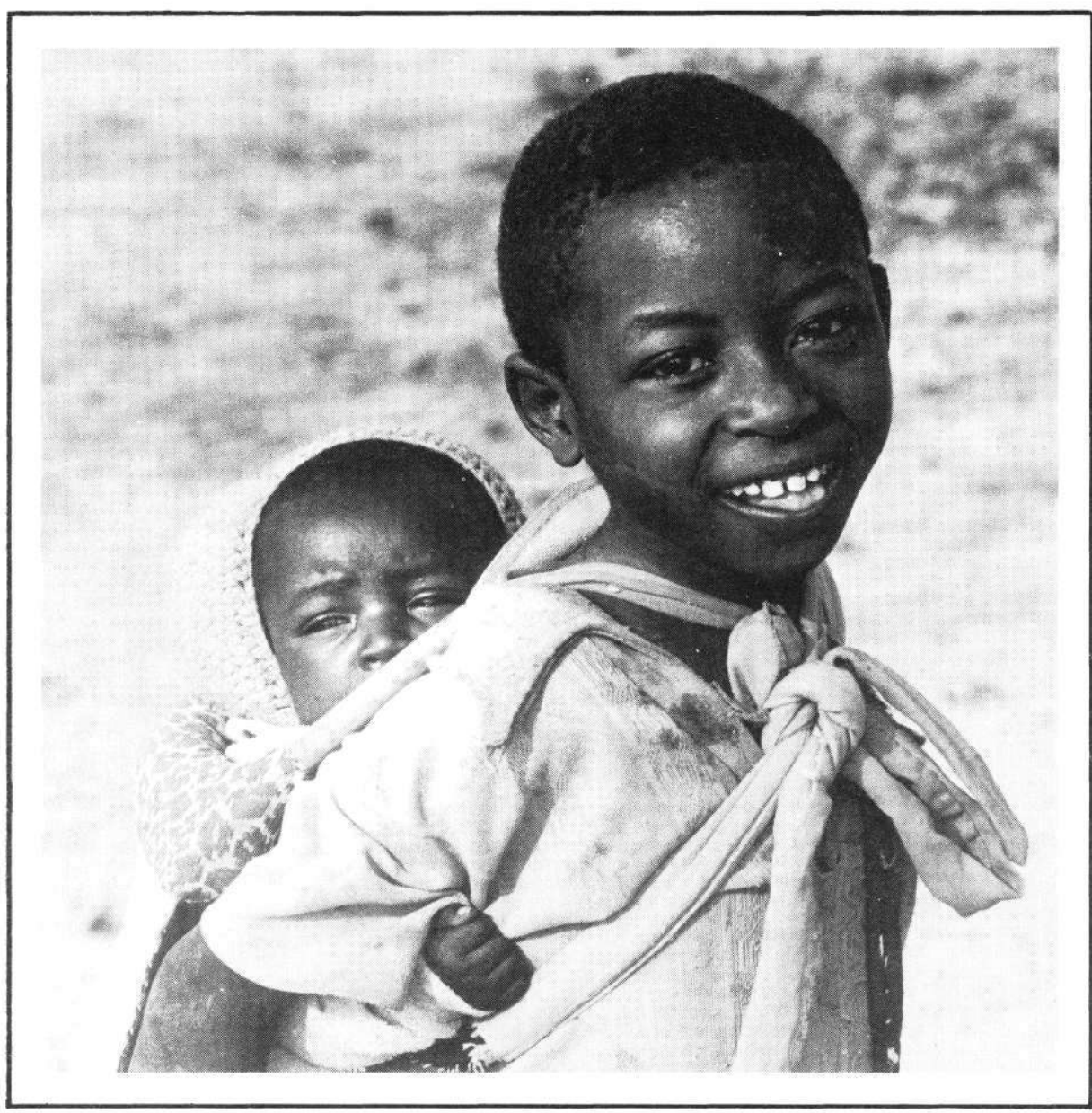


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Namibian Children: Hope for a New Future

A JOURNAL OF LIBERAL AND RADICAL OPINION

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Cover photograph by Paul Weinberg

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EDITORIALS

1. Helen Suzman

During the last twenty years REALITY has paid tribute to many outstanding Liberals, but that has almost invariably been on the occasions of their deaths. It is a pleasant change, then, to pay tribute here to one who we hope will be with us for many years. That is, of course, Helen Suzman, who retired from Parliament at the end of May.

It must be said at once that the tribute is bound to be inadequate, for only Helen herself knows the full extent of her engagement against the apartheid juggernaut these past 36 years.

A great deal has been said about her marvellously sustained and brilliantly conducted campaign as the Nationalist Party's only credible Parliamentary opponent for thirteen years. She has been praised for the role she continued to play so effectively, as the PFP's spokeswoman on Police and Security matters, in the sixteen years which followed. Her public performance over all the time she represented Houghton is well-recorded. That performance was prodigious, enough to exhaust the toughest constitution.

But it did not exhaust her. What she did in public was only half of what she did. Year after year she was the unfailing support of every person harassed or banned or imprisoned for political reasons. From Nelson Mandela to the humblest member of the extra-parliamentary opposition of the 1950s, 60s and 70s there are countless people to testify to that. The extra-parliamentary leadership of recent years has not yet paid proper tribute to what she did to keep its gaoler and banned leadership sane, and still with hope, in those grim days. Without her, despair might have overwhelmed them.

Not nearly enough is known about this second and equally draining role which Helen played, unseen but unrelentingly, away from the public eye. We hope that she will tell us about it in the book she now says she hopes to write. For that story of incessant lobbying, nagging at a hard-faced and unfeeling Government and its bureaucrats, to make life just that little bit more livable for its victims, was a story of heroic persistence.

South Africa, black and white, to say nothing of the world at large, needs to know it. □

2. Justice and the Police

In this issue we carry the full text of the statement from the dock, made at the start of their trial for terrorism, of the thirteen accused in what has come to be known as Cape Town's "rainbow trial". We do this not because we agree with everything the statement says (in fact, for one, we disagree with its justification of violence) but because we think it reflects a view of the system of administration of justice here which is becoming widespread and which has serious implications for our future.

In the eyes of more and more South Africans the Courts are seen not as impartial arbiters of justice but as agents of the apartheid state. Without any reflection on the impartiality of individual judges it is clear that their credibility has been systematically undermined by the laws they have to apply, by the removal of their discretionary powers, by the passing of retroactive legislation.

To these handicaps must be added the way in which the police often go about their business. Mr Ken Owen, the editor of *Business Day*, has recently been in a brush with the police for publishing an article in which he claimed

that a murder carried out before two thousand witnesses on a mine had still not led to a prosecution two years later. In the conflict in Natal the number of people brought to Court, compared to the number of cases of murder, arson and assault reported, is negligible. The response of the police to criticism of this state of affairs is to say that they cannot bring cases to Court because witnesses are too afraid to testify. This surely is the most telling indictment of all. If the police cannot provide people with protection, what point is there in having them?

It goes further than that. In Natal a number of people have sought the intervention of the Courts against threats of murder and assault and Judges have handed down orders restraining individuals or organisations from carrying out those threats – with no effect at all. Murders and assaults have followed and we do not know whether the people who carried them out were those originally cited because no arrests are made.

Is it surprising that, when even the Courts are no longer able to protect them, more and more people should come to look at them in the same light as the rainbow trialists do? □

3. The Election

The anti-apartheid forces in Parliament took a severe beating in the last general Election, the extra-parliamentary forces have taken one since then.

Logic dictates that the two should be working in tandem to bring to an end the system they both abhor. There seems to be a much wider acceptance of this view on both sides

today, than there was two years ago.

We hope that in this election the extra-parliamentary opposition will do nothing to make the Democratic Party's task of winning white seats more difficult than it already is, and that the DP's candidates will not say things which will make future cooperation with them more difficult. □

RAINBOW TRIAL PLEA

We stand here charged with “terrorism”. The original main charge against us was treason. After the State had been questioned on our behalf, it withdrew this charge. The allegation then was that we sought to overthrow the State. The present indictment still attributes such an intent to us. What was and still is omitted is that the State referred to is the apartheid state.

Our understanding of treason is that it is a crime against the people. It would, for instance, be treason to betray the people of this country and to take up arms against them. But our people have been treasonably betrayed. The racist minority regime rules by force, through the barrel of the gun and without a mandate from the people. It has created an apartheid state and, in order to maintain and defend it, employs awesome weapons of war which it has unleashed against the citizenry of this country. One of the results is an ongoing international armed conflict in which the racist minority regime is ranged against the people of the country.

We believe that SA belongs to all who live in it and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people. We accordingly abhor the apartheid state and, in so far as we have any choice in the matter, we owe it no allegiance whatsoever. We make no apologies for seeking its downfall. Nor do we believe that those who seek its demise, whether by international armed conflict or otherwise, should on that account be considered guilty of criminal conduct.

The regime therefore stands accused of treason and the people do not and will not withdraw that charge.

As for the charge we now face, we again say that it is the State that stands accused. In defence of its apartheid practices, this regime has brooked no opposition. Mass democratic organisations, the organisations of the people, have been silenced and their leaders gaoled or restricted. Tens of thousands of the regime’s political opponents have languished in gaol, having been detained without trial. Scores of others are forced to stand trial for so-called crimes against the State. This is called the maintenance of law and order. We call it terrorism.

It is terrorism too when innocent men, women and children are attacked by the regime’s police and SADF, and killed while they sleep, in foreign countries; we think of Maseru, Matola, Gaborone and others.

It is terrorism when this country’s neighbours are destabilised, all in the name of apartheid.

It is terrorism when assassination squads, operating inside and outside this country, hunt for and eliminate opponents of apartheid. We think of Ruth First, Jeanette Schoon, Pat Ndzima, Cassius Make, Abram Tiro and many others.

We recall with horror the cruel, violent and untimely deaths of many heroes of the struggle inside this country, all at the hands of the agents of this regime. It includes Joseph Mdluli, Steve Biko, Neil Aggett, Goniwe, Calata, Mhlawuli, Saul Mkhize, Hector Petersen, Timol and many others.

The roll-call is endless. It includes the hordes of our fallen comrades who have dared to march in protest against their oppression, together with the countless numbers who did not even march but were mowed down by the police and SADF in the townships of our land: Sharpeville, Langa, Nyanga, Soweto and elsewhere. We call this brutal, naked terrorism. This is terrorism in any language.

It is terrorism when, in the pursuit of apartheid, whole communities are uprooted — when extreme misery and poverty are the lot of certain sections of the population while others enjoy a standard of living which rates with the highest in the world.

We say that it is the regime that is guilty of terrorism. It would therefore be terrorism for us to identify with apartheid, or to condone a system that forces its youth to take up arms against fellow citizens, to defend the indefensible. Apartheid stands condemned as a crime against humanity. It has been declared a crime by the international community and has been rejected as a heresy and a sin by the religious community. Yet it has been allowed to devastate millions of lives in this country.

Most regrettably, apartheid has not left the legal system and the judicial process of this country untainted. With due respect to your Lordship and learned Assessors, we have to point out that an official Court in this country cannot ignore the laws to which it owes its existence, nor the body of laws which constitute the apartheid legal system: in other words it is enjoined to apply an unjust legal system.

One facet of the workings of the system has already been manifested in this case, in the course of events whereby we were arrested, detained, interrogated and brought to trial.

After our arrest, we were detained under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act, a provision which is, in practice, used only against the political opponents of the regime. It is a horrific legal provision and is in blatant disregard of the Rule of Law. The Security Police have not failed to take full advantage of its provisions; it enables them to operate in the dark and to extract maximum advantage to the maximum detriment of their victim. It enables them to exert all manner of pressures on the detained: psychological and physical torture, intimidation, coercion and assault. It exposes the detainee to dehumanising and degrading treatment, lengthy interrogation and months of solitary confinement without even the basic mental comforts such as reading material, access to family, friends and legal representation and advice. It is as though the system is designed to destroy the detainee’s mental faculties; it is in fact designed to break him, to force him to produce information which will be used against him at his trial. Having undergone the rigours of Section 29 ourselves, we are not surprised that political trials are characterised by a high number of “confessions” allegedly made by the accused. The courts have admitted numerous of these so-called confessions.

The Act stipulates that the detainee should be visited periodically by a magistrate as well as by other employees of the State. We were so visited. Some of us were also visited by the Judge President of this division. Our experience shows that these visits do not succeed to ameliorate in any substantial way the conditions under which we are kept. It would rather seem that they were designed to put a more humane veneer to barbaric treatment which is in effect sanctioned and countenanced by the law. Some of our comrades still bear painful reminders of their ordeal; they are still receiving medical and psychological treatment.

There is no doubt that the State is using the section as a terrorist weapon: to exact a terrible revenge on opponents of the regime's sterile and outdated policies. Eventually, when the victim has been thoroughly broken, he is brought before these courts to put a final stamp of credibility on the actions of the police. The Court then in effect becomes a mere tool of the oppressor.

The courts have, furthermore, failed to fight the erosion of civil liberties. The judiciary have, by their silence, allowed this erosion to gain momentum and the courts now find themselves bereft of their traditional role of an independent arbiter and protector of individual rights.

The total picture is therefore that of a regime which has treated the courts of this land with disdain. We cannot therefore have confidence in those Courts; they are not the Courts of the people of South Africa; they cannot dispense "justice" except in accordance with the guidelines and rules devised by the oppressor. Our ideal is that all shall be equal before the law; that the courts shall be representative of all the people.

While, therefore, we find ourselves compelled by circumstances to participate in the proceedings in this case, as we intend to do, we have no desire, nor do we find it at all necessary, to plead to the charges brought against us in this court.

Finally, we cannot fail to observe that there are numerous political trials before the courts in this country. Hundreds of our comrades, decent, sensitive and intelligent men and women are daily arraigned; they have but one thing in common: they pursue the same ideal of freedom which the fathers and grandfathers of today's rulers sought and fought for against the British. But they seek something more; they struggle for a new society where discrimination based on the colour of one's skin shall be a thing of the past. Hundreds of these noble souls already populate the gaols of this country. Thousands more have suffered severe deprivation whilst being held in detention for indefinite periods without trial, the anguish and desperation of it all sometimes driving some of them to adopt extreme measures, such as hunger strikes, in order to draw attention to their plight.

We in this Court are but a humble few. We tread a thorny path which is rapidly becoming a highway. We do expect pain, prison and death if need be.

But our cause is just. Therefore, and in accordance with the ideals enshrined in the Freedom Charter, we here, together with the rest of the people of South Africa, black and white — equals, countrymen, brothers and sisters — will strive together, sparing nothing of our strength and courage, until a just and democratic society is achieved.

Victory is certain.

South Africa shall be free.

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BLACK MEN ON WHITE LAND

Keegan, Tim, *Facing the storm. Portraits of black lives in rural South Africa*, Cape Town and Johannesburg, David Phillip, 1988, X + 169; R14,95.

Ndae Makume, Lucas Nqandela, Barney Ngakane, Petrus Poee: these are the four men whose relations with the land form the basis of Keegan's analysis of agrarian transformation on the highveld (rather than "rural South Africa", as the title suggests) in the early decades of this century.

The "life stories" of these men, unknown to each other, "obscure" (Keegan's term, though he would view Ngakane, a community leader of some standing, as an exception) and battling in disparate small groups against the growing might of organised white politics, reveal much in common. Most obviously, they are all male accounts. Keegan is aware of the implications of a male bias; he writes,

the perspectives of women are likely to reveal different dimensions of the rural experience to that of their menfolk. . . . But the difficulties of investigating women's experiences and perspectives should not be underestimated. Patriarchy itself (the domination and control of men over women) is a major obstacle; women are not supposed to view the world through independent lenses . . . (pp. 160-1).

Even with this acknowledgement, however, there is little indication in the book that gender — men's gender in this instance — can in any way help to explain the life chances of individuals. Race and class for Keegan are the critical factors.

HISTORIES

This problem aside, there is much that these men's histories tell us. We learn of how they skilfully exploited opportunities for survival — even for accumulation — in a variety of landlord-tenant relationships, from share-cropping proper to labour tenancy; of the basic importance of education for improving one's status and also for ensuring some more secure future for the following generation; of the wide appeal of an inclusive, self-bettering style of Christianity, which gave way only later to bitterness and disillusion as "the boundaries of freedom clos(ed) in rapidly" (p. 111); of the force of local custom and habit rather than the strictures of the law *per se* in determining what was possible or impossible; of the effects on the size of family groups and households of increasing tenuousness on the land; also, as life on the farms became more insecure, of the growing appeal of the towns, as "investment in upward class mobility on the basis of rural enterprise gave way to investment in ragtime trousers" (p. 123); and fascinatingly, of the way in which people themselves reconstructed "ethnic" ties and "tribes" — af-

ter proper consultation of Ellenberger and Macgregor's **History of the Basuto** — as a form of self-defence against encroaching state authority. Sometimes this was done in order to assemble enough people together to buy land; on other occasions, it was felt that the reassertion of chiefly authority would assist in negotiations with the state.

Although all four of the men whose experiences are recounted in the book maintained some link with the land through the greater part of their lives, some were more successful than others at escaping the "proletarian vortex" (p. 59). Education, as well as a reasonably secure rural base, seem to have been the twin factors here.

Yet stacked against all of them, a theme which recurs again and again, is that none of them was the owner of the (white) land on which they were farming and largely as a result, they were mostly consigned to a fate of wandering. Lucas Nqandela, for example, moved to 10 different farms in his adult working life before being dumped in the Bophuthatswana bantustan in the 1960s. This sense of upheaval permeates all these oral histories and underlines the inherent disadvantage faced by African tenant farmers already excluded from the ownership of private property on the highveld, a point curiously underplayed by Keegan. (It is true that some of these men did come to own or co-own farm land and even this was no guarantee of security, as they suddenly found themselves declared a "black spot" and vulnerable to forced removal, or as pressure on available land became acute and farming unviable.)

The four men did not simply have these experiences (or variations of them) in common. Each case history, as Keegan explicitly notes,

reveals aspects of the experience of a class, of a racial or ethnic group, of a community, of a geographical region, of a particular economic enterprise (p. 159).

INDIVIDUALS AND PROCESSES

Although the book is divided into two sections, the first containing the "life stories" and the second concerned with broader issues of social transformation and the recovery of oral tradition, in fact Keegan attempts to make links between individuals and wider social processes throughout. He makes this intention clear in the preface:

This book then, is . . . a history of ordinary black folk, but it is also more. It is concerned as well to investigate wider themes of social and economic change by examining the lives of a handful of individuals (p. ix).

The distinction between the two sections, then, is somewhat misleading. It is probably more accurate to characterise the presentations of the individuals as "portraits" (cf. the book's subtitle) — suggesting a fairly extensive reconstruction, selection and interpretation of the interview material — than as "life stories" (cf. the title page). One takes Keegan's point that 'seldom can the informant's own words be quoted verbatim without being explained and translated' (p. 161); nevertheless, there is an important distinction between the "straight" presentation of a life story and the selection of only certain parts of it, which are recast to show up key processes, events, meanings. There is a ready and striking example of these two approaches: the publication of the South African Institute of Race Relations, **A community man. An oral history of the life of William Barney Ngakane** (SAIRR, 1982) could much more properly be treated as a "life story". There is of course an interviewer, of whom one is constantly aware, prodding with questions (and in this sense, exercising to some extent prior selection of information) but in the responses one is left in no doubt that it is Barney Ngakane

telling Barney Ngakane's story. In Keegan's portrait, on the other hand, one is never sure whether the storyteller is Keegan or the same Ngakane (and by the same token, any of the other three informants) — which one is making the links between personal reminiscence and the big issues.

A portrait as painted by Keegan turns into a work of analysis: it is no longer simply a "life story". One is not questioning the use of oral testimony in this way but rather, to ask that the bigger job of appropriation that has been undertaken be recognised as such. A work of analysis based on oral sources (supplemented as Keegan's has been by archival work) can be as valuable an addition to "history from below", and as valuable a statement that "society is an organism that grows rather than a structure that can be dismantled and reassembled like a motor car engine"¹ (Keegan being one of the most forceful proponents of this view) as any "straight" life history.

1. "Introduction" to Wilson, F. and M. Ramphela **Uprooting poverty. The South African challenge**. Cape Town and Johannesburg, David Phillip, 1989, p. 5.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

In his article 'Suggestions for an economic policy for the future'. Gavin Maasdorp is clearly torn between the Free Market and Redistribution approaches to the elimination of poverty. I have no such conflict.

I find it inconsistent to give even 'careful consideration' to minimum wage legislation while finding 'the presence of absolute poverty unacceptable' to all liberals. Minimum wages and trade unions for that matter, in their very nature upgrade the employed at the expense of the poverty-stricken unemployed, and further confound the issue by reducing profits which are the ONLY generator of employment and/or taxation.

Mr Maasdorp has also fallen into the trap of treating poverty as a given. In fact the primary cause of poverty is the parent who brings into the world more children than he can afford to feed, clothe and educate. We cannot discuss poverty without drawing attention to this, at the very least. Upliftment is only one way of reducing the birth rate. A direct attack on the problem is surely as 'liberal' as drawing attention to the appalling death rate.

What is inherently liberal about increasing my taxes in

order to pay for the education and health care of my neighbour with twice as many children as I? The words liberal and humanitarian cannot mean the same thing. No society can prosper where the parent is relieved of primary responsibility for launching each of his children into economic life.

The state has no more than an overall role to play in the elimination of poverty. Every R5 000 it extracts from me in the form of taxation prevents that R5 000 from finding its way, through institutions, to expansion and the employment of one more worker earning R5 000 per annum. To add insult to injury after the bureaucrats and bunglers have done their work on my R5 000, only R2 500 remains to give to a citizen in need.

Can R2 500 once only, be compared with R5 000 per annum for life?

Yours sincerely,

C.L. Kidson

THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE IN SOUTH AFRICA'S RURAL AREAS*

*An essay reviewing Catherine Cross and Richard Haines, *Towards Freehold? Options for Land and Development in South Africa's Black Rural Areas*, Cape Town, Juta and Co., 1988.

1. INTRODUCTION

The common theme that allows the editors to bring all of forty contemporary articles into one book is that all of the articles focus their analyses on some aspect of South Africa's rural areas. Clearly, this is a very broad theme and within this ambit there is scope for a great deal of diversity. This might be taken to imply a lack of cohesion and direction and the publishers do little to dispel this implication when on the back cover they state that the book is intended as 'a handbook for workers in official and voluntary agencies'. Whilst not denying that easy access to this collection of articles is a contribution in itself especially to development officials but also to the academic community, it is clear that the editors had more ambitious aims in mind in that they wanted to **clarify** the options that are available in the rural areas.

The book does give a very comprehensive picture of the current state of the rural areas and, building from this foundation successfully launches a serious examination of what the future options are in these areas. In line with this focus on the present and the future, historical material is only included to the extent that it throws light on the current situation. This makes the book a strong complement to the recent surge in agrarian historiography.

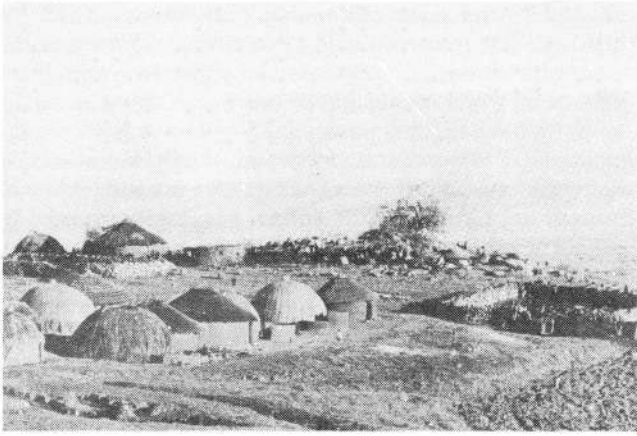
The editors have worked very hard at structuring the book in order to make it into a cohesive contribution and, to the credit of the editors, it is evident that the number of included contributions is symptomatic of the complexity of the issues at hand rather than editorial indecision. Catherine Cross has written a superb introduction that not only gives one a preview of what lies ahead but also airs her own well-considered views on current and future land scenarios. One small slip up on the production side is that in a few of the contributions the references which are cited in brief do not make it into the comprehensive reference list at the back of the book. However, this would annoy only the most fastidious of readers.

Thusfar the review has complimented the editors on putting together a book in which the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. This cohesiveness should not be understood to mean that only one consistent viewpoint is aired in all of the contributions. On the contrary, a spectrum of views is included on each of the issues which the book airs. To quote from the back cover again: 'The contributors – from the progressive left to state development agencies – illuminate differences in policy directions and give insight into the policy debate for land'. In

addition, the multidisciplinary nature of the book means that the same issues are often approached through very different lenses. The net result is that any reader inevitably becomes drawn in as an active participant in these important debates.

Rather than systematically working through the actual contributions in the book, the review will now go on to present what is, in the opinion of the reviewer, the most persuasive synthesis to emerge out of the book. This will be done without acknowledged reference to any specific author or article and will be presented in terms of four planks. The review will then raise some issues which emerge out of this synthesis. Of course, such a synthesis view is very much in the eye of the beholder and has therefore moved very far from the domain for which the editors or contributors can be held accountable.





2. A SUGGESTED SYNTHESIS

A. Any move toward freehold tenure is to be approached with a good deal of caution.

The sad state of black agriculture and other rural productive activity is largely explicable in terms of the macro-milieu within which these activities take place (the spatial lumpiness of South Africa's industrial growth points, for example) as well as more local level factors such as the lack of any effective support services for these rural activities and the considerable population pressure on the land. There is no reason to believe that the introduction of freehold into such an environment will be the fulfilling of any of the promises which freehold offers in theory. In fact, the evidence from the small pockets of freehold land already found in South Africa's rural areas suggests that yields per acre and animal husbandry practices on the freehold land are not significantly different from those on the land that is farmed under other tenurial arrangements. In addition, there is no evidence of an active market in freehold farmland.¹ Lastly, in addition to the informal channels through which all rural communities secure credit, freeholders are supposed to be able to raise credit formally using their property as security. However, there is very little evidence of this taking place at all and no evidence that credit is being raised for cultivation purposes.

The case does not rest here however; because, besides the fact that freehold will not produce the promised goods, the introduction of freehold title into rural communities on a large scale at this stage is likely to have a number of undesirable consequences. Most importantly, there is the concern that this could lead to the development of a landless class when the poorest members of rural society are effectively forced to sell off their land in order to survive through particularly hard times. Ironically, it is this same poorest group that finds itself trapped in the rural areas because they do not have the means to make the big move to the urban areas. Another cause of concern that is based on trends that are already emerging on black freehold land in the peri-urban areas is that the landlord/tenant relationships which emerge out of the renting of this freehold land are a source of great social anger, upheaval and even violence. Finally, as regards stockholding, there is concern which is also based on actual experience within Southern Africa that the conversion of commonage into freehold land could lead to the concentration of stock ownership in the hands of only the wealthier rural stratum.

Alongside these arguments regarding the limitations of freehold, recent research has revealed that traditional tenure arrangements are far more functional and efficient than they have been given credit for in the past. In fact these traditional arrangements have:

- always offered residents *de facto* security of tenure,
- been steeped in a sense of social responsibility; and
- have always contained adequate checks on the abuse of power by those making land allocation decisions.

These arrangements have also shown themselves to be evolutionary rather than static by clearly undergoing adaptations in response to changes in the external environment. For example, in the peri-urban areas the contemporary tenure arrangements can best be categorised as 'informal freehold' in that they hold many of the advantages of freehold whilst retaining a sense of responsibility to the community at the same time. It appears that even the much berated commonage is not necessarily correlated with overstocking and, when such a correlation does exist, this is often due to the disruption by 'development officials' of the informal institutions within the community that were governing behaviour on the commonage rather than to the communal tenure itself.²

The impact of all of this is that a negative answer emerges to the question raised in the main title of the book, 'Toward Freehold?'.³ It should be said though that the analysis is sophisticated enough to qualify this conclusion by saying that it is applicable to the short and medium terms and that it needs to be re-assessed as the situation in the rural and peri-urban areas changes.

B. The pursuit of agricultural development should not dominate the rural policy agenda.

At least 40 percent of the so called 'homeland' population is urbanised. In addition, households in the black rural areas derive such a large proportion of their income from their members who are migrant workers in the urban, industrial centres and such a small percentage of their income from their agricultural activities that they are effectively dependent on the urban areas.⁴ Despite this urban dependency, the abolition of influx control and the granting of secure tenure in the urban areas is unlikely to catalyse a massive, permanent migration into the cities because, on the one hand, the rural base offers the urban members of the household an insurance against all the contingencies of urban life and, on the other hand, all the household members who have high wage earning potential can be channeled from the rural region into the urban via the household's urban base. In other words, a stable equilibrium appears to exist with households desiring to hold land in both the urban and rural areas. Consequently, for the foreseeable future it is unlikely that more land will become available in the rural areas for agricultural purposes or that agriculture will become a higher priority in the decision making processes of rural households.

This does not mean that there should be no concern with agriculture, however, because there are two groups of rural households who do not fit into the generic analysis of the above paragraph. The first group consists of some of the wealthier households in the rural areas who are attempting to move into commercial agriculture in order to supplement the cash earnings of their households. The

second group is constituted by some of the poorest of the rural households. The agricultural activities of this group make a much larger contribution to their earnings than for the average rural household. However, this should not be attributed to their higher productivity as farmers but rather to the significantly lower earnings which these households derive from migrant remittances and from wage work. As was mentioned in the previous section, these households find it harder to open up channels into the urban areas. They also generally live in the remotest rural regions far removed from any industrial nodes. If the focus of rural development is on the upliftment of the poor and there are many in the book who clearly support just such a Rawlsian focus – then it is crucial that something is done to help this group to break out of this low-level equilibrium trap in which they find themselves.

Given the above rural scenario what type of policy options suggest themselves?

– There is a need to provide an efficient agricultural support package for rural farmers but this package has to be targeted at those groups to whom agriculture is a priority. Clearly, the actual support provided to those farmers trying to break into commercial agriculture will be different from the support services made available to households in order that they may meet a higher proportion of their subsistence needs.

– Although most black rural households have some access to land, more land is needed for both residential and productive use. The strong political call for redistribution of land on equity grounds turns this issue of land reform into an important and contentious one. However, careful analysis reveals that the options are fairly limited.⁵ Outright expropriation of white farmland and consequent resettlement is going to be both difficult and expensive. There is the possibility of some voluntary selling off of land by white farmers but this too will be expensive. More promising is the opening up of plots on abandoned marginal white farmland for residential and/or smallholder purposes. As far as commercial agriculture is concerned, the scrapping of the Land Act and Group Areas Act would open up the land market to black commercial farmers. Given the current crisis in white agriculture, the present would be a very suitable time for this to take place. However, with the Land Act in place, a concentration of ownership is taking place in white agriculture and this trend is making the possibility of a market mediated re-emergence of black commercial agriculture an ever-diminishing possibility.

– Taking a long-term view, change in the black rural areas requires changes in South Africa's space economy so that industrial development begins to take place closer to these rural areas. Besides creating additional wage employment, this would also increase the demand for agricultural goods as well as non-agricultural goods and services from the rural areas. Such changes might make it sensible for rural households to allocate more time and labour to rural productive activity.

C. Past and current state interventions in the rural areas are good examples of what is to be avoided in rural development.

An analysis of the history of rural policy interventions by the South African state clearly reveals that the state has

abused the language of the development field in order to justify the implementation of policy in the rural areas that was really aimed at the State's own political goals and the effects of which could never be regarded as 'development' in any of the many meanings of this term. For example, in terms of state ideology, the Bantu Authorities Act could be said to have set up the broader administrative structures needed to enact development policy by giving official sanction to the administrative structures that already existed in the community. However, when resistance from within the rural communities indicated that the communities did not see the act in this way, the state implemented it nonetheless. In addition, all members of the traditional structures who were part of this resistance were excluded from the newly created Bantu Authorities. The distorted structures that emerged ensured that the *de jure* community leaders were accountable to the state rather than the community and these leaders were, in fact, in a relationship of conflict with the communities that they were supposed to represent. Given this situation, the utilization of these structures for the channeling of pension payments and the financing of rural development work was inviting corruption and certainly ensured that whatever emerged was shaped by the needs of the leadership rather than the community.

Betterment planning offers a further example. In this case the ideology was, and is, that rural villages need to be re-organised in order to promote more efficient agriculture. Once again, fierce rural resistance has not stopped the implementation of such re-organizations. The result of this 'betterment' is largescale social disruption including the disruption of long-established agricultural work parties and the informal arrangements controlling the use of the commonage. It appears that even agricultural productivity has suffered as a result of 'betterment'.

The contemporary agricultural development schemes run by the agricultural corporations in the bantustans are also not to be emulated. Many are large, expensive agricultural projects which are administered by the corporations until they become profit making at which time they are supposed to be broken up into smallholdings. However, most of them are not financially viable and the chance of these projects benefitting any rural communities seems remote. The smallholder schemes also tend to be instituted in a very top-down fashion with such rigid parameters defining the behaviour of participants that some of the participants perceive themselves to be employees on the project manager's land. In some areas the participants actually earn less from their agricultural efforts than they used to earn before they became part of the project once the increased cost of inputs such as fertilizer, special seed and tractors have been netted out. Finally, these projects discourage the cultivation of a wide variety of crops which lessens the subsistence contribution of agriculture.

D. There are marked differences between the various rural regions in South Africa and the policy options available in each region will therefore be different.

There are both quantitative and qualitative aspects to this recognition of regional differences:

– On the quantitative side it is objectively clear that

regional differences do have an important bearing on what is within the feasible set of policy options. The synthesis discussion under planks A. and B. above has however generalised across regions and is, in this sense, more gross in its analysis than the regional differences allow for.⁶ For example, there are regions in South Africa in which successful land reforms could be undertaken or in which freehold tenure may appear to be a more attractive alternative than it appears in plank A. above.

– On the qualitative side, the many detailed case studies and village-level analyses ensure that the rich diversity of rural life is brought across. They also serve to emphasise that the central commitment in rural analysis and policy must be to the rural people. The object of exploring rural options is to increase the choices available to rural people and especially to the rural poor. The discussion under plank C. above reveals that this overt commitment to bottom-up development stands in clear contrast to the past and present practice of state development officials.

3. SOME THOUGHTS ON THE SYNTHESIS

It was mentioned earlier that developing the synthesis view was somewhat contrived in that the book does present alternative viewpoints on many issues. In this section, some of these interesting open issues will be briefly aired using the synthesis view as a base. The airing will make reference to some pertinent literature that was not included in the book as well as material that was included. As before, no references will be cited for material in the book. The exposition will be structured by dividing the issues (again somewhat artificially) into discussion about the short-term and the long-term.

A. Short-term issues

Short-term policy can be regarded as interventions that can be made in the present to ameliorate the situation in the rural areas whilst recognising that there are also longer term structural forces at work which will also have to be dealt with to bring about any permanent upliftment in the rural areas. An initial issue that has to be confronted in formulating short-term policy is what priority to accord rural agriculture. There are certain infrastructural provisions such as good roads and transport that link the rural areas into the broader economy and are therefore necessary whether or not priority is accorded to agriculture. The same could be said of the provision of clinics, schools and clean drinking water. However, as soon as agriculture is prioritised additional policy supports seem to be necessary.

Stock ownership, or at least access to stock on favourable terms, seems to be a basic prerequisite for any serious farming as the time- and labour-intensity of hand-hoe field preparation seems to be too much of a disincentive for even subsistence producers.⁷ It could be argued that the provision of some basic extension service is in the same category. However, to argue for the provision of agricultural credit facilities, co-operatives, marketing boards and price supports on agricultural goods implies a policy focus on assisting commercial agriculture.⁸ But whether such a policy focus is appropriate is a contentious issue.⁹

It could be argued that support for subsistence production is compatible with commercial production; however to argue the reverse is more difficult. To make commercial agriculture a real alternative, given the options available in the broader economy, seems to involve a qualitatively different commitment. A few examples will illustrate this:

– Farming 25 hectares of land in rural Natal will give the rural household the equivalent income to one member of the household finding semi-unskilled employment in Pinetown;

– In a marginal maize area it was calculated that a maize farmer needed 71 hectares to earn R5 000 per year and this income might just be enough to prevent the farmer from moving to an urban area in search of work; and,

– In an area with good soil and rainfall and which was suitable for sugarcane farming, the average household earned an average of R368 per year by cultivating about two hectares of sugarcane.

There are other examples and they are all sobering. If this circumstantial approach is deemed to provide conclusive evidence that the South African black rural areas will not be able to produce agricultural surpluses on the 2 hectares which the average household has access to, the implications are important. For a start, this implies that a commitment to commercial farming necessitates some sort of targeting of rural households who may be successful commercial farmers and who are therefore to be granted privileged access to land and other support services. Without this targeting it seems that only the most wealthy will have the opportunity (which is different from having the inclination) to move into commercial farming. Either of these options implies that, in the short term, commercial farming will be practised by an elite.

This talk of targetting and elites does not accord too well with commitment to 'the people on the ground' that was an important part of the synthesis view. Although the synthesis view was sensitive to regional differences and the need to target agricultural assistance, not enough consideration was given to the heterogeneity of rural communities. It was hoped that rural development could increase the range of choices available to these rural communities. For a start it was hoped that rural development policy would give households the latitude to decide whether to concentrate on the cities keeping only a small rural base, or whether to spread themselves more evenly by engaging in some rural productive activity or whether to prioritise rural activities. However it is highly unlikely that all of these options could be opened up to all rural communities. Like different regions the rural community is characterised by considerable differentiation¹⁰ and, given this, it is far more likely that the opening up of the range of choices for one rural group (perhaps the poorest group) would curtail the options of at least one other rural group. Given this, debates about appropriate rural policy options are as much debates about value judgements as they are debates about technical feasibility. In fact, even in the short-run, what is and is not technically feasible depends as much on the power relations and the interest groups within the rural community as it does on anything else. Indeed, issues involving land allocation and land use are especially bedevilled by these considerations.



B. Long-term issues

Long-term scenarios have the freedom to speculate on the broader, structural changes in the economy which need to be made in order to promote the development of the rural areas. In this sense the short-run/long-run divide corresponds to a micro versus a macro focus. However, in the long-run there is also the license to allow for fundamental changes in the South African state and to assume that those in power do have a genuine commitment to improving the rural situation. In these circumstances, what are the options?

The long-run scenario emerging from the synthesis view was one in which the Land Act and the Group Areas Act have been done away with and fragmented pockets of new land have been made available for black settlement by the state through the expropriation of unused white farmland and the buying out of some small, marginal white farms. In addition it was hoped that the pattern of economic growth would have seen the spreading of industry out of the traditional core areas and into the peripheral areas so as to intergrate the rural areas into the productive economy.

This scenario has a number of serious limitations:

- Although there is evidence of some spontaneous decentralisation of industry taking place in South Africa¹¹, there is very little chance of industry relocating at anything close to the degree needed to create a fundamentally changed possibility set in the rural areas.¹²
- The scrapping of the Group Areas Act and the Land Act is

going to increase the rural options of wealthier black households who are usually well connected with the urban centres. This, together with the limited amount of new land that will be made available for resettlement, means that there will be no significant restructuring of commercial agriculture to make it more labour-absorbing. Neither will reforms come close to meeting the strong political demand for land that will emerge from those blacks who have been employed as farm labourers and those who have clung tenaciously to their smallholder status through the most arduous circumstances.¹³ This, in turn, implies that a huge burden of employment creation is placed firmly in the hand of the industrial sector and, to the extent that it is unable to meet the required growth rate, there seem to be no new processes opening up to transform the rural situation. Instead the flow of the unemployed will continue to be into the rural areas.

It appears then that the long-term scenario of the synthesis view will not lead to any major structural change. The policy emphasis therefore seems to be trapped at the local level dealing with incremental initiatives. It will certainly go nowhere near far enough to satisfy those who frame 'the land issue' in terms of the righting of historical injustices and the narrowing of the relative deprivation of rural areas compared to the urban centres and of black South Africans compared to whites.

Given these limitations, the pertinent issue is whether other long-term scenarios have offered anything more satisfactory.¹⁴ Amongst the alternative scenarios, there seems to be a general recognition that if smallholders are settled on the 'freed' white farmland and given necessary support services they may come to produce a surplus over time but that South Africa's food supply is dependent upon the productive core of white agriculture. The central issue therefore seems to be how this productive core is to be incorporated into any land reforms. All agree that the risk of ill-conceived policy in this regard is largescale food supply failure but there are differing views as to how this should be dealt with.

For the more cautious this transition should involve a carefully staged move to black dominance hopefully with the support and even under the training of white operators.¹⁵ This approach is seen to be necessary not because of the lack of farming skills on the part of the black farmers but rather because of their lack of exposure to the managerial and organisational side of largescale farming. If such a sensitive transition is not feasible this scenario tends to favour leaving this productive core unchanged rather than pushing ahead with some land reform anyway.



Less cautious are the classical Marxists who argue that swift expropriation without compensation is the only way to begin the transition to socialism in the rural areas.¹⁶ The swiftness is necessary in order to prevent the white capitalist farmers from running down their farms, in true kulak fashion, because of the threat of expropriation. This expropriation is certainly going to cause dislocations in the rural economy but this is the price that has to be paid in order to move beyond the restraints of capitalist agriculture. The doctrinaire nature of this approach is disturbing and it is certainly further away from the synthesis view than the 'cautious revisionists'. Yet, the analysis is probably correct in maintaining that any attempt to restructure commercial agriculture by compensation of white farmers is not financially feasible. This, in turn, makes any suggestion of an orderly transition to a black-dominated commercial agriculture appear highly unlikely.

Another point of agreement between these alternative scenarios is that these large white farms should not be sub-divided because they have gravitated towards their current sizes under the sway of economies of scale. For the classical Marxists these farms are to be put under the control of workers collectives who will dutifully ensure that these farms meet the planning targets which the central authorities set for them. What is to be avoided at all costs is the 'liquidation of economies of scale, the recreation of the peasantry on the basis of the division of land amongst those who work it...' (Krikler (1987, p. 113). Unemployment is less of a problem than the re-emergence of peasant farmers because the unemployed are fully proletarianised and so they do not occupy ambiguous and potentially reactionary class positions. For the 'cautious revisionists' these farms need to carry as much rural labour as they can whilst retaining their optimal size. It is also hoped that these farms can become rural growth points around which other rural productive activities, including smallholder farming can emerge.

The alternative long-term scenarios sketched above certainly do involve structural change in the rural environment and therefore do move beyond the synthesis view. However, there are many feasibility issues in these scenarios that are unclear. Recent empirical work by Moll (1988) on commercial maize and wheat farming begins to deal with some of these issues. He shows that there is evidence of economies of scale in the 50 – 300 hectare range but that the 300 – 1500 hectare range seems to be characterised by constant returns to scale. This suggests that a reform which attempts to set up a 'modest middle-class' commercial farming sector (50 hectare farms, for example) will be expensive for the state because these farms will be in the inefficient range and there will therefore be strong calls for price and/or other supports. On the other hand there is no technical support for massive collectivist farms either.

Clearly, technical feasibility does set the parameters for the realm of the possible. However, it is also evident that the debate between the different scenarios also turns on what is regarded as feasible in the human realm.

4. CONCLUSION

This essay has presented and discussed some of the issues which are examined in the book under review. The discussion has been far from exhaustive. The intention

has been to illustrate that the book is important enough to be regarded as a bench-mark detailing the extent of our current knowledge and therefore highlighting areas that warrant research priority. As such the book is representative of a broader rural research programme that is clearly making progress.

NOTES

1. This is the mechanism by which freehold is supposed to guide the land into the hands of the keenest and most efficient farmers.
2. The idea of some ideal, hypothetical stock capacity is itself under critical fire in the contemporary literature.
3. It is baffling as to why the freehold issue should enjoy star billing when it is only one of the issues discussed in the book.
4. This conclusion about low agricultural earnings remains valid even after differences in agricultural potential have been controlled for. However, it is likely that the size of the average land holding is so small that, even on the more fertile land, a serious commitment to agriculture would not be rational.
5. These limited options imply that, even with a change of government, the current black areas will have to remain the focal point of rural development initiatives.
6. However, it is hoped that this discussion does capture general trends against which any regional differences can be seen as exceptions.
7. See Derman and Poultney (1987).
8. There is some debate as to whether external access to credit and official marketing boards are necessary for the emergence of commercial agriculture because there are credit lines operating within the rural communities and adequate private marketing arrangements do seem to evolve once there is a surplus being produced. As long as these provisions make agriculture a more profitable undertaking they will facilitate the emergence of commercial agriculture even if they are not strictly necessary.
9. See De Wet, McAllister and Hart (1987).
10. See May (1988) and Spiegel (1981) for empirical examples.
11. See Bell (1987).
12. See Tomlinson (1983).
13. See Beinart (1988), Cooper (1987) and Davenport (1987).
14. It is important to note that this comparison between alternative scenarios is narrowly focussed on feasible rural options. It is not a discussion of alternative political views. Many of the authors whom the reviewer has used in constructing the synthesis view would be very much at home, politically, with authors used in the construction of the more revisionist scenarios.
15. See Beinart (1988) and Cooper (1987).
16. See Krikler (1987).

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By G.D.L. SCHREINER

LIBERALISM IN A DIVIDED SOCIETY

A Response to the LDA's policy suggestions.

The Liberal Democratic Association recently published four articles in *Reality* which were described as "part of a series of policy suggestions". It is a pity that they were not accompanied by a clarifying statement defining the purpose of their publication because their effectiveness and the discussion they are designed to stimulate will depend on this purpose. Is the L.D.A. attempting to define, for its members, a late 20th century "liberal philosophy" which is designed to bring together, into an active political party, a sufficient number of 'liberals' to make its representation in a parliament possible? Or is the L.D.A. intending to remain a Fabian-life group with its major purpose to preserve some elements of a "liberal philosophy" by their inclusion in the policies of the existing political forces in South Africa? If it is the former, then "the series of policy suggestions" need to be widespread and sufficiently accurately defined to determine the boundary between those who belong within the L.D.A. and those who do not. If it is the latter the series can be more selective, focussing on particular issues which liberals would define as being particularly necessary in the envisaged new society. Once these have been clearly stated, the value of the discussion would be largely concerned with the possibilities of their incorporation, either *in toto* or in some adapted form into the policies of groups other than the L.D.A. itself. In the current polarization of the South African political scene the latter path seems to be the only feasible one with the L.D.A. acting as a catalyist which would function by influence only.

Irvine and Maasdorp

Irvine's paper on Civil Liberties tacitly sets out the problem that liberals must face and put to those they wish to influence. He states, on the one hand; "Liberals are not committed to extreme individualism and recognise the need to reconcile liberty with other claims and values such as the respect for human welfare" and then, on the other hand "liberals are, however, utterly opposed to any ideology or policy (left or right) which makes society or the state everything and the individual nothing". It is fundamental to 'liberalism' that a liberal society would provide a balance between the protection of individual civil liberties and the level of societal intervention and limitation of these liberties which is needed to preserve "the other claims and values such as respect for human welfare". Historically, liberal political actions have been essentially "reformist" and the powers of government have been used to adjust the societal/individual rights balance toward what is deemed to be a more just society. The measure that is used to determine the "greater justice of the society" produced by a particular state intervention is a reassessment of the balance between the increased

welfare and freedom of all the individuals and the limitation of fundamental civil liberties for some individuals. Maasdorp argues cogently that "centrally planned systems" with public ownership of almost all enterprises are not only, "the antithesis of liberalism" but also prove to be economically unsuccessful. But social engineering is not "the antithesis of liberalism" until it reaches proportions which subjugate individual civil liberties almost entirely to the society or the state. Indeed liberalism has outgrown its original 'laissez faire' to such an extent that those who now advocate a totally free market economy cannot claim to remain within the liberal camp. They have rejected Irvine's first condition of reconciliation of the individual liberty with the preservation of "other claims and values such as the respect for human welfare".

Mathews and Cowling

The papers by Mathews and Cowling are most useful in pointing out two ways in which the balance of the freedom for individual and societal claims for overall justice can be policed and maintained, and from time to time adjusted. But it seems wrong to suggest as Cowling does that the two should be contrasted. As Mathews so clearly establishes, the "rule of law" precludes arbitrary governmental action by those who deem themselves to be above the law. Without the rule of law no civil liberty is protected from arbitrary limitation; not even if it were a civil liberty protected within a constitutionally accepted Bill of Rights. The protective powers of a Bill of Rights are themselves entirely dependent on the governors recognising that they themselves are subject to the rule of law, and that there is a method of testing their actions by an independent body. Rather than contrasting the two ways of providing against arbitrary governmental or administrative actions, it would seem better to regard the introduction of a Bill of Rights into a new constitution as an extension of the protection provided by observation of the Rule of Law. This is achieved by placing certain rights in a position of heightened protection - requiring of the law makers special and difficult mechanisms that they must, under the Rule of Law, observe before they can alter those rights. It does not remove from parliament the right to change the balance of individual and societal rights. It merely imposes upon the governors the necessity to do so legally and not arbitrarily or by some sleight of hand.

The four published articles do much to present a framework within which a liberal philosophy for a new South Africa could be developed. They remain, however, too far removed from the existing South African society to

be directly useful in defining the limits of the balance between individual rights and those societal controls which could result in a society acceptable to a liberal philosophy. They, therefore, cannot yet serve as "policy suggestions" but must remain guidelines to be used in the formation of policy suggestions.

Special Consideration

What are the S.A. circumstances which need such special consideration? First it must be recognised that South Africa is a "deeply divided society" - one which is divided into groups of people who feel, most acutely, a loyalty to their own sub-communities, which may be as deep or nearly as deep as their loyalty to the whole of South Africa. Indeed, in the case of some groups (or is it one group) it may be that group loyalty, for the time being, is the dominant loyalty. The deep divisions that exist and the historical interaction of these separate groups have developed attitudes towards sub-loyalties which cannot be wished away or ignored. It is important to recognise that if each of these groups were to write down, in order of priority, a list of the rights, (the civil liberties), that they would regard as most needing protection in law it is unlikely that the list would be the same. There are those whose main concern would be with property rights and who would place language or religious rights as of lower importance. There are those who would interpret this right of ownership as not just an individual right of ownership but would see it as involving a group right as well. By a combination, presumably, of the right of free association and the right to private ownership there arises a tenuous but strongly held belief in a right to "choice of neighbour". The path to a continuation of apartheid, to a continued belief in "homelands" lies, in such an affirmation of group rights. But, in practice, many societies allow 'group' rights of freely associating groups to be exercised. Even in the deeply divided South Africa of today we are beginning to find acceptance of freedom of worship by voluntary groupings which cut across the legally imposed involuntary group divisions. But it will remain true that because of our history, because of our conditioning towards thinking in terms of groups within our society, "group rights" will occupy a dominant position in any negotiation of a new dispensation; and much of this thinking will be concerned with the existing compulsory groups rather than with groups formed by the exercising of the individual right to of free association. It would seem to be imperative that any liberal association policy relating to "rights" must exclude the existence of group rights for "involuntary" groups. But it is possible that, in stating this as a policy, it may also be necessary to recognise that an interim protection of "involuntary" group rights may have to remain for a while. This is related to another aspect of what should be a target of the new dispensation, namely, an attempt to adjust towards the elimination of past injustices which are built into the present dispensation. It is also related, if slightly more remotely, to the protection of minority groups from possible future actions of the majority. The first problem is well illustrated by reference to wealth distribution and private ownership of land and the second is equally well illustrated by reference to language rights.

Land Ownership

If the new policy were to accept ownership of land as a fundamental right of both an individual and a group and

did not protect in any way this right for those who are presently the impoverished group there would exist the real danger that the attempt to protect the ownership right would be counter productive. The current wealth distribution would allow for the near complete dispossession of the peasant population from land ownership, whether rural or urban land was involved. The right to ownership is of no value to all those whose financial position is such as to preclude ownership. When that financial position has been established in the past by withholding of the development of the necessary infrastructure because that part of the community was excluded from directly influencing such development, the simple acceptance of ownership as an unrestricted right could serve mainly to perpetuate the existing injustices. It follows from this example that any attempt to formulate those rights which might become a part of a Bill of Rights should be treated with some caution. This inclusion of any "right" should be measured not just because it might seem to be widely acceptable but also against the criterion of its effective operation in the present South African circumstances.

Group Loyalties

The problem of "language rights" - the demanded right to education in a particular medium and perhaps a re-echoing in the future of both "white" languages an official languages-raises the problem of minority group rights and whether they require particular protection. It is easy to say "no" - that ideally a liberal democratic society would be tolerant enough to allow societal, if not legal, protection of a group desire for the preservation of their language and through it of their culture. But, if the object of any new dispensation is to enable South Africans to move towards the construction of a less deeply divided society than we now have, saying "No" is not the most propitious beginning. In practice the rejection of a "group right" in respect of language, education in it, and the culture associated with it, is strongly divisive and is likely to prove a serious stumbling block to the growth of an overall loyalty in our multi-lingual society. Here again it may be necessary to have an interim period of formal or legal protection of such a right while the society adjusts to its newfound freedom and reaches a moderation which will allow it openly to accept such "group rights", whether they are protected in law or not.

Most political theorists seem to accept that "group rights" exist only as a consequence of individual rights one of which is the right of free association. The peculiar circumstances which surround attempts to change "deeply divided" or "group orientated" societies have received considerable attention but the resultant political accommodations such as "consociational government" or "consensus policies" have not successfully overcome the basic problem of the fact that sub-loyalties - group loyalties - are often so strong that they override the wider societal loyalties. It should be noted in passing that surely sub-loyalties may well have geographical features and be more developed in some areas than in others. The group areas act exacerbates this further and we have already seen in South Africa a political party, claiming to be dedicated to non-racialism allowing its sub loyalty to the imposed group of "so-called" Coloured South Africans to over-ride its stated national policy in relation to the Group Areas Act. It is unnecessary to add that this action was

successfully taken at the expense of those South Africans who are not represented in parliament.

But if "group rights" are to enjoy legal protection in the new dispensation they need to be considered very carefully. They will derive their protection from their embodiment in constitution – type documents and it may be necessary to consider some forms of limitation to the individual constitution of "voluntary groups" which are legally protected. This arises because the principle of the individual right of free association means that the group formed by such voluntary association immediately acquires the right of exclusion of individuals from its membership. This is already embodied in the position of our existing political parties which have the right to expel from their membership those who advocate policies which are not those of the Party. But the criterion which allows this exclusion is that of disagreement with fundamental policies of the original group. It would be contrary to a liberal view of the future South Africa that exclusion from any voluntary group could be based on criteria over which the individual has no control such as race or colour of skin.. It would seem then to be necessary to limit the constitutions of any "voluntary group" which is to be recognised for the purposes of legal protection of its rights, in such a way that no South African citizen could be excluded because of race or colour. In itself this presents considerable constitutional problems and certainly cannot be extended into any sphere which impinges on political or religious views which are voluntarily formed. Nevertheless, in the deeply divided South African society in which many of the deepest divisions have historically been based on "social" classifications, it is necessary that this nettle be grasped. If it is not done the new dispensation may only consist of an extension of governmental power to those who at present do not have it and will not move toward decreasing the present deep division. Certainly the move toward a new and inclusive South African societal agreement should involve a significant change in the "social" thinking of the past but such thinking and even actions based on it will not easily be eliminated and restrictions of freedoms, unnecessary in less divided societies, may be an essential, if temporary, part of our immediate constitutional agreements. It would certainly fit with a liberal philosophy in one sense even if it is repulsive in another.

Immediate Actions

This article will have done little to push further the "policy suggestions" outlined in the four published papers. It may, in fact, be thought to have merely added some confusion as to what the L.D.A. should be doing. It is intended to be helpful and to suggest certain immediate actions that are needed for a practical liberal contribution to be injected into the present South African scene. What has been suggested is that the immediate need is to apply the concepts raised in the four articles to the existing South African political scene. It is further suggested that there exist particular circumstances here which demand particular care in the detailed formulation of the "civil liberties" or "Bill of Rights" so that the possibility of self-defeating expression of a "liberal philosophy" can be avoided. There can be no objection to accepting that the rule of law is essential, that a Bill of Rights may be helpful in protecting, further than the rule of law, the civil liberties that are fundamental to the growth of a liberal society. Nor

can there be any serious questioning that a mixed type economy is acceptable within a liberal society. But there is a level of detail which needs to be written and what appears may well be controlled by the present realities. The pure market forces approach of the "Free Market-teers" might have a claim were it not that it has been launched on a society which has a dreadfully high unemployment level and no infra-structure of a welfare society. As it is the consequences of its acceptance are such as to make it unthinkable as a part of immediate liberal thinking. It is, however, very necessary for liberals to consider how far it is possible to accommodate those who by force of economic pressures have moved toward acceptance of a centrally planned economy. This is a boundary which is of vital importance to liberals because if too extensive an accommodation is made the centrality of the individual to the liberal philosophy is seriously endangered. But equally it is important that the very centrality of the individual be translated into terms which are essentially emancipatory for the whole society and not seen as one of the fundamental pillars of oppression.

Opportunities

Finally let me add a further comment which has not formed part of the articles yet published. A new liberal society, a more just society, must have as one of its properties the opportunity of upward mobility for all its members. This, too, must be a practically attainable mobility available to individuals at all levels. If the new society retains in it the present ossified opportunities for so many of our community it cannot become a society in which liberal concepts can be expected to prosper. The foundation on which upward opportunity rests is education. Not only is it fundamental to an individual's opportunity for self-advancement, it is also essential for a wide societal advancement. The L.D.A. needs to address itself urgently to this matter.

Because of our past misdemeanours and lack of realisation that an expanding society, - expanding in freedoms as well as expanding in material well-being-is based on the capabilities of the people who constitute our society we have again particular and very real problems which have to be faced. South Africa has created a "system" of education which is deeply distrusted by the majority of the people who are involved in it. The L.D.A. cannot escape a responsibility to examine how the distrust can be eliminated and a new "system" – an "uncontaminated" system – can be introduced. It is essential that those who now "distrust" the system are involved in the design of the "new" system. It is also essential that the new system should not focus its attention only on the younger generations who have not yet completed school or even those who have not yet attended school. While they are clearly of vital importance, a significant part of education expenditure and effort must be devoted to improving the opportunities for those whose educational opportunities in the past were inadequate or even non-existent. The illiterate must be provided with the opportunity to become literate. The recently literate must have the means to progress further. The "rights of individuals" must be written with the realities of the present South African educational discrepancies in mind and the L.D.A. should form a suitably wide group to formulate an appropriate policy in this field.□

NAMIBIAN ELECTIONS - SOME MISGIVINGS

How the South African government would try to influence the outcome of Namibia's independence elections has puzzled progressive organisations and commentators alike. But the recent exposé by daily newspaper The Namibian of the existence of a top secret National Security Council has added weight to the argument that, despite initial appearances to the contrary, the forthcoming independence elections in Africa's last colony will be a case of Swapo versus Pretoria.

The security council (NSC) scandal has also cast serious doubts about the supposed impartiality of the civil service, police and South Africa's Administrator-General who have been entrusted with running the country in an unbiased fashion before and during the elections.

Minutes of one NSC meeting reveal that members of the now disbanded interim government - politicians appointed by South Africa and opposed to the liberation movement Swapo - met with top civil servants, police and army chiefs to draw up a plan to prevent Swapo from winning the elections, due to be held in November this year.

Amongst those civil servants involved in the NSC were the recently appointed Chief Electoral Officer for the forthcoming "free and fair" elections, Andries Visser, and head of the South West African Police (Swapol), Lieutenant General Dolf Gouws. The Administrator-General, Louis Pienaar who, under the United Nations independence plan for Namibia, wields supreme executive power in the country until a constituent assembly has been voted in, has also admitted attending NSC meetings, though denies having played any part in discussions about the anti-Swapo plan.

The revelations sparked a hunt for the source of the leak, security police seizing the document from The Namibian's offices and taking it away for "further investigations". "The post of Chief Electoral Officer is one which demands the utmost impartiality," commented one leading Windhoek lawyer. "Mr Visser is aware of the NSC plan to prevent a Swapo victory, so how can Namibians possibly have confidence that this will act without political bias in the execution of his duties?"

Umbrella labour organisation, the National Union of Namibian Workers, said there was "no way" the civil servants involved in the NSC should stay in office as their "impartiality is seriously in question".

Meeting

The NSC minutes which fell into the hands of The Namibian were of a meeting held on September 7 last year, a time when US-brokered talks between South Africa, Cuba and Angola designed to bring peace to south-western Africa and independence to Namibia were at an advanced stage. Sources have, however, confirmed that the NSC meetings went on until at least March, three months after the angolan-Namibian peace plan had been

signed in New York and weeks after the United Nations (UN) military commander, General Prem Chand, had arrived in Namibia.

The meeting of September 7 referred to a seminar held at a remote resort on Namibia's Skeleton Coast at which a General Lloyd, secretary of South Africa's all-powerful security council, briefed the NSC on South Africa's "security considerations". The aim of the seminar, said the minutes, was to "establish what could be done to beat Swapo in an election".

Fanie Gouws, a high-ranking civil servant, went on to say that civil service heads of departments wanted to "become involved in the future of their country".

"They feel that the department heads and cabinet must work together as a team to give urgent attention to an overall strategy (to beat Swapo). The committee also felt that South West Africa itself should present South Africa with a long term plan," Mr Gouws continued.

South Africa's involvement was also touched upon by the then cabinet chairman, and leader of the supposedly independent Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) party, Dirk Mudge, who said Pretoria had two options; war or "democracy".

Chief of National Security, Brigadier Gert van Niekerk, went on to say that South Africa wanted the territory to be independent as soon as possible but wanted a "friendly" government to rule Namibia. The question was whether SWA was ready for independence elections or whether "steps had to be taken to ensure that Swapo did not win the election", he continued, adding that "only when certain plans for the election had been tabled by SWA could funds then be sought". Civil servants alone could not draw up such a plan he concluded.

The overall plan of action taking shape at the meeting was that the civil service - which now comes under direct control of the Administrator-General - would work hand in hand with the parties opposed to Swapo to draw up a strategy to try and deny the liberation movement of victory at the polls.

The Namibian's article sent shock waves through government and DTA circles. Both Pienaar and Mudge held hurriedly convened press conferences to clear their names and defend the civil service. Not once, however, was the existence of the NSC and the counter Swapo plan denied.

During the time the security council met, Pienaar was effectively head of state vested with the power of veto, and every piece of legislation drawn up by the interim government had to receive his approval before becoming law.

An ice-cool Pienaar, flanked by an anxious looking Visser, admitted they had both attended NSC meetings, the Administrator-General on two occasions but only in order

to sort out disagreements between the interim government and members of the South African delegation. He said the NSC no longer met and denied that either he or Visser had attended council sessions when the anti-Swapo strategy was discussed.

"My administration is an impartial one," Pienaar declared "It has been established in terms of Resolution 435 and it is supposed to be as objective as humanly possible," adding that he was not prepared to fire any of the officials involved in the NSC, Visser above all.

He also wished to assure the country of the impartiality of the police while pointing out that no "politically contaminated persons" served on his administration's committees. Asked what he meant by "politically contaminated persons", he quickly replied: "Look at me and you might see one," before biting his lip and refusing to elaborate further.

Mudge also defended the impartiality of the civil service and claimed the NSC had been "essential" because of the "state of the war" in Angola and northern Namibia, and a "campaign of terror" being carried out by Swapo.

Yet, when the NSC started meeting, the war had ground to a virtual halt after the signing of a ceasefire, while the "terror campaign" amounted to three bomb explosions in the space of two months which claimed five lives. Swapo denied responsibility for all three blasts.

Backing

Details of the NSC meeting - particularly the references to presenting South Africa with a plan, the need for funding and South Africa's "democratic" option - has further strengthened the belief that the DTA and other major alliances opposed to Swapo receive substantial backing from Pretoria.

It appears the alliance has an unlimited source of funds. The party has bought its own jet plane for R3.8 million while one exasperated car buyer went to a major Windhoek dealer to find 200 four wheel drive vehicles, costing as much as R40 000 each, had been bought up by the DTA.

DTA supporters attending party rallies receive free transport to and from all parts of the country. At the meetings, they are further treated to free food and drink in the shade of a huge marquee painted in the red, blue and white colours of the party. Here too, free T-shirts, tracksuits, badges and hats are handed out to rally-goers.

At a DTA demonstration organised at the end of March to greet United Nations Special Representative for Namibia, Marti Ahtisaari, the DTA transported an estimated 3000 supporters to Windhoek Airport, over distances of up to 700 miles, in lorries, coaches and even three chartered trains.

And in almost every town, the DTA is renting spacious, prime-site offices. In Windhoek's Katutura township alone, the party has two offices less than a kilometre apart.

Asked where their funding comes from, DTA leaders say from "business sources" within and outside the country and refuse to elaborate further. It is believed that much of the party's cash used to be canvassed in West Germany by the late Bavarian Prime Minister, Frans-Josef Strauss.

But this flow of funding is thought to have eased off since the latter's death last year.

There also seems to be no shortage of money for groups opposed to Swapo to start up their own newspapers. Three such publications have hit the streets in the past month, including one put together by the vehemently anti-Swapo group of students, the Academy Students' Organisation (ASO), using the latest computer technology and printed in costly - though impressive - glossy paper. New arrivals on the publishing scene take to 10 the number of newspapers printed in Namibia (population 1,4 million), only one of which is sympathetic to Swapo.

Badges

But more ominous than the DTA's blank-cheque spending is the blatant bias of some of the security forces in favour of the alliance. Soldiers openly wear DTA T-shirts and badges, while giving the DTA's V-sign salute to passers-by and even newspaper photographers.

At the trial of two soldiers accused of the murder of an Ovamboland priest - suspected of being a "terrorist" and who died from wounds sustained in a severe beating by the troops - one of the accused wore a DTA badge on his jacket lapel. The soldiers were acquitted of murder and fined 50 pounds for assault as they were judged to be acting in the course of duty.

Questions have also been raised about apparent police bias towards the DTA. Police were recently called to break up fighting between unarmed Swapo supporters attending a fund-raising rally and a pro-DTA group wielding guns, pangas, kieres, bows and arrows in the northern town of Okatope. Having fired warning shots and driven their armoured Casspirs through the melee, the police - including former members of the supposedly disbanded paramilitary Koevoet counter insurgency force - arrested 13 Swapo supporters while none of the DTA crowd were detained.

There is little doubt South Africa would view a DTA government as "friendly". South Africa is familiar with the party's leadership, the majority of which was on Pretoria's pay-roll in the days of the interim government. The alliance's cross between free enterprise, and state control programme, combined with its sizeable support makes the DTA the only viable alternative to the socialism of Swapo, and thus the party Pretoria - taking the "democratic" option mentioned in the NSC minutes - would be likely to back in what will effectively be a two horse election race.

While the DTA has been campaigning vociferously since the beginning of the year, Swapo's election campaign has only just started now the majority of exiles and the party's leadership have returned to their homeland. It is therefore difficult to gauge whether the DTA has made inroads into Swapo's support which, in the past, has accounted for the vast majority of Namibians.

While the DTA is loud, brash and apparently omnipresent, routine Swapo rallies consistently draw much bigger crowds than those of their opponents and there is little danger that the liberation movement is losing its bed-rock of popular support. What is at stake for Swapo is an election victory by a two-thirds majority, needed if the party is to have complete control over the writing of the constitution for an independent Namibia. □

BISHOP ZULU AND IVIYO — A RESPONSE TO MICHAEL WORSNIP

After reading Michael Worsnip's review of Shorten's book about Iviyo, the Anglican society established by the late Bishop Alphaeus Zulu to deepen Christian discipleship and witness, I asked a friend who is a committed member of Iviyo about the criticism that this organisation deflects attention from social and political issues. She agreed that this might be so in rural areas; but felt that the commitment to recruit at least one new disciple each year obliged members to concern themselves with other people and their problems. As for the need to change structures — some people are called to this task — but there are other forms of service.

Bishop Zulu always insisted that he was not a politician. But he believed passionately that his people could and should stand on their own feet, speak up and express themselves, pay their own way, and take responsibility for their own needs. He himself had won success the hard way. When his mother had insufficient money for school fees, he readily agreed to spend his holidays working, and paid off the balance by teaching. His J.C. and Matric he won by correspondence, and he was 30 before he entered Fort Hare to obtain a B.A. with distinction in Social Anthropology. Then followed further study at St Peter's in Johannesburg for the priesthood, and he became the first Black priest to receive full ordination in the Anglican church, and later the first Black Bishop.

His interests were wide. In 1924 he had assisted in the formation of the Durban branch of the Natal African Teachers Union and became its Chairman. He assisted Chief Lutuli, with whom he had a very close relationship, in establishing the Natal Bantu Cane Growers Association in 1934, and became its Treasurer. He was Chairman of Durban Bantu Child Welfare and founded a similar organisation in Chesterville. Later, as Bishop of Zululand, he established Zisizeni, an ecumenical health and welfare self-help organisation.

OTHER TRADITIONS

He had a deep respect for Zulu Culture and traditions, but there was nothing narrow about his attitude to people of other races and traditions. He was an active member of the Durban International Club, Joint Council, and the S.A. Institute of Race Relations. He was a committed Anglican but believed firmly in co-operation with other churches. He was a leading member of IDAMSA, the Interdenominational African Ministers Association of South Africa. In 1959 he accepted a study fellowship at the Bossey Ecumenical Institute in Switzerland. In 1968 he was elected President of the World Council of Churches.

With his deep and compassionate concern for people and his wide sympathies he was essentially a man of peace, and became a member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation in 1955. When Chief Lutuli, winner of the 1962 Nobel Peace Prize, was its leader, he was a member of the A.N.C. But he could not go along with the decision by the exiled A.N.C. leadership that violence was a necessary part of the liberation struggle. He saw in his nephew Chief Mangusuthu Buthelezi, a man of intelligence, ability, energy and education, son of a princess of the royal Zulu house, the natural successor to Lutuli, and encouraged him to accept the responsibilities of leadership. A close bond developed between Buthelezi and his spiritual adviser. At the Bishop's funeral, Buthelezi stated that the idea of a Black cultural organisation that could play a role in the liberation struggle had been suggested to him simultaneously and independently by President Kenneth Kaunda and Bishop Zulu. So it was natural that the Bishop should accept office on Inkatha's Central Committee and National Council.

KWA ZULU DEVELOPMENT

And when he retired as Bishop, Buthelezi lost no time in availing himself of the services of this remarkable man, first as speaker of the Kwa Zulu Legislature, and then on various bodies concerned with the economic and social development of Kwa Zulu. They were not impressed with the record of socialism in African states, and believed that the best way to overcome the severe poverty of the people of Kwa Zulu was by encouraging investment not primarily for profit, but for people; so that they might have work and the opportunity to help themselves.

This brought him into conflict with former friends both here and overseas; but it did not deter the Bishop from doing what he believed to be right. And whatever economic or political systems we finally arrive at, there will always be a need for men and women with the qualities of Bishop Zulu; honesty and integrity; humility and compassion; a willingness to accept responsibility and to undertake onerous tasks. If Iviyo can help to produce people of that calibre, they will have made a significant contribution to the creation of a better South Africa.

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(Bishop Zulu was Chairman of the Kwa Zulu Finance Corporation.)

these crumbs of dustiness

yes, the old ones are gone
lost and dead
on these crumbs of dustiness
we had them and we lost them
our country
a poor metaphor of vacant happiness

like sky-bolted souls, removed
all at a glance, so hurried
murmuring funny dialects
taken beyond
these dim enclosures

the old country sleeps
telling us of our loss, our
valueless profit
yesterday we were ten, now
we are two
on these crumbs of dustiness.

POEMS BY M.M. NYEZWA



As we review our lives

here's why
what remains of us
but nothing
nothing in the space that represented
our lives
and we mourn silently
like pigs and donkeys sometimes
do
we mourn
feeling the hate against us

here's why
and we say 'to hell with them'
this regime we wouldn't worship
we would rather die.