

had those ideals been dignified with implementations. As it has turned out, neither faith nor reason, nor the sacred challenge of a unique place in human history could defeat the pre-emptive commitment to racial tribalization, which like some primitive impulse shattered that more noble commitment to political and social excellence, and made the color of a man's skin the prime criterion of human value in the emergent European experiment in America.

If race, religion and economics constitute the cultural adhesive by means of which the American miniculture hang together the question arises as to whether Blacks who embrace Christianity and who master the white man's economic technique may not in so doing overcome their racial disabilities, or reduce them to the level of inconsequence. This is the theory implicit in that presumptuous notion that freedom is something to be merited by Blacks and doled out by whites like sugar to a jackass who has learned to bray on cue. The fact that the white man's standards of human excellence for all non-whites are both arbitrary and inevitably linked to the maintenance of his racial hegemony, and that the white man himself has never approached in fact the ideal of human perfection he demands as a minimum of all lesser beings is lost in the tour de force of existing white power. Arnold Toynbee in The Decline of the West is both candid and correct when he says that though the Black man may have learned to speak the white man's language with the tongue of angels, mastered his economic technique and found salvation in his religion, "it profits him nothing so long as he has not changed his skins". Certainly this reading of history seems vindicated by events.

The evidence that white America was deliberate in her refusal to run whatever risk there may have been implied in Christianizing Blacks and including them in the entrepreneurial enterprise is in itself quite compelling. There was no rush among the English colonists north or south to bring the gospel to the Blacks who lived among them and catered to their needs. The governor of Massachusetts could write home to England in 1743 with reasonable assurance that there were no Black Christians as part of any church communion anywhere in his province. It happened that the governor was wrong - there was one Black woman admitted to a church in Dorchester in 1741, but this occasion, unusual though it was, hardly

vitiates the principle that Christianity in America was racially pre-emptive. It was for white people.

In the north the favorite subject of the learned divines like Cotton Mather and Charles Chauncey was whether or not Blacks were possessed of souls - not whether they had souls which could, or ought to be saved. In the south, where the Black man was legally considered two-thirds of a person, the question of souls was hardly an issue. The white man in the south was allegedly concerned with whether he stood in danger of losing his chattel interest in any slave who confessed Christ. While there would certainly appear to be a logical inconsistency in the practice of Christians holding Christians in slavery, the fact was that logic was never permitted to be a factor of consequence in America's patterns of race relations if it got in the way of the white man's presumption, or if it was an impediment to his profit. The fact is that throughout the history of America - there is not one recorded instance of a white Christian manumitting his slave solely on the basis of the slave becoming a Christian. Hence we must look elsewhere if we would understand the strong resistance of the slaveholders to having their black chattels share the faith with them. When finally the doors of the church were opened to Blacks, it was a figurative opening. Blacks could hear the gospel if it was preached by a white man, or in the presence of a white overseer. But the Blacks developed their famous "invisible church", meeting secretly in the swamps and bayous, and out of that experience they developed the first sense of black unity, the prototype of contemporary black ethnicity.

As for economic technique, the road to Black entrepreneurship was far more difficult than the road to Black Christianity. Indeed, there came a time in the developing American experience when the Christianization of Blacks became highly functional to the white man's interests. Christianity, when properly interpreted to the Blacks made them non-violent; it made them morally responsive to the white man's needs, and persuaded them to postpone the expectations of reward to some future experience beyond this world where the white man's indulgence in material values could brook no competition. In the economic sphere, black participation has been traditionally and routinely limited to two levels of participation: production and consumption. It was the Black slaves who

produced the rice and the indigo, the cane and the cotton. It was the Black slaves who were even forced to reproduce themselves for the white man's profit once the African sources were cut off. Slave breeding was a big industry in the United States after 1808 - with the slave master's active participation. It is little wonder then, that fully 99 % of all Blackamericans bear the taint of Saxons blood, and the question of who is a so-called "Negro" is as logically academic as it is a factor in the paradoxical nature of Black identity.

When slavery was no longer viable as an economic and political institution it was the Blackamerican again upon whom the lot of physical production fell once more. He cleared the forests, built the roads, fed the furnaces, poured the steel, laid the rails, and raised the cotton and the cross which created the wealth of America. But the Blackamerican had no part in the management or the distribution of that wealth. He was not an entrepreneur.

Despite the fact that there are black millionaires in America, the avenues leading to the management, control and accumulation of capital are still essentially closed to him. The handful of Blacks who have made money in the Capitalistic enterprise have done so in spite of the odds rather than in the presence of opportunity. The Blackamericans consumer market is greater than that of the whole country of Canada, but the black entrepreneur's share of even the black consumer market is minimal, for that market, like all other economic prerogatives, is essentially a white preserve. The capitalistic enterprise to be successfully pursued requires money, credit, managerial expertise and distributive outlets, none of which the Blackamerican controls to a degree sufficient to make his entrepreneurial risk reasonable or competitive.

We must conclude then, as did Toynbee, that neither religion nor economics will provide for the Blackamerican the identity required for his reasonable participation in the American's social process, that indeed, religion and economics represent important aspects of the process from which he is excluded. It is not that he is not Christian; almost all Blackamericans are. But he is a Christian apart from other Christians who are white. It is not that he is not "an economic man"; he is a prodigious consumer, but he does not share the enormous profits derived from his consumption. As for

his race, whatever that may be, it would seem to be fixed, and unlikely to be peremptorily changed by God or nature, although I will not rule out political decree. The most positive aspect of all this is that Blackamericans have been forced by the American experiences to discover themselves and to find value in who they are rather than in who the white man thought they ought to be. This is the meaning of the "Black is Beautiful" syndrome. This is the meaning of black ethnicity. This is what "soul" is all about. It is the Black man's mature reflection on his past, his sober contemplation of his future. It is his critical rediscovery of himself - who he was and who he is and his eminent satisfaction with being black. It is the victory implicit in his survival - his final escape from the entrapment of an alien civilization which for five hundred years spared no effort and no device to dehumanize him and make him a thing. It is his joy in the realization that the white man failed. That white-over-black is neither normative, inevitable, or a condition of the future. It is the growing recognition that the black experience is one experience, in America, in Africa - wherever Black people are; and that the black ego has survived that experience to become the organizing principle of the new black estate all over the world.

Black identity, Black conceived is the surest sign of ethnic health and the surest road to political power.

White over black is a social anachronism, a primitive way of ordering a society which can have no place in any future America may enjoy. Neither force of arms nor economic stricture can insure the order necessary to a sane, safe, civilized society in the absence of a sense of participation in the crucial decisions which affect the critical interests of the people in question. The white man's order is an expression of the White man's power. Those who do not share his power will not share his order. In America, peace presupposes racial harmony. Racial harmony presupposes reasonable participation in the structuring of the society and the vital decisions which affect the people who comprise it. To the degree that Black people are excluded from such participation to that degree will the integrity of the White Establishment be in question, the legions of the oppressed be in revolt.

AN AFRICAN VIEW

by M. Moerane

I am an African and therefore I am a civilised person.

Among my people there are no orphans and no illegitimate children.

All children belong. They enjoy the care accorded to all other children and have equal opportunity, and advance according to their talents and industry.

I am an African, perhaps that is why I see things the way I see them.

I think I am a Mesotho. I was born in the Transkei but my parents and ancestors as far as our records go, lived in Lesotho.

When I get to Western Transvaal the people there claim me, as a Moerane, to be of the Bapo Tribe among the Tswanas.

When they say their clan praises they call me "Letebele"; A Nguni. For though they now are Tswanas, they know they were originally Nguni.

I belong to be Bafokeng clan of the Basotho. In the Cape Province there are people of my clan who migrated over a century ago and they are Xhosa, known as Mavundle - a translation of the Sotho Mmutla.

Are you getting bored of this personal history? Let me end on this final anecdote.

As a Mosotho I belong to a people who honour Moshoeshoe as the founder of their nation.

The fact is that Moshoeshoe built up a nation out of many tribes. That is why I believe it is true that my own clan could have come from anywhere. But the Basotho are a nation.

Let me hurry on to say that there was a hundred years war between

White and Black in this country.

But before then our own Black peoples had had wars among themselves. And please note this point. Among Blacks wars have created new nations. That is because if one tribe conquere another, the conquered people did not become slaves. They became citizens of the new victor regime. A new citizenship.

My forebears, from whom I have inherited this mode of thinking expected, when they conceded defeat by the whites - though as a Lesotho Mosotho I do not accept that my people were ever conquered - they understood that they were becoming citizens of the new regime.

I am sure the Black people of South Africa believed, as I have grown up believing, that they were South African citizens.

Call them subjects or second class citizens, but citizens they were.

Our peoples went further to make themselves acceptable to the new White regime. They adopted the white man's ways of life, religion, education, habits, clothes even foods.

My father and others even received the stamp of citizenship in this Cape Province. They became voters, elected many people to the South African Parliament and theoretically themselves had the right to be M.P.'s in Cape Town.

These things reinforced the belief in my people, including me in the latter days, that we were South Africans, fellow citizens with the white first class citizens.

In 1960, when Dr. H. F. Verwoerd took South Africa out of the British commonwealth of Nations a new history of South Africa was enunciated by that celebrated psychologist and journalist.

He said that South Africa was a multi-national state.

From that moment I was no more a South African but a Transkeian.

I am part of the 15 million to 18 million of this country in popu-

lation but geographically from that point I become a citizen of possibly one seventh of 13 % the area of South Africa - a puny man indeed.

To me, as an African, this was all bewildering. Remember, as an African my sense of right and wrong is simple but sharp.

Because, do not forget I am a civilised man with a sensitive sense of right and wrong, just and unjust, democratic and undemocratic, moral and immoral.

Before 1961, I traversed countries in Europe, Canada and the United States.

I have observed the beauties of the lowlands of Holland and the grandeur of the majestic Swiss Alps.

Fresh in my mind is the view, travelling from Vancouver in British Columbia in Canada through the Rocky Mountains to Edmonton in Alberta.

May I add that since I have seen the tremendous Gand Canyon - one of natures fabulous wonders.

But in 1958 I returned to my homeland after eighteen months in America.

I travelled with my wife from Durban our present home through the garden route to Cape Town.

Our hearts were enthralled with the sheer beauty of the scenery and I said to myself. They can keep their Canada and America with all the Niagara falls, their lakes and their Rocky Mountains, my South Africa is still the most lovely country on God's earth.

Mind you I have seen some lovely sceneries in my lifetime. I can think now with a heart-warming glow of the Victoria Falls, of the fantastic scenery as you fly over the Mountains of the Moon between Usumbura in Ruanda Urundi and Uganda.

But in 1958 I felt as a patriotic South African that my Country was indeed God's own country.

I was a South African then, loyal and proud.

Today they tell me I am not a South African but a Transkeian Bantu - a foreigner in this spot where I stand and speak - now God! Am I alive or dreaming. I am indeed a dispossessed and displaced person? Is a colonised people not better than me with the resources of his homeland and his own person exploited to enrich foreign imperialists?

I cannot understand the thinking and ways of the white man.

What do all the tenets mean which they brought to my people, which I learnt as a boy and admired - of fair play, justice, the brotherhood of man, Christian charity! Heroic wars that were fought in my life time for the rights of minority nations' freedom and independence?

Arbitrarily, today I am a foreigner in 87% of my homeland.

But my coloured brother, Tom Swartz, who lived with me in our Native Transkei and Mr. Fortein do not have even the solace of the fictitious citizenship of a Transkei geographical entity.

We witness their political immobilisation a few months ago when following our own annihilation of political representation in the body politic of South Africa, the token Coloured representatives in Parliament were finally phased out of that Lily White august House.

My people earned the territorial dispossession from the Fish River to the Kei and beyond. For we dared to fight the mighty whites.

We earned the dispossession of the lands from Potchefstroom to Zee-rust, didn't we, the Tswana and Hurutse's, ask the Voortrekkers to help us fight against Mzilikazi's hordes till we together pushed them yonder into Rhodesia. Surely the whites have a right by military conquest, to dispossess us of our ancestral homelands.

But what has the Coloured man done to deserve no place in the South African sun of which he can call himself a citizen?

Brother, Coloured man, take courage; unlike me you are still a South African - a prized citizenship I have lost.

Like me you are disowned in the white parliament that in the final analysis makes the laws that govern you and me, I do not know by what right!

But you have no separate citizenship such as I suffer.

You are discriminated against in many respects by the White regime powerful and committed to white privilege and white oligarchy.

Do not despair, the white man's conscience is not at rest about the discriminatory treatment that is meted to you.

In a sense you are a key person in this country. Like me in a sense, you are an anachronism in this country. For I am an urban dweller - a resident in the white man's backyard.

I do not have the solace of the Bantustan brother, who can play at a fictitious self government.

In fact, allow me to ashamedly confess that I, in a sinister way, hope that you hold the key to my future as an urban African.

For I believe that sooner or later - I hope sooner - the white man will be forced by force of circumstance and sheer moral demand, to accept you as a South African. For what else are you?

And then, perhaps, next, he will begin to realise the absurdity of positing for me, an urban African, economic and political hope in the distant - "homelands" where I shall never live.

My own people, the Africans, if indeed I may speak in such terms, I believe, after the age old rejection by the whites, are going apart today to find their own identity as Black people.

We realise that, in our own African mentality, which now we discover was not the white man's thinking, we have been misled in aspiring to a common nationhood with the white man.

We are disillusioned. Struck by the excellence of things white and Western, yesterday we adored the white man. Yes, we sinned for we

idolised him and put him on a pedestal.

Nay, we put the White man in the place where God should have been.

We forgot that we too as humans were created in the image of God and we made the White man our standard, ideal, frame of reference and arbiter of our fate.

We have woken up with a bump and know that it is our sacred duty to be ourselves today.

We must seek our own identity, proud of the great heritage we have as a people and accept our people's needs as the frame of reference for activity and motivation.

Only so shall our lives and activity be truly meaningful and creative.

With malice to none, shall it yet be our own responsibility to work out our own salvation.

After all we are as selected stock as any white can ever boast.

Is it not true that we are in truth pioneer stock that has in history braved the rigours of the unknown and the wild as over the centuries we traversed desert and jungle from the milder climes of the kinder milder regions further north till we established ourselves in these rigorous areas of the South.

We may not have brought with us the material cultures that Zimbabwe and Ife bespeak. So the Afrikaner pioneer left in his European homeland the pianos and cultural gadgets characteristic of settled, as against pioneer life. But one evidence of our civilisation is the social culture, respect for the dignity and worth of human personality and the social stability which to date is the envy of peoples with better material gadgets than we.

In this going apart to find our identity and new national volition, perspective and drive, I believe the latent forces and values of the essential God-given essences of the African personality will emerge - after ages of latency, to illuminate our societies long dominated by

the tired cultures of the West.

And with malice to none - this may be the hour for the continent which God kept in reserve just for such a time as this.

So, my Coloured Brother, in all humility I want to greet you in your struggle, with which I have deep fellow feeling.

I am conscious of the advantages you have over me. If you cherish them I understand.

The youth of my group, especially those in the Universities think these few advantages are not material because in the final analysis you, like us are victims of discrimination and lack of citizenship rights.

They demand a black political solidarity of African, Coloured and Indian as the priority of the hour.

I cannot dogmatise on these things, believing every man and group must decide for themselves.

For me, I want to assure you that you have a case to fight for, and can count on my support in your legitimate struggle to full freedom.

And as a genuine African, perhaps too tied to the past, which I have lived with longer than I hope to live with the future, my conviction is that the present political and social setting is a passing phase.

I believe that our common destiny, whatever our colour or background, is a rich, common, single nationhood. And that posterity will bless those as true patriots who eschewing passing sectional advantage steadfastly toiled for the consummation of this goal of a common nationhood, perhaps a unity in diversity but truly a brotherhood in fact.

To this end, for myself, without flinching from my basic loyalty to my family, clan, tribe or Africanhood, I pledge my sacred honour, in the sincere belief that it is Almighty God's plan that we all must live in this country as brothers and fulfil a mission on this Continent whose outreach shall go way beyond our borders.

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