

UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA

FLORIDA. 6 NOVEMBER 1985

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Apartheid is monstrously hideous and it is quite rightly described as a crime against humanity. South Africa is correctly regarded as the only country claiming to take its place in the Western civilised world which has institutionalised racial prejudice and which has on its Statute Books Draconian laws which are applied with the full might of the State to maintain a system of White minority rule. There may be other places in the world where there is more poverty; where more inhumanity is used by man against man, and there may be other places in the world where democracy is flouted, and where the State relies on brutality to administer obnoxious laws. South Africa is, however, unique as such a country among all the nations of the world which purports to have a Christian government and which claims to be a participant in the kind of modern civilised values found in Western industrial democracies. The claim by successive National Party Governments ever since it first came to power in 1948 that the hideous practices of apartheid are justified and necessary for the preservation of the kind of values which the West cherishes, has aroused anger and indignation in every civilised country.

There is no government in the Western industrial world which agrees that apartheid could possibly serve the values which underpin decent society. Everywhere governments speak out against the hideousness of apartheid and in every country Church organisations condemn it as un-Christian. Black South Africans are encouraged to liberate their country from the shackles of racist minority government and we applaud the condemnations contained in rising international protests about the inhumanity of apartheid.

The very widespread rejection of apartheid, and its total condemnation in all decent circles, is now evidencing a very unfortunate by-product. It is so condemned that it is condemnation no longer needs to be supported by reason, and it is tragic that this is happening. Apartheid is treated by the West in particular as anyone would treat a really poisonous viper among a group of innocent children at play. That viper would be killed with whatever is to hand. Apartheid is treated in the same way. On the one extreme we have Western sympathies, and even Christian Western sympathies, for Black South Africans who declared apartheid to be so hideous and so entrenched that the only left for them to do was

to wage an armed struggle against the Pretoria regime. They claim to the West that they are fighting a just war in which the only recourse they have is recourse to violence.

The ANC Mission in exile has a constituted army and has been training small groups in guerilla warfare and has offices through Europe and North America, seeking to sway public opinion to support the employment of violence against apartheid. My brothers and sisters in exile in the ANC Mission condemn all South Africans who do not see the armed struggle as the only thing left to pursue, and in particular, they wage relentless political vendettas against any Black leader or organisation who has any real utility in bringing about a settlement of the South African situation through non-violent means and in the politics of negotiation. Every small step of progress towards a negotiated settlement of South Africa constitutes a threat to the armed struggle because that struggle is built on the premise that only warfare can win. If the armed struggle did not rest on that premise it could not be regarded as a just war.

The question of whether or not the armed struggle and violent revolution must be relied on as a primary means of bringing about change, is a question on which a great many Western observers show little clarity of thought. A great many observers rest with the notion that the threat of violence could well act as a stimulant to avoid it by furthering the politics of negotiation. They do not realise they adopt a different position to the ANC Mission in exile and those working with them inside South Africa to solve the country's problems through violence. The ANC Mission in exile has declared violence to be the primary means of bringing about change. They do not pursue it as an added pressure to assist in democratic change. They pursue violence with a single-minded dedication to make it and it alone work.

I very seldom hear serious debate in the West about what the ANC Mission in exile is in fact really doing. The West is relatively uninformed about what they are doing. The West is unaware that because the ANC Mission in exile has failed to establish military bases in neighbouring States which can be used as springboards in the armed struggle; because the ANC Mission in exile has failed to establish liberated zones inside the country from which they can direct internal operations, and because they lack the internal infrastructure and they lack the mechanisms to transport men, equipment, ammunition and supplies safely and quickly over vast distances, the armed struggle which they conceived 20 years ago has dismally failed. South Africa has never been under any serious threat of the armed struggle succeeding. Mr. P.W. Botha, the State President of South Africa, has the most efficient military machine in the whole of Africa. He has defence force units which successfully go on rampages throughout the whole of Southern Africa and beyond. He has the men, the equipment and the mobility, and enjoys tremendous logistic advantages over the ANC Mission in exile. All this became patently clear to everybody when any

remaining hopes of the armed struggle succeeding were shattered when President Samora Machel had in the end to ask the ANC Mission in exile's military personnel to leave Mocambique. That final shattering of hope has had a profound effect on the ANC Mission in exile.

They now only pay lip service to the armed struggle of the classic kind. They search now instead to stimulate a people's war and have moved from waging an armed struggle against the apartheid regime in South Africa to making attempts to achieve by an internal revolution that which could not be achieved through the armed struggle. They have switched tactics and strategies, and they now employ political violence in its most hideous form. They employ violence to set Black brother against Black brother, and they seek to spread hideous violence in which targets are not selected because they are strategic or military targets. The ANC Mission in exile has made targets out of Black people. They have ordered the execution of Black Town Councillors and have urged Blacks to destroy all whom they call collaborators, and they call everybody who negotiates with the South African Government a collaborator. They are intolerant of any development of a negotiating power base and they are intolerant of anybody working from within the institutionalised life of the country to bring about change through non-violent means.

They do this within a political framework which holds that it is not only the Government which needs to be destroyed, but the whole way of life in South Africa which is based on Western industrial norms and standards. They reject capitalists as the arch enemies of the people and they are striving to destroy the economy of the country in order to further the prospects of a revolutionary victory. They want to replace the free enterprise system and instal a socialist government which will nationalise the country's major industrial, commercial and banking undertakings. Their struggle has ceased to be a struggle against apartheid and has become a struggle which will lead to their return as a revolutionary government and to their total monopoly of power.

I do not make these statements as propaganda statements. They are the facts of the matter and I ask every American student and academic to do what is necessary to verify them for themselves. Read what the ANC Mission in exile is saying in its official mouthpiece "Sechaba." Establish what they are broadcasting now daily in their Radio Freedom programme from Addis Ababa and elsewhere. Examine the transcripts of these broadcast statements. Read the writings of members in the National Executive of the ANC Mission in exile such as Joe Slovo and Thabo Mbeki. Read what Ruth First has written over the years. If you do this, you will find that I am not making outrageous statements for party political purposes. I am making them as a South African who is deeply concerned about the extent to which unthinking condemnation of apartheid is leading many in the West to support that which threatens everything the West itself believes in.

For me the most potent system mankind has ever devised as an agent for economic development in a country such as South Africa is the free enterprise system. South Africa, whether we like it or not, is locked into a north/south international axis, and the development of the economy will remain almost entirely dependent on the continued inflow of capital, technology and management skills which Western industrial countries have evolved. Everyone who holds the values which underpin Western democratic society, and every American who is inspired by the great American dream should ask himself or herself whether violent revolution has ever been a precursor to phenomenal Western industrial development. The answer is a very definite No, and this begins to spell out the kind of steps which great democracies like the United States should be taking to bring about the emergence of a free democratic society in South Africa, in which there will be equality of opportunity and equality before the law for all.

The hideousness of apartheid has ensured that the dividing line between the haves and have-nots in South Africa is the dividing line between Black and White. For generations after 1910 Black South Africans were regarded as Black hewers of wood and drawers of water in South Africa for the benefit of the privileged White class. For generations Black education was criminally neglected and even today the enormity of the disparity between per capita expenditure on Black and White education is staggering. For generations, Black South Africans were precluded from apprenticeship training, and precluded by law from doing skilled work. They were precluded from the professions and they were precluded by law from establishing small businesses in the country's metropolitan areas. They were precluded by law from becoming supervisors, foremen and managers over Whites.

It is only relatively recently that many of these hideous restrictions which inhibited Blacks from developing themselves to their fullest human potential have begun to be removed. Blacks are now permitted to do skilled work; they are now permitted to qualify as artisans and there are no legal prohibitions on them becoming professionals. Black South Africans now seek to do these things in terribly disadvantageous positions. Something like 23 per cent of all African teachers are not qualified, and whereas the pupil/teacher ratio in White schools is 18 to one, in Black schools it is 42.7 to one. The per capita expenditure on White schoolchildren is R1 221.00, whereas on Blacks it is R178.00. Only 10 per cent of all Black pupils leaving school have got as far as entering for the matriculation examinations. Of those who actually wrote the examinations, only 10.5 per cent passed with University entrance qualifications, and 60 per cent failed outright. This shocking state of affairs exists in a Black population in which there is only a 50 to 60 per cent literacy rate.

The aims of successive National Party Governments prior to the present Government, was to make the 87 per cent of South Africa

which they regard as so-called White South Africa, Whiter. Blacks were regarded as temporary sojourners there to sell their labour only, and successive National Party Governments have followed very vigorous immigration policies to attract White skilled workers from Europe and North America. The present Government has at least sufficiently seen the stupidity of the National Party's past policies and it is now talking about remedial action. They are committed, however, to the apartheid objectives of continuing segregation in South Africa's school education system which is the basis of the terrible disparities to which I have referred. Blacks are not free even today to attend the school of their choice, and are forced by law to attend racially segregated schools. There is no prospect whatsoever of parity being reached on the per capita expenditure for education on Black and White pupils within the foreseeable future.

The enormity of the education problem in South Africa is seen by the fact that over half of all Black South Africans are 15 years and younger. There is an enormous Black population bulge now passing through our schools, and the kind of statistics to which I have referred will be the kind of statistics we will be talking about for a very considerable time. South Africa at the moment is by now producing a whole new generation of semi-literate Blacks who have to struggle against enormous odds to acquire education. Education for Whites is compulsory and free. It is not yet compulsory for Blacks and nor is it free. The Black pupils of today are the victims of apartheid, and if Western Governments which oppose apartheid feel the need to strengthen their moral condemnation of it by doing something tangible and practical for the victims of apartheid, then it is to assistance in the field of education that they should be turning.

There is now a total White dependency on Blacks in the South African economy. Many of the reforms which President P.W. Botha and his Government are now introducing are reforms which can be traced to economic necessity. South Africa is now going through the deepest depression ever experienced since the great depression of the thirties. Everywhere businesses are going insolvent and workers are being retrenched across a wide range of industries, and it is primarily because the country is now finally paying for the horrors of apartheid. The present Government is totally aware of the fact that it has to set its economic house in order and that there will be no economic recovery unless it behaves to restore national and international levels of confidence in the future. There is a desperate need to start doing whatever can now be done to strengthen education at all levels and wherever possible to provide in-company training aimed at Black job advancement. When economic recovery comes, it will be Blacks who will have to provide the necessary labour.

It is this total economic dependence of Whites on Blacks which is now spelling out the need for White South Africa to abandon apartheid. It is in these circumstances that the time is ripe for

initiatives to be taken to translate economic interdependence into political interdependence. The interdependence between Black and White is busy creating the circumstances in which the politics of negotiation will succeed in bringing about radical change far sooner than the politics of violence. Economic recovery and high levels of growth patterns will result in a very dramatic vertical mobility of Blacks in South African society, and we must therefore see economic factors benefiting the process of change, not only in immediate terms but even more so in medium and long term. Rising Black vertical mobility in South Africa has already begun to generate potent political forces working for change. Those forces will increase dramatically with each passing year, and any assistance given to education and training for Black South Africans will make a significant contribution towards the development of the forces we need to bring about the kind of changes that all Americans want.

I recently received a letter as Chancellor of the University of Zululand from the President of Tufts University, Jean Mayer, who is also Chairman of the New England Board of Higher Education, which I would like to read to you. It is addressed to me and the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor A.C. Nkabinde, and it reads:

"We in the United States understand and sympathize with the difficulty of your and your colleagues' demanding positions as educators and ethical men and women who, we are sure, believe in the basic equality of all people and at the same time are operating under close control by your government. We are also confident that even though in the Republic of South Africa most of you are national executives, you all believe that being the heads of universities is different from the role of other public officials in terms of your responsibilities. We would like to encourage you and your colleagues and assure you of our support, if you choose to take a more visible stand in favour of major changes in your society and of your conviction that excellent education at all levels must be available on an equal and non-segregated basis to people of all races.

In our history, we have gone through some of the experiences you are living through now. We know that universal education of high quality is the necessary basis for the creation of a true multi-ethnic community, and we believe that your intellectual leadership is deeply needed at this point in history.

Should we, the chancellors and presidents of the 260 college and universities in New England, be in a position to strengthen your hand and help your struggle towards educational equality, we will do what we can."

This letter goes beyond moral condemnation of apartheid and it heartens me to think that educationists are now coming together in

the United States to evidence a collective concern about education in South Africa.

I have great admiration for the way in which both President Reagan and Mrs. Margaret Thatcher have dealt with the tremendous pressure that was exerted on them to apply damaging sanctions against South Africa. I am particularly grateful that President Reagan has balanced his limited sanctions programme with greatly stepped-up humanitarian aid to the victims of apartheid, and I am very grateful that the United States places education high in its priorities as something which is regarded as humanitarian aid. Humanitarian aid to the victims of apartheid could be made more than a matter of American Government concern. There are numerous ways in which ordinary Americans can assist in Black education in South Africa. Black pupils still have to buy school books. They have to buy their uniforms. Every book and every dollar that the ordinary American could afford to donate would be meaningful. Every American could take the opportunity of contributing in his or her own small way towards making American condemnation of apartheid meaningful to the victims of apartheid. Millions of Black South Africans seek to establish in South Africa a system of government and economic order, and a network of institutionalised behaviour, which Americans could truly identify with. Those are the Black South Africans who need American support, and I appeal to the American people to move closer to the ordinary Black people of South Africa and to support them as the victims of apartheid.

Black Secondary Schools are shells with no libraries and which are not equipped with laboratories. There is no limit to what young students can do to help with books and with money to establish laboratories. We need money for scholarships, both at High School and University level. We need bursaries to enable young Black students to study, both in South Africa and at some of your American Universities. President Reagan is correctly using the American tax-payers money when his Administration offers, as it did last year, five million dollars for scholarships for Black students at some of our Black Universities in South Africa. There is no limit to what people can do to help us, who want to go beyond mere rhetoric, to enable young Blacks to take their rightful place in South African society. We have no doubt that dark as the tunnel we are moving in is at the moment, that we will triumph at the end. We therefore need to be helped to be ready when that day comes.

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