

INJUSTICE AND DISORDER IN

South Africa's stance of compulsory racism and total denial of political participation or equality of economic opportunity to the vast majority of its people is a direct challenge both to the Judaeo-Christian religions and moral tradition and to the secular democratic traditions of Western Europe and North America.

By Deogratias Mugoa

An essay

South Africa's stance of compulsory racism and total denial of political participation or equality of economic opportunity to the vast majority of its people is a direct challenge both to the Judaeo-Christian religions and moral tradition and to the secular democratic traditions of Western Europe and North America.

Failure to face and act on that challenge over the past century, and especially over the last twenty years, has meant that the storms blow wilder and seas higher, most of all for the African people of Southern Africa and also all of us in the other African States as well as for you in the Western democracies.

By now the lesson of Namibia and South Africa should be clear. I believe that the notion that if one kills time and postpones decisions, something will turn up, is a disastrous idea. Killing time is killing human beings as illustrated by the Sharpeville and Soweto massacres, the murder of Steven Biko and the attacks on Mozambique, the killings in Windhoek prison and a thousand barely remembered smaller incidents. Killing time is killing the chance for peaceful change. Killing time is killing, too, the interests of the Western democracies in preserving mutually advantageous economic relationships with Namibia and South Africa.

My appeal is not primarily to the Western conscience. I do put it to you (the West) that far from being the defenders of Western Christian civilization, the Southern African and South African regimes are its mortal enemies and that by failing to condemn them and to act on that

condemnation, the West is endangering its own democracy and moral tradition.

Collaboration with despotism and injustice abroad is not normally conducive to promoting democracy and justice at home. However, my main theme is that it is in the West's own self-interest, its own political and economic self-interest, to cripple the economics of Southern Africa and her clients, the Namibia struggle. No other action today can protect the West's interests tomorrow as effectively as that.

There are two dominant perceptions of Southern Africa. The first is of a system of organized violence, exploitation and oppression in which local European tribes ally themselves with external firms, states and arms suppliers to sustain a political economy of theft, a politics of exclusion and a society of inhumanity. That is the view of those fighting against the Southern African regimes - primarily their won subjects and secondarily other Africans, but, certainly, also including a number of the West's fellow citizens in the Western democracies.

The second view is of Southern Africa as a source of critical minerals, a market for exports, a home away from home for investments, a regional strategic bastion, an area ruled by brothers, erring brothers, yes, but still kith and kin. That is a Western European and North American perception. It is, I think and hope, a perception which is increasingly tinged with doubts and queries. Certainly, the revelation of the endless prevarications and tricks of that rebel, should be indicative of how

much longer this perception can be seen to correspond to reality.

Let me venture what I believe is inevitable in respect to Southern Africa:-

(a) Namibia and South Africa will become independent and ruled by their majorities. The question is not whether but when and how.

(b) Liberation will involve violence - the violence of repression and the answering violence of revolution. The question is not how to avoid violence - violence is already there, in the inadequate wages and health facilities that kill our black African brothers and sisters, in the freedom fighters who strike ever deeper in Namibia today and South Africa tomorrow.

(c) There will be African rule. Rule by a small band of minority - tribes cannot continue much longer. The questions are: Who will be considered to be African? How easily can the tribes of European ancestry be accepted as Africans? And how, with what legacy of the earlier domination?

(d) The successor states in Southern Africa will engage in international trade. The questions are: With whom will they trade and on what terms?

(e) Namibia and South Africa will have international friends, debts and links. So do all states. The questions are: With whom will the links be? Debts be? And who will be perceived as friends? This is in respect to states emerged from the liberation struggle, in which certain states

supported the freedom fighters.

The present Western European and North American perception of the southern African Challenge has been characterized as "The West at Bay". What now exists in the West is a late, limited and unreal attempt to defend its interests with clear-headed perception of what those interests are or how to defend them.

I recognize fully and acknowledge gladly, the importance of the deeply concerned journalists, musicians, academics and trade unionists who have seen and spoken of the challenge for many years despite ridicule, vituperation and indifference; of those associated with the Programme to Combat Racism; of the World Council of Churches; and of the handful of businessmen who have rejected doing business in Southern Africa because they see it as the "unacceptable face of capitalism".

I perceive as my own interests as an African:

First, I believe no man is an island. The bell that tolled for Steven Biko tolled for me. Second, I believe that the price of solidarity in struggle is a high one for countries such as Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique that have taken it seriously. Third, I believe in the peace of the living negotiated in conference rooms and ratified by popular consent and not in the peace of the dead fought in blood on the battlefields and sealed in silent graves. Killing people is

not a sacrament.

A South Africa or a Namibia which emerges in twenty years from a holocaust of violence, ringed by seas of hatred and scarred by countless unmarked but unforgotten graves, will be no friends to the West. Nor, as they gather up their harvest of burnt buildings and broken lives, will they be friends to a world that refused to help them shorten those terrible birth pangs.

It is still in the West's power to halt that cycle of the violence of the repressed, the hatred of the oppressor spawning the hatred of the oppressed. If the West could act, the cycle can and will be broken. "It can be done - play your part". But the West has very little time left. It is therefore imperative to take a genuine first step. Even the longest journey began with a first few steps.

Today, the choice is yours in the West. By tomorrow it will be too late; the West's choice of today will have determined its future role - or lack of role in Namibia and South Africa. The West, with its Judaeo-Christian tradition, surely cannot pretend not to understand the moral behaviors of life and the moral responsibility to act accordingly. To betray the African people in southern Africa can only mean laying on the West everlasting shame. It is your last chance in Africa.

KIRBY CHEESE

Every Saturday Morning
(Center Aisle)
At the Market

This Weeks Special: Jarlsberg
&
Gruyere

We Also Carry : N.B. Cheddars
Cream Cheeses
Edam
100% Goat's Milk
Cheese
Mozzarella
And many more..

Come To Us For All Of Your Cheese Needs.
HOMEMADE BAGELS - Only \$1.80 / 1/2 dozen



We're still singing the same tune.
But now we're performing on a bigger stage.

Ernst & Young

For 125 years, Clarkson Gordon in Canada.

