

an outrage against humanity

The mounting international pressure against the creed of Apartheid has gained a momentum so strong that it may well prove decisive in the struggle going on in South Africa. It is a welcome sign in the larger interest of mankind that the Pretoria regime is being black-listed and isolated by the international community. Time alone can tell how long the regime can stand on its own. It is against all reason to think that a small minority of the whites can keep a large majority of the blacks totally submerged forever. It is high time that the world realises that nobody can suppress indefinitely a whole people.

The situation in south Africa is one of the most tragic, difficult and dangerous. The black nationals outnumber the whites by a ratio of about four to one. Yet, they are denied even the very elementary rights and privileges of citizenship. Now, although too late, they ask themselves: Are we a lost people? What is going to happen to our children?



A shift from the mere diplomatic tut-tutting about Apartheid to more concrete steps is a clear index of the international sentiment running high against the creed. Hitherto, its history reveals that the cocktail utterances of the European community nations cannot be comprehended genuine. But, in an unprecedented move, the Republican controlled U. S. Senate has now rebelled against President Reagn and voted a series of sanctions against South Africa. The sound and fury in the Senate debate signifies the cracks that have appeared in the doctrine of unqualified support of the Reagan government for the Apartheid regime. The Commonwealth - hitherto considered a British lobby - has succeeded in isolating Mrs. Thatcher and her government in the international sphere. A barricade of rotten fruits and insults that recently greeted her in her visit to the trun-

ated Commonwealth games at Edinburgh was only a square proof of it. From the mere cosmetic measures such as discouraging sporting contacts, the condemnation of Apartheid seems to have further moved to concerted actions. The organisation of African Unity (OAU) has put aside their petty political differences in order to seek solution to this crippling social problem of racial discrimination. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) has expressed its solidarity with the anti-Apartheid movement in South Africa, in their struggle for freedom and human dignity. All these moves, if together they ignite a world wide campaign against the whites may bring in a hopeful change in the attitude of the racist regime.

No dilemma is more cruel in the world than that of the black population in South Africa. What bothers them is the colour—nothing but the frantic 'pigmentalism'! If the black population could overnight be given white skins half of the problem would disappear. But, as they are, they are wallowing in a hell. The darker a person's skin, the worse the curse! How inhuman and unthinkable! Dr. Daniel F. Malan, former Prime Minister (1948) of South Africa went even to the extent of declaring, "The Negro does not need a home. He can sleep under a tree". The colour bar is observed in the hotels, theatres and public places. A sign on a park bench 'For Europeans Only' is only a simple example. There is apartheid in schools, industry, hospitals recreation clubs and so on. In short, over everything in South Africa there is a grim pall of the racial problem!

It seems inconceivable to the white to co-exist with the black. Years ago, once, when Jawaharlal Nehru was photographed with Dr. Malan, then Prime Minister of South Africa, during a Commonwealth conference, it was literally inconceivable to them that they could have been photographed together. When the photo was printed in the English Press in Johannesburg, stout Afrikaners commented that it must have been fabricated. The creed of Apartheid is so deep rooted. The problem is multidimensional, dangerous and tricky and the solution seems far away

and evasive. Can the white minority kill off the black majority? No, they cannot even if they wish to do so. And the black majority cannot drive out the white minority into the sea. Again it goes without saying that apartheid cannot be made to work except at the risk of poisoning the entire nation and offending human dignity. Reagan's much ado about 'the constructive engagement' with South Africa or Geogfrey Howe's diplomatic shuttle to South Africa cannot solve this. If wisdom does not dawn on world powers, especially the U. S, and the U. K. then the bubbling discontent in South Africa may ignite tension and bring about unforeseen violence and unwanted bloodshed,

Now all the international eyes are focussed on South Africa. Considering the very weight of public opinion even Pretoria's staunchest allies are considering economic sanctions. It is only exceptional that Mr. Reagan, quite hypocritical in his stance, is being forced to sign a bill imposing some sanctions albeit of a highly limited nature. The disinvestment movement has become the most burning issue on the University campuses in the United States. Sit-ins, protest rallies and marches are conducted in all Universities. At Berkeley last year alone, 7000 students demanded that the University of California divest \$2.4 billions worth of stock in companies with South African interest. Although the governments are determined to ride out the storm, anti-apartheid movement is gaining strength and support from among the intellectuals, church authorities and mediamen.

and so on who are ready to flout the sanctions and serve as conduit. Trade statistics about possible sanctionbusters are hard to come by. South Korea has no diplomatic relation with South Africa for they depend on the black African votes in the international organisations. But it is known that South Korea is now South Africa's latest white hope for their indirect trade via South East Asian re-exporters. It is interesting that South Africa's Customs Department has just stopped publishing information about trade with South Korea. Again, it is reported that a high level Israeli trade delegation was on a secrecy-shrouded visit to South Africa. Headed by the Director General of Israel's Finance Ministry, Mr Emmanuel Sharon, the team has been meeting South African officials. It is interesting that both governments have maintained a news blackout in the case. Again, South Africa's strength vis-a-vis its neighbours also is a noteworthy factor. It is capable of inflicting economic and military damage on the frontline states. Hence, any economic squeeze introduced against South Africa must not serve a pretext for raiding its neighbours. Zimbabwe Prime Minister Robert Mugabe's keynote address at the NAM summit at Harare merits consideration. He made it clear: "What is needed now is to eradicate the evil system of apartheid and action to resist Pretoria regime's aggression against the neighbouring independent states."

South Africa has more minority problems than any other part of the world. Tribalism quite often rears its ugly head and triggers wars. The Botha government is doing its best to ignite the tribal rivalry in order to beset the anti-apartheid movement. Hence, only an umbrella body enjoying the support of all sections of the black minority groups can bring about a change without much bloodshed and turmoil. However, the world-wide upsurge and reprisal against apartheid may help open the eyes of the 'albinos'. Their power of weapon and pride of stock cannot stand them in good stead if they do not read the writings on the wall.

Of the European Community leaders, Mrs. Thatcher alone is still gritting her teeth against sanctions. Yet, it cannot be ignored that she was forced to agree to a document at Nelson, at the summit of the Commonwealth leaders-called 'measures' to keep her happy-which imposed some sanctions. Canadian Members of Parliament from all the three national political parties have approved a resolution calling on Prime Minister Brian Mulroney to immediately impose economic sanctions against South Africa to force it dismantle apartheid.

Since a state of emergency was proclaimed in South Africa, a couple of months ago, about 10,000 people are either believed to be missing or detained. It is a matter of grave concern that the black population is being systematically wiped out. Well-known American columnist Anthony Lewis writes, "If 1,600 whites had been killed in South Africa in the last 18 months, would President Reagan do nothing? Would he do nothing if a small black minority used totalitarian methods to keep all political power...? No. a President who has been so ready to use American power around the world would surely use it in that kind of South Africa. He would not reject economic pressure". We know that Reagan did not desist from using economic pressure whenever American interests were affected. Poland, Cuba, Nicaragua and Libya are only a few of the more recent instances. But, in South Africa, the American agencies are spying on the African Nationalist Congress and other nationalist organisations for Pretoria's benefit. Pretoria is seeking lifelines to sidestep the

on old yi folk song

In our world of today, robbers
abound; what ever they see of value
they try and grab; from me
only my mouth they cannot steal
so with it I still sing
my hill songs.

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a folk poem from China's minorities



the scientific spirit of Islam

Knowledge does not consist in the mere assemblage of different ideas and perceptions in one's memory. It is a harmonious grasp of the varieties underlying them. Hence Islam appeals to man to reflect on life and things that are in immediate or in remote contact with him. A scientist is always involved in analysing the God-ordained nature of the physical phenomena that help him establish a deeper communion with God. Thus, according to Islam, scientist is regarded as walking in the path of Allah. The holy Prophet aptly remarked, "One hour's meditation on the work of the Creator (in a devout spirit) is better than seventy years of prayer". There is a just and wise purpose behind the creation of this Universe. Islam exhorts him to use his intellect. It enjoins him to see things in the light of reality. The conscience of man according to Islam is kindled by the use of reason. The Will of God is manifest in the objects of nature. Theology and Philosophy are very closely linked in Islam. Theology is aimed at the clarification and defence of religious principles whereas philosophy is concerned with deep understanding of the phenomena of this Universe. The holy Quran invites our attention to reflect upon the seed of life. It declares, "Out of water do We create every living being. Consequently, the study of living organisms and the condition of their development receive great attention. Hearing the call of Islam, Arabs—the companions and the followers of the Prophet—rose to the occasion and made remarkable contributions in the field of science; in medicine, mathematics, chemistry, astronomy and geography. The period beginning with Abbasids particularly with Mamun who inaugurated an era of great translation work from different sources, mostly Greek and Persian into Arabic is noteworthy for its literary and scientific leaps. Hundreds of great works in all branches of learning were rendered into Arabic and the library at Baghdad became a centre of learning. The translation bureau was named 'Bait-al-Hikma', the House of Wisdom, where a well-organised activity unprecedented in scope and vigour went on for nearly a century until all treasures from Byzantium, Syria, Egypt, Persia, and India were not merely translated but also analysed, assessed, adopted and improved to a degree. They made use of this knowledge to advance their own views and theories in the light of Islamic approach to fundamental issues of life and creation. Medicine was a branch to which the Arabs gave great stress. In the curative use of drugs, some remarkable progress was made. They established the earliest school of pharmacy and produced the first pharmacopoeia. The first hospital of Islam was built in Baghdad, and Cairo had its hospital in AD 872 with separate wards for men and women. Avicenna and Al-Razi are considered pioneers in the science of medicine. According to Dr. William Isler the *Materia Medica* of Avicenna (Abu Ali Sina) remained the 'medical Bible for a longer period than any other work.' In Physics and Chemistry, Muslims introduced objective experiments. Western tradition credits Geber (Jabir Ibnu Hayyam) with the discovery of several chemical compounds. They introduced the decimal system and the zero (sifr). The first Arabic algebra was written by Al-Khawairzmi during the time of Mamun and was called *Al Jabar Wal Muquabala* which solved linear and quadratic equations. Very soon, Arabs developed applied mathematics resulting in the idea of mechanics which they called mechanical technology (ilm-al-hayal). The present day Muslims, on a retrospective view, have much to relish about their past contributions in the field of science and technology. It is only shocking to compare how high they were and how low they have fallen now. Muslim-scholars and academicians must take inspiration from their rich heritage not to be merely vociferous about it but to be practical to give a lead in the field of scientific research and discoveries.

to my friend

My dear.

Though far, far away from mine eyes,
to banish you from my mind
is beyond my will,

You gave me your portrait
which will fade, yellow with age,
but Killer Nature is helpless
against the one inside me.

In this busy, busy world, I long and long,
but never can see you anymore, ever:
Yet in my mind
You live forever, bright, laughing, alive
My only fault : I can't open the album within
and show you to anyone else.

God bless us to meet again,
Out There,
and unto Him I turn
in prayer.