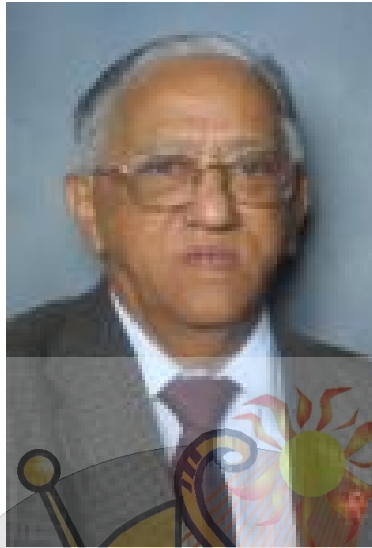


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LENASIA RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION
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SPORT
ISLAM
INDIAN SOUTH AFRICANS
YOUTH

WHERE DO I STAND - YOUTH CONFERENCE - 18/6/78. (PPR)

It is indeed a rare privilege, in our country of barriers, to be able to address a gathering representing its diverse population; and it is even a greater honour that this is the youth of South Africa - the treasure-house of our future. It is just right that our stand on the critical and crucial issues of the day, be placed under their questioning analysis and discerning eyes; because they have the claim to know, the legacy we leave for them: whether we have the vision and competency to mould a society based on harmony, peace and balance; or one which is strained at the leash with enmity, suspicion and turmoil. The aspirations and expectations, underlying the idealisms of ALL our youth, must be an essential part of the barometer of change, which guides our projections for the future. So that we can avoid the pitfalls of our own particular prejudices, blind partialities and myopic visions. Only then can we weld the good from our pasts; build on the benefits of our present; and ^{prepare} build on ~~the~~ for the fruitful ideals of the future. A bond of unity and strength, that will give stability and security; and will stand the test of time.

Further, with the ^{2nd} anniversary of the tragic events of ¹⁹⁷⁶ last June and its aftermath, it is necessary that we evaluate, where we stand; and to honestly assess, whether the factors that provoked the revolt, have been totally or partially ~~been~~ resolved. On the answers to this question depends where I stand.

In my estimation, I do not consider that any real or positive momentum has resulted in resolving the issues. In fact I detect a hardening of attitudes and a greater racial polarisation. When the air is cleared of the verbiage from Ministerial pronouncements on such themes as a merit society; justice and security; moving away from discrimination; self-determination and consensus; sharing of power and other sensitive problems - I only see the fortifying walls of apartheid. Our children are to-day more estranged from one another, than it was the case during our young days. It is incongruous to talk of merit society, whilst single-mindedly dispossessing two-thirds of the South African population of their birth-rights; it is equally contradictory to express compassion and sympathy, whilst bulldozers flatten shacks, without providing alternative shelter; it is equally fatuous to claim that others are obstructing and undermining justice, when the system itself has circumvented the basic precepts of the rule of law; with the "new dispensation" and "homeland" policies, we have a constitutionalisation of discrimination, rather than moving away from it; under conditions of Hobson's choice, can we have self-determination or consensus; the proposed entrenched inequality under the new constitutional plan surely is far from sharing of power. Is it then any wonder, that true and legitimate leaders are either reluctant to become associated with these sham institutions or if for reasons of strategy do become involved, then they have to run the gauntlet of a very conscience searing dilemma and credibility gap within the society they serve. Thus I stand against all this which is unhealthy and unstable. All that have ^{to be} maintained by force and intimidation; ^{all that} ~~that~~ which tears asunder the normal emotions of society which brings people together - regardless of colour, race, religion, sectionalism and social status. Thus I stand for a socially just society, a morally defensible order, and one that respects

human dignity, peace, reconciliation and social total unity.

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In the hybrid political climate of South Africa, it is indeed a most noxious experience that daily one is conscious of the insults that the system inflicts on the human personality; and it is even more excruciating to be aware that one is compelled by legislation to violate the sacred dignity of your fellow-men. The sum total of this reaction is clearly identified by the extremely violent society that we live in - fear, intimidation, aggression and insensitivity. Put into a simplistic frame; we either support the existing status-quo, based on differential values; discordant ethical norms; and pestilent racial prejudice or we subscribe to the sacredness of the human personality, in which we have equal individual rights, with related responsibilities to the total society. On this I have no crises of conscience, because I am committed to striving for the latter. Discrimination based on skin pigmentation undermines all my faith in the spiritual values that hold ~~clerk~~.

I do not see our situation and its solution in the light of majorities and minorities; or in terms of black, white, coloured and Indian; or even in terms of multi-national and restrictive uni-national, but I see the whole answer within the context of right and wrong moral and immoral; just and unjust; freedom and oppression. I believe in the decisive elements that protect, promote and ensure the inviolable total image of man. I stand for the rights of individuals and societies to integrate, if they so desire; to co-exist if they so choose; practice and perform one's own cultural and religious traditions, without trampling or impinging upon the basic rights and liberties of others. Thus I have no objection to the Afrikaner to his identity, heritage and self-respect, but I strongly object to his misguided obsession, with the belief that he has a religious mission to impose his will and authority on the physical movement, mental expression and spiritual commitment of the other millions, that form the broad South African nation. By the Nationalist Party's authoritarian imposition of a whole armoury of laws - on the movement, education, livelihood, thought process, life, happiness and death - of all these under its control, has made our common homeland a maze of foreigners; a sea of turbulent strangers; and a crucible for turmoil and ferment. The minds and hearts of rational men and women, who can contribute so much to peace and harmony is pushed into the cauldron of violence and revenge. It is leading our beautiful land into a mindfield of polarisation, where the patience, perseverance and resignation ^{of the old} is being replaced by the anger, action and impatience of the young. Thus I stand for a reconciliation of these diverse responses so that we build a social structure in which the aspirations and expectations of all our people can be canalised ^{positively} ~~into~~ towards fruition.

I stand for a representative system that affords every citizen of South Africa - that includes the Transkei and Bophutswana - to have a meaningful say in the Government of an undivided country. The machinery and mechanism, is something which must be worked out at a negotiated settlement, between the true and trusted leaders of all the people of South Africa. No one can be fooled by the instant leaders that are being brewed through Govt. nominated concoctions or given dubious credibility through 5% and 10% election polls. The Minister of Plural Relations can parade these as the real leaders, but the masses know better, that these are phantoms of a system, which clearly creates aberration in the minds of the conjurers, whilst the majority of the audience knows it to be a subterfuge.

A fact clearly outlined by a recent press survey, which showed that whilst those exercising the vote felt that their relations with the governed was improving, whilst the voteless clearly indicated that the situation has deteriorated. There is a certain measure of repugnant irony, that those justifying 30 years of harsh Nationalist regimentation, ~~that~~ claim that in order to establish the positive aspects of apartheid, it was necessary to be 'cruel' before one could become kind. It is in effect saying that in order to restore morality one has to first practice evil and that violence is necessary before ~~ea~~peace can follow. Tragically, even the support ^{name} of God is invoked in support of this twisted logic. Those that support such reasoning then have no excuse, ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ condemning others, that call for economic and other sanctions against South Africa. Surely what is good for the goose, must be good for the gander. It is just unbelievable the degree of double-talk and double standards that straddle official postures and reasoning. At one stage Dr Metlana is regarded as non-representative of the opinions held by Sewetenians; but ~~we~~ ^{when he} makes a statement on majority rule, it is seized with gusto as to how the blacks think and would react; Mr Voster warns the world that even as a small nation due regard must be given to the dignity and self-respect for his Government; and yet in many agonising ways the state inflicts insults and injuries to vast numbers of its black citizens; Mr Voster calls upon the West to interfere in the internal affairs of African countries, in order to stem Marxism, yet objects when these Western countries try to resolve racism in South Africa; South Africa is prepared to accept a Turnhalle in S.W.A., but refuses to sit with its own blacks to solve similar issues; one can go on this undulating path of double standards, ad-nauseum. But suffice to add that I stand for morality and equity in action and performance - if it is not forthcoming then I am afraid the world at large will pay little heed to what S.Africa's Nationalist government has to say.

On the meaning of PATRIOTISM I stand distanced from the meaning the Nationalist have devised - that complete subservience to its policy forms the basis of a South African loyalty. I consider loyalty to the moral edicts and ethical value systems that protect the interests and promotes the well-being of our total society as the pillar of my duty; and being mindful of the rights and privileges of all other societies, provided they respect the legitimate integrity of the components of our total population. Thus I would have no hesitation in defending a morally just South Africa, but have serious qualms of conscience in defending Nationalist South Africa.

On the question of JUSTICE I stand for the rule of law and the due process of law. All enactments that circumvent the just process of law, does as much harm to society as lawlessness. I cannot support or condone measures which incarcerate persons without guilt; indefinitely detain persons without a trial; and punish individuals for suspicion by the state, that they may at some future date commit a crime. It appears that in South Africa it is easier to escape from punishment for non-political ^{etc} misdeeds - such as armed assault, muggings, murders, theft, rape etc. - then for, ^{etc} active opposition to state politics. Ideas on social justice ^{are} have become more frowned upon than crime itself. Is it any wonder that non-political crime stalks every moment of our lives; residents live in fear; snatching payrolls have become a routine occurrence; gunshot wounds and deaths a part of our daily existence. To blame unemployment for this new phenomenon is too simple; it is the product of a politically sick society. our roads are death traps

As the wheel of our common S.African destiny, moves (on) gear into the phase of constitutional juggling, to give final form to the finished ~~form~~ product of apartheid; it reminds me, with some adjustment, to the old Nationalist adage, which would now read: "di swartes uit Suid Africa (Homelands) and die kleurling and Indiers op sy plek (The Group Areas)" - this is precisely what the vamped constitutional plan means to me. In its present form it will not only entrench white hegemony, Nationalist domination; but also entrap the coloureds and Indians, into a perpetual subservience and ^{to} administratively and collectively dispossess the African of his birth-right. To this I cannot agree or lend support. A system in which I must now consent, to enjoy, albeit an inferior then the white status, but superior then the African's, in a racially balkanised S.A. Am I morally justified in accepting that any white, even new immigrants and non-citizens; an Indians of Asian origin have a right to a S.African passport; and Africans like Dr Motlana, whose total cultural and ancestral heritage seeps deep into the soil of S.A., are aliens. Are the oceans that divide Europe and Asia from Africa, less of a barrier, than imaginary and phantom boundaries within the inviolable continuity of the earth and surface of S.A. The localised pieces of jagged areas, ^{are} the manifest results of continued restrictive constraints by successive white Governments, and not the results of any natural process of evolution. Thus if Nationalist Party logic has any merit, then the coloureds are the only true indigenous group; also if we have to take ^{the} logic to its final conclusion, ^{then} all the nations of the world needs unscrambling and new boundaries have to be defined and total resettlement of peoples across the universe must follow. Further, it is naive to expect us to be jubilant about the administrative enclaves, composed of underdeveloped and fiscally unviable group areas, over which our supposed subordinate parliaments ~~are~~ will have control. Like the "independant Homelands" we will be tied to the economic apron strings of the powerful white hierarchy. The adjusted dispensation within the laager of separatism makes participation, even as a strategy for protest a questionable one, because it has minimal scope for achieving our goals of a non-racially just society; but instead entangles us as pliant tools in enforcing and entrenching ethnicity and racism. Thus political collaboration through the system is permissible, at a degradingly high cost. On this issue I must conclude that politically I believe in my right to an equal citizenship, with that of the white; and state with equal conviction that the Mr Kambules have a firmer and deeper roots to this claim.

On the economic front, I support an equitable and free enterprise system; as opposed to an exploitative enterprise system. In order to right our malstructured racial economy; fresh priorities and non-discriminatory programmes have to be instituted to restore balance and upgrade those that have suffered at the hands of exploitation - thus influx control, job reservation and other labour restrictions must be eliminated; and training facilities and equal educational opportunities, for the deprived has to be placed on a high priority level. I back decentralisation and rural upliftment, but these developments to be independant of the demands and coercions that deprive the illiterate peasantry of their citizenship status; and ^{the} inalienable right to the resources of an undivided S.A. To contend that the Homeland policies are successful, is to deliberately overlook the fact that its citizens are not given the option of the alternative of a full and unrestricted;

share in the rest of S.A. Such a Hobson's choice is no yardstick for success. Such inequity, will and can never guarantee permanent peace and security to the rest of the 87% of S.A. A disinherited heir remains a permanent thorn in the unity of a family. It remains a valid basis of friction in the future - the extent of the explosion only the future can tell.

Left for me to tackle is the question of sports, theatres and hotels : I do not believe that one can have normal sports in an abnormal society. Merit becomes relative to the facilities and opportunities available in each group. Further, I cannot agree with the waves of euphoria, that hotels of certain categories and theatres in particular localities have been permitted to allow the deprived and discriminated groups. It may make life a bit more bearable, for those who can afford these luxuries and ease the conscience of others in the favoured group, but it does not remove the stench of indignity, because these exemptions are concessions, and not rights, because the law that controls its use is merely suspended and not revoked. It does not confer upon the disadvantaged total freedom of choice and unfettered right of perpetual accessibility. The system remains, only the degree of implementation is adjusted. In a nutshell: no name swapping can change the basic character of a thing, be it good or bad; nor fringe embellishments alter the core of a bad system. It is not sufficient for a political party or vested economic interests to determine the fate for the unrepresented - it is only these that bear the burden of the weight of permanent insecurity; suffer the impact of divided family existence; reap the evils of an anti-social environment; feel the anxiety of insecurity of tenure; experience the agony of bulldozers destroying their shelter; imprisoned by influx control and migrant labour laws, which deny gainful employment; carry the perpetual yoke of inferior education, social services, recreational and sports facilities; and sustain the stamp of political lepers, in the land of their birth - who can negotiate their interests and declare their humanity.

In final summary, as a powerless voice in the race obsessed socio-political labyrinth of our beloved S.A. I can state that I bear no bitterness against those that have dehumanised me, because if I do, then I am no better a person than them. But I cannot gainsay the reality, that the zealotry of race politics has boxed people and persons into stereotyped groups, with predictable characteristics. This unworthy effects of the system has destroyed trust between groups of citizens. We must stretch across these artificial barriers of mistrust and cultivate the spirit of forgiveness and goodwill, which has withstood the battering storms of our divided existence. We must reject the misleading hypothesis that the alternative to enforced separation is compulsory integration. Societies, through out history have shown that co-existence is possible and integration has followed a natural course, related to the demands and needs of society. Also, we must realise that like slavery, colonialism, nazism, fascism and feudalism, racism is at the bar of international disapprobation. It is under the guillotine for final execution. Thus legalised racism has reached its nadir, and S.A. is the last outpost of this dying dinosaur. Let its end come through peaceful bargaining and co-operation, so that we give respect and honour to the Supreme Being, who has created life sacred and holy. Let us ~~also~~ not write another gory page, into the archives of man's shameful past, of inhumanity to himself. Let us rise above our weaknesses and find ourselves in unity, trust, understanding and love

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