

WHEN I ARRIVED IN BRITAIN in July, 1960, I expected to find nation-wide support for the Anti-Apartheid cause. Clutching 300 copies of the latest *Contact* which I had brought with me from Cape Town, I leapt off the bus at Victoria and stormed the offices of an organisation concerned with African Affairs. Smiling at my enthusiasm, a hardened female secretary suggested that I deposit 50 copies on a shelf already littered with piles of leftist literature from Johannesburg to Jinja. Two months later a Cambridge postman brought 40 unwanted *Contacts* to my door.

With slightly waning zeal I stood with 250 *Contacts* outside a Cambridge bookshop. My home-made poster read "The evils of Apartheid exposed for only six-pence." Three gumchewing teenagers screwed up their noses as they read, or tried to read, my poster "The . . . wot? . . . E-L-V-I-S . . . of a party . . . 'Ere, wot's 'is game?" After two hours I had sold five *Contacts*. One of the five avid purchasers, a youthfully earnest undergraduate, suggested through his spectacles "Try and sell them at the Societies' Fair. I suggest you try the JAGUAR stand . . . Oh, so sorry. Not the car. JAGUAR actually stands for 'Joint Action Group for Understanding Among Races'."

I made my way through the buzz of Oxbridge conversation to the JAGUAR stand which I found in the furthest corner of the hall. I dropped 245 *Contacts* onto the table. "Jolly good," said the young secretary. "We need South Africans in JAGUAR. I'm sure you'd like to help us sell 100 copies of this Oxford paper on racial prejudice. It's called *Contact* . . . What? Extraordinary. Your paper is also called *Contact*!"

The Senior Tutor of my college gave a sherry party for all English and overseas graduate students. I was introduced as a South African and after half an hour and three glasses of sherry I felt that Cambridge academics really *did* seem concerned about South Africa:

"And would you say, Mr. Paton, that in spite of the banning of the Congress movements there is still a reasonable chance that most Africans will continue to support Loo-thoo-ley's demand that all resistance should be non-violent?" Our conversation was interrupted while more sherry was poured and my interrogator vanished. Five minutes later I heard his voice behind me:

"And do American intellectuals really believe that the Castro regime cannot continue in spite of Castro's threat to nationalise Cuba's chief industries?"

I JOINED JAGUAR AND THE LABOUR and Liberal Clubs. I soon discovered that the little round black badge with an inverted white cross stood for C.N.D. and that

---

JONATHAN PATON has recently returned from post-graduate study at Cambridge University and is teaching at Hilton College, Natal. He is the younger son of Alan Paton.

"C.N.D." stood for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Perhaps I was a little better informed than the Englishman in the street (Peter Sellers) who, when asked by a BBC reporter (Peter Sellers) "You, sir. What are your views on the bomb?" replies "What bomb?" Nevertheless, before going to Britain I had not heard of the term "unilateral disarmament" (I was not a *New Statesman* reader at the time) and perhaps if I had remained in South Africa, I would still be unable to say what the "Committee of a Hundred" was.

I later joined C.N.D., but could never work up enough enthusiasm to march from Aldermaston or lie down in Whitehall. I devoted my energies rather to organising study groups on South Africa, speaking at several meetings, collecting small amounts of money, and working through JAGUAR. C.N.D. supporters could not understand why I had such an "exaggerated" idea of the importance of South African problems in the field of international politics, and several told me that if the bomb fell, the world, including South Africa, would be destroyed.

I once addressed a small group of University Socialists on South African problems. Several young Socialists questioned me closely about the views of Liberals on Nationalisation. Even more intense questions were asked about non-violent resistance and the discussion that followed revealed two distinct groups, one pro-, the other anti-violence. Madam Chair intervened: "All our meetings end up the same way. Do the Communists have to attack C.N.D. at every meeting?"

I decided to stick to JAGUAR. Of course I realised that JAGUAR was not only an anti-apartheid organisation. It was opposed to racial discrimination throughout the world. In spite of this, many of its meetings were on South Africa, and this led to the unfair attack by some white South Africans that JAGUAR was simply a disguised branch of the South African Liberal Party. Unfortunately JAGUAR was (and perhaps still is) the most paradoxical organisation in Cambridge. On the one hand, it was an action group, and on the other it was supposed to create understanding among the races. For example, when JAGUAR attempted to take action by circulating a petition suggesting that South Africa be made to change her race policies or withdraw from the Commonwealth, several English and South African conservatives said that JAGUAR was creating tension rather than understanding among races. When JAGUAR concentrated on raising money for political prisoners, and holding study groups on race problems in Africa and the West Indies, the Labour Club accused it of being a philanthropic study group rather than an action group, and this led to another paradox within JAGUAR. JAGUAR was intentionally created to embrace all political thought in its fight against race discrimination. It was to charge a nominal membership fee and to receive financial aid from all the political clubs and

---

Student "causes" at  
Cambridge University

---

from other organisations, which included even the Caius Milk and Wine Society and the Tuskers' Club!

FOR SEVERAL MONTHS the Cambridge University Conservative Association (CUCA) accused JAGUAR of being run by South African fanatics. In fact, however, it was a non-South African crisis that led to CUCA's withdrawal from JAGUAR. The Jewish Society complained that Sir Oswald Mosley had been asked by CUCA to address a meeting in Cambridge. JAGUAR protested to CUCA but the meeting was not cancelled. After several weeks of tension CUCA withdrew its support for JAGUAR which meant that JAGUAR would no longer receive CUCA's terminal subscription of £10—one of the biggest. Soon after this a suggestion was made that JAGUAR cease to be an action group and I believe that this suggestion was adopted at a meeting soon after my resignation as chairman due to pressure of work.

Cambridge does not have a Students' Representative Council and the Union is a private society (membership open to men only) which holds debates of very high standard but which does not pass motions on behalf of the student body. In fact on the Oxbridge campus there is no "student body" and the links with the National Union of students are almost non-existent. It is true that after Sharpeville huge sums of money were collected at Oxbridge for the Defence and Aid Fund, but now only a trickle of the money collected finds its way to this fund. This is understandable when one realises that worthy causes are demanding money almost every week. Cosmopolitan Cambridge is asked to collect for Kenya famine relief, Algerian refugees, West Indies hurricane relief, Congo victims . . .

Two years in Cambridge certainly improved my perspective of international affairs. I see now—and I hadn't seen it before—that the bomb, Berlin and the Common Market are more important internationally than the South African situation. But this does not alter my criticism of several C.N.D. supporters who put all their eggs in the bomb basket. They cynically refuse to transfer even a bantam's worth into another basket. Some in their pessimistic moods even venture to suggest that total world destruction by the bomb is inevitable and the implication seems to be "Why bother to do anything about anything?" One C.N.D. supporter listened to my account of the Sabotage Bill. I told him I was apprehensively returning to Durban. "That is if you ever reach Durban," he interrupted. "The world will probably blow up first."

I have reached Durban and the world has not blown up yet. It might do so before this article is published. But while the bomb remains dormant apartheid legislation continues. And C.N.D. action alone will never stop it. ●

---

## My Grandmother

As sinewy as biltong, as narrow  
As the path around her house  
She keeps her pride intact,  
Fiercely erect, with both eyes, her hands, her feet  
Her half-blind crooked legs  
Intent on the unbending God  
Dazing her from above;  
The coast she hugs is cruel and comfortless.

Intolerant of so much of  
The champing, leering, breath-blown-on-to-old-chafed  
hands  
Snickering world, she keeps a short leash  
To her cupped bit, her palms held close  
Like a cat on a mat  
With a sharp scratch and a bite  
For those who love the light  
But find the source too cold . . .

Yet should you be stranded or unaided  
Or yield to temptation's bait  
Finding no answer from the decentralised  
Warmth you feel and covet all about  
She will not be gay or quick or glib  
But will lead you out  
Showing you how strait is the gate  
How good the reward.

Being strong, she knows the cold  
And fears it. As lonely as a prophet  
Her dogma rages unheeded  
Binding her Motherhood and sealing  
The scattered seed; And her house has known  
The deafening lights that now stands  
Exiled in age and marooned by her convictions,  
Its grief beaten into whispers.

Only the pupils interrupt her vigil  
The unwilling students of her clod-hopping  
Adopted tongue. How gratefully she goes  
Her plough-blades gleaming, towards those morning  
fields,  
Her fixed labours crossing the long afternoon  
Till a ripple of wind pushes  
The arid windmill far back in her old Dutch veins  
And she rises absorbed, her self-hood grinded to a wave  
of light.

Soon, they are gone and her waiting  
Resumes. The tall shadows begin their evening task  
Of flagging off the jagged  
Or unrepentant intruders: The burrows  
Are warm and glad about her bones where she tunnels  
Deep in her body's mistake: And within she prays  
For that abrupt landslide, the huge mountain  
Or rectifying darkness, now all but level with her sight.

PERSEUS ADAMS

---