

inch nearer the goal of the common society. Therefore I am compelled to say, however fantastic the policy may seem to be, that it seems to indicate that *for the first time in conventional white politics*, a number of representative white politicians have begun to grant the possibility of a common society, and have begun to grant the possibility of the creation of a parliament representative —whether by universal franchise or not — of all the people of South Africa.

I would expect to incur heavy criticisms from some quarters for imagining that there is anything hopeful about this. I realise that this is a forward policy with a thousand built-in safeguards. But up till now conventional white policy has been all safeguards. I realise that in terms of the new U.P. policy the white parliament need never cede sovereignty. But having lived my political life on small mercies, I count this another.

I may say that I disclaim any right to speak for REALITY' I am writing over my own name because I doubt if any member of our editorial board could write on this subject the kind of anonymous editorial that it is our practice to publish.

This new policy can obviously be used in two diametrically opposed ways. It can be argued on the platteland that the sovereign white parliament need never cede sovereignty if it does not wish to. It can be argued in the cities — some cities — or some parts of some cities — that at last some hope is being held out to the voiceless people of our country. One is quite aware of this ambivalence.

Why then should a person like myself not condemn utterly and outright this new policy as a subterfuge, a fantasy, a fraud, a dodge to get back into power? The reason is that though the policy may be these things to some members of the U.P., it is not so to all. I repeat that some have at last got the message that the days of white domination are drawing to an end. I concede the possibility that violence may recommend itself to many as the only possible solution of the white-domination impasse. But I myself am morally and temperamentally unable to take part in violence nor can I believe that it holds the solution to our difficulties. My hope — very deep — for the greater part of my life has been that white South Africans should be converted to righteousness. I can't give it up now. If a respectably large section of the electorate — with whom I have had so little in common — should at last concede the possibility of a common society, that is for me a small mercy.

Let me conclude by repeating that this common society demands a common loyalty, and there can never be a common loyalty until there is a more equitable distribution of wealth, and a removal of unjust discriminations. Let the United Party make it abundantly and unequivocally clear that its white parliament will set about doing these very things, and that it is doing them in preparation for the common society. □

Alan Paton

ODE TO THE NEW REALITY

A Journal of Liberal and Radical Opinion

Dedicated to
Edgar Brookes —
old champion of the right
New champion of the left.

Sometimes I was a glad lib
Sometimes I was a sad lib
No more I'll be a bad lib
For now I am a rad lib.

I never was a mad rad
I would have made a bad rad
Although I hate the glib rad
Myself am now a lib rad.

Lib now takes its sabbatical
But I'll not be fanatical
I shall remain pragmatICAL
Though I am now a radical.

No more I'll lie and fiberal
Nor talk a lot of gibberal
Nor will I quake and quiberal
I now am a rad liberal.

I really now have had lib
Now that I am a rad lib
I pledge to the new REALITY
My firm and true feality.

A.P.