

## **FRAGMENTATION** in the World; fragments of my thoughts.

‘Pessimism of the Intellect and Optimism of the Mind’ – Antonio Gramsci.

**USA:** From arrogant war-maker of the world to war-monger-dictator of the world; demanding Ukraine's natural resources; wanting Greenland and more is no less than a return to crude colonialism! ‘America über alles’ is in the end fatal for the people of the US, but how much else will they destroy as they go down? Untergang and darkness!

To be what it is, the USA has destroyed the UNO system and its treaties and agencies. Global South and BRICS: now is the time to build a new international mediation and peace framework!

The resurgent call for the armaments industry to grow, is the most criminal action against the environment- the entire planet is under threat! The bombs dropped on Gaza equates to four atomic bombs; nothing else compares. Accused are: the USA/Israel, NATO, Russia, Germany, the UK, France and many more. The race to wipe each other out, and with all else that lives and grows has never been more acute. South Africa also stands accused. **Denel SA's** state-owned arms manufacturer – half owned by German Rheinmetall, with the Ichikowitz Paramount Group and their suppliers, all need investigating and then charged with war, here in SA. They might say they sell to arms buyers, like the UAE, but that is just the ruse to dodge the accusation that they are in fact supplying Israel, Saudi Arabia, Myanmar and others. We should demand to know how our arms industry contributes to the killing fields in Palestine, Sudan, Yemen and others.

A most valuable book I just read – and encourage you to read – is by South African born, Gavin Evans. I knew his father! The title: **White supremacy – a brief history of hatred**, published by Jonathan Ball, SA. He traces the web-based roots and the current resurgence of White right-wing thinking globally – from its heart in the USA, to the shootings of civilians in Norway to New Zealand. Importantly he shows how White supremacist thinking, including South Africa promotes their connected ‘othering’: anti-Semitism. Let us once more, learn from this. The current conflation of White fascist thought with Zionist fascist action should not confuse us; but together they are a most deadly force for now.

Lesotho:

“I mean, who has ever heard of this place?” said Trump and then slapped the highest tariff globally on Lesotho (before the whim that reduced it again). And Musk wants to operate one of his space operations in the Lesotho mountains. What a way to negotiate! Or is it because the manufacturing industry in Lesotho is based on China or India investments or both?

## **South Africa:**

*Solidariteit* and *AfriForm*: well-funded, white, Afrikaans, reactionary and racist organisations – an Apartheid remnant is rearing its head once more. They did not feel defeated when democracy replaced authoritarian and race rule in our country. I have heard it said that they feel they were never unconditionally defeated like Nazi Germany was, but instead, negotiated the ending of Apartheid and hence need not yield more than what the written deal entailed. This connects to their claim that the land is theirs. So much **unfinished business!** The racist former perpetrator did not learn or change! The justice of land reparations cannot be ignored. Similarly the justice for those killed and maimed and traumatized, finally and now only brought to court must not be further delayed! Land. We must stand up for justice not affected yet. (By the same token, the SABC RSG should review its relationship with AfriForum as a ‘commentator’ on international affairs.)

Trump's racist terminology fits well with Ernst Roets and Kallie Kriel, the two men who lead the Afrikaans racist comeback; pretending they want asylum in the USA. They pose as the victimized, but they are un-reconstructed supremacists inciting tension race/colour tensions in our country now. Their victimhood claims relate to the newly enacted Land Expropriation Act and the 'Bela' Act (the latter deals with language use in schools). Under the shroud of minority rights they seek disproportionate advantage based on historic colonial advantage; the stuff they told racist Trump was causing their violent decimation and hence their need be treated as refugees in the USA. DA collusion or silences are opportunistic. So are the plethora of new upstart parties – a phenomenon of the failures of the ruling party.

It is an affront that they have access to lobby the maniacal Trump to peddle lies whilst our Ambassador is expelled! They can say about others what they want, but we, especially we when we are of another colour or other attribute must pussy-foot around them. It is sick. "It is not in our interests to alienate the USA" I hear them say. To this I respond: As the Empire falters, let the Global South stand up! AfriForum and Solidariteit should be charged with treason!

May progressive white Afrikaners (like Max du Preez and the Betereinders (not Bittereinders)) do what progressive Jewry around the world, including South Africa, have done and are acting out each day. South African Jews for a Free Palestine – I say with immense thanks – make group judgements by anti-Semites more difficult. Afrikaners also often condemned as a uniform group should learn from this. Recently I listened to DRC dominee, Dr Johannes Mouton. He made it clear that Kriel and Roets do not speak for him. We need these voices to be heard. "They never moved beyond Apartheid thinking", are the 'othering' words I have heard being uttered now!

There is another reason for the puffed-up return of white race politics: The abysmal rule of the ANC over the past 3 decades. Whilst an ANC elite is getting richer, without blinking, they continue their betrayal of the down-trodden in whose name they fought the liberation struggle. Misrule, wholesale corruption and arrogance is creating an unstable country; low-level civil war by another name is evident in townships throughout the country. Our socio-economic pyramid is steeper than anywhere else in the world! And getting worse! Shame on you ANC! Your new-found power and wealth was outsourced to you by the previous SA and global capitalist elite – and you swallowed it without demure despite having pretended until you got power, that you were pursuing socialism. Shame on the SACP who cheer-leads this sell-out! Eventually you will be remembered for this historic betrayal! Your sell-out to a Thatcherite market economy without the slightest of constraints marks you as power-seekers without regard to the people who fought for their dignity and a worthy place that provides work, a home and functioning services.

### **SA Foreign policy:**

My accusing the ANC of betrayal, does not extend to important parts of its foreign policy. Independent civil society should voice our support for the assertion of the Global South. More than that we should state loudly our support for the Government taking Israel to the International Court of Justice. Whatever the hostility to this action, I have no doubt that history is on our side when it gets to be written. Our former Foreign Minister, Naledi Pandor should be honoured for her pioneering part in this.

My own liberation from a family with roots in German colonial genocide, the holocaust, and then my Apartheid upbringing, I became a willing advocate of what I was told the state of Israel was. Yet in 1968, as NUSAS VP I attended an international student conference in Natanya, Israel. But there were doubts. I ultimately voted against the resolution our hosts put forward: to encourage Israel to treat their newly occupied territories as annexed. When I was a guest at socialist Kibbutzim's I thought these young social experiments would ultimately serve a just cause. My grasp was inadequate. Eventually I saw what are parallels to SA Apartheid. Whether soft or hard Zionism, unless there is justice and equity for all who live, and who lived, between 'the river and sea', the current Israel is on a journey of self-destruction. Several years ago at UCT, attending a workshop led by Ilan Pappé, he clarified matters finally for me. And then the statement by Rev Frank Chikane, a man the Apartheid SBs tried to kill, that what happens in Gaza and on

the West Bank is far worse than was experienced by the victims of Apartheid, left no space for a benign view of this unfolding genocide.

Now I have added a further insight: Apartheid displaced people in the cruelest ways, but this does not compare to the Israeli objective of obliterating Palestinians – maybe allowing some to exist forever as refugees somewhere else. Israel is on a self-destruction path; how can a former victim become a perpetrator? Whatever the trauma or the Herzl colonial plan, I cry rage at what is happening. I cannot have committed myself to just causes all my life and let this fascist atrocity happen (in real time) in front of my eyes.

### **Values vs political programmes:**

The major political parties espouse programmes and pass pious resolutions promising delivery to the poor, be it through crass capitalist investment hopes or through fatuous better service delivery. The cult of demagogic leaders is especially evident in the MK party – it is not left leaning! And it is ridiculous to use the name of the former armed wing of the liberation movement as a party in a democratic state. It's leaders come across as self-seeking and mis-using and mis-informing the disaffected who remain poor etc.

My gripe list goes on:

- The most unequal country in the world – and getting more unequal each day. We need a **wealth tax!** Why can the holy cow of more and more profit not be touched? When is enough - enough? As extraction for profit takes on new forms, (Techno Feudalism – Yanis Varoufakis) we need the debate that challenges the empire of the rich. If we cannot flatten the economic-social pyramid that is condemning the poor each day, can we reverse or put a halt to the selfish, self-congratulatory smugness of the rich to extract even more? How? When will the left stand up and provide an articulate alternative? What have we to do to stop delivering the disaffected (notably from within the ANC) to fascist-inclined MK or EFF parties?
- The failure to provide an alternative, within democratic parameters, indicts us all. We are allowing democracy to fail. We watch as the class alliance of the rich white and rich black takes shape, but nothing happens on the left, nothing progressive! Is the GNU the ground where **ANC-DA flirtation** takes place before engagement and ultimate marriage?
- If the President (the **Phala-Phala** unresolved 2000 debacle) is no example moral virtue, don't expect those he rules to not live up an unselfish, caring, compassionate standard. ANC corruption has undermined the morality in our country (as did Apartheid which was racist immorality). The whole-sale breakdown of law and order – most especially in the poorest areas is palpable. It starts with ignoring the rules of the road (SA statistically now has the un-safest roads in the world), to routine murders in the grimmest growth of all: protection rackets.
- The **Common Good**: we pay tax in order that public services are rendered adequately and fairly – across the spectrum, especially for those in greatest need. The local police commissioner in our area observed at a recent rate-payers meeting that: over the past 30 years the number of people living in this area has doubled but our police numbers have halved. If they had instead been deployed to areas most in need of good policing I would not argue, but crime and murder is escalating in their area most of all. **The tax supply-line and the tax-utilization equation is no longer working.** Trust in giving, whether by way of tax or VAT, to serve the common good, is broken. Weak government, as much as corrupt government is to blame. Instead the rich indulge in giving to charity; a sure way to keep gross inequality in place. An adequate state would tax proportionately the rich and super rich such that inequality is reduced. And yes, we should guard against what the UK discovered became a 'nanny-state' that did not change the fraught social structure. Here we don't even have an approach – just facile words by politicians.
- Our supposed moral guardians, **faith institutions**, once again are nowhere to be seen. Remember, they only stood up against Apartheid very, very late in the struggle. – There were always individual exceptions and it is not my intention to take anything away from their courage and guidance!
- What we need most of all is educational outcomes that make us an equal amongst nations. The rich, White and Black get their return by sending their children to private schools, but the rest are ignored. Trevor Huddleston, when serving a parish in Sophiatown in the 1950s, recalled how a

little boy pulled at his cassock. Huddleston asked: what would you most want to get? The little boy answered: a trumpet. Huddleston gave him a trumpet a few weeks later. The little boy grew to become Hugh Masekela! – How much talent is never discovered, never tempted, never found, because our schools don't deliver!

Be reminded, each day: sustain and feed that which provides optimism of the mind. However small the flame of justice and égalité right now, always nurture it, not by being passive, but by doing something that gives to the common good.

Thank you if you read this Newsletter, written during dark times. Feel free to challenge, disagree or add insight! Despite hitting the big 8zero later this year, I want to remain a learner, a student.

(I've never used '!' as often as in this essay. A sign of my mood, or of the times I live in? Sigh...)

Yours,

Horst.