

(Identity, November, 1972)
Bruce McGuinness

Into the auditorium - fat with dogoodism - full with the notables of civic righteousness, smelling thickly of welfarism and fundraising, know-allism, he walked, young, bright, confident, proud, dignified and angry. For years he has heard the speeches in this square, white Bora ring, the speeches of inane nothingness pouring from the mouths of whites and white-made pseudo black leaders! The speeches continue to flow in thick syrupy gluelike innuendo. Rhetoric, pouring forth with the regularity of monotonous, computerised factory-made verbosity. "Shut up"...there is silence, the incessant flow of empty words has ceased. He stands in their midst, tall, and beautiful - not since before Cook has a black man stood so tall. He is silent, for but a moment, yet to the shopfront stooges of white hypocrisy, the moment is an eternity. Then he speaks, "I am Black Power, that is my name, Black Power, I personify 200 years of living death. I have listened to your white lies and your black compromises. I have seen you, white man praise my nobility with you follied lips then, slay my children, my brothers, and my sisters, my whole with your colourless, callous hands and YOU! my black brethren, YOU who have helped the white butcher with your mealy-mouthed apathy, are less than the animalistic white assassins you purport to aspire to. I come here today to give fair warning. The day of reckoning has arrived. I have just slayed the white myth of black subservience and docility. Be warned white butcher and black quisling, today the black Phoenix has arisen, no matter how many times you attempt to kill me, out of the fire I will arise again and again until I have defeated you. Not with guns, not with your bombs, not with your chemicals. But with time, for soon your world will crumble. At your own hands, you, white man, have been appointed your own executioner. We the blacks of the earth are rising to witness the spectacle of your self-destruction and when you have completed your destiny, I will go among the ruins, to heal and mend your victims and then it will be as it was before your rampage.

"I seek not equality, I wish not to share of your plastic play world. You will see my prophecy bear fruit, you will see me in every town, in every city, you will see me on the face of every black youth, on the face of every old man and woman, and you will feel me in your every nerve. You will see me and feel me, until your body cries out for mercy. Be warned thieves and murderers. Be warned. While time is on your side, be warned. Return to them, their heritage, before they take it. Be warned white man, black traitor...Uncle Tom is dead."

Then and only then, does the tall, black creature move... slowly, to the front of the auditorium...he pauses, then passes proudly through the doors...the doors to freedom.

The beginning.

There have been black men, trying to get other blacks to protest on the streets since the mid-'sixties. Attempting to give rise to the black upsurge and hasten the overthrow of white supremacy. The recent "black moratorium", has shown the fruits of their labour. In Melbourne, on the 14th of July, 1972, at the corner of Elizabeth and Collins Sts at 6.05 p.m., I stood at the head of the black and white mass. There were 2,000 people behind me; between the restless mass and myself, there were 100 blacks, blacks of all age groups. However the majority of these were under 25 years of age. In front of me, there was a space of about ten yards. On the periphery of that space, stood a teeming mass of blue uniforms.

The mass wanted to go ahead through the uniforms. The uniforms wanted the mass to turn left (up Collins St). I was undecided...hesitant...I had to make a decision. Go ahead and confront the uniforms with the possibility of conflict, or turn left? The onus was too much! I kept seeing those Brisbane blacks, unarmed, being smashed by the police. I looked about me and watched the black kids, they watched back, waiting for my decision...everything seemed terribly quiet... it shouldn't have been quiet...we were in the middle of the city, at peak hour, participating in a protest. Suddenly the noise returned. I then decided not to make a decision, but to let the blacks make it instead...I turned to them, and shouted, "Where will we go? Ahead or left?" They answered almost as one, "Straight ahead," My skin went cold, but still I perspired, I said to myself, if we go ahead we will get smashed. I kept seeing the blacks in Brisbane being smashed, especially the kids...I had to think fast. They would listen to me. So I argued with them (the blacks) and talked them into turning left. But what if I hadn't been there? What would they have done? I am convinced that they would have gone ahead and forced the uniforms either to let them pass, or be dragged away. The point I am making is that I am essentially a passivist; if the uniforms had charged, I would have reacted violently. However, I was not prepared to initiate any violence. Those other blacks with me would, and will assert themselves when the next confrontation occurs. I am sure that soon we will witness the "New Black" movement, doing its thing. This is not a threat, it's a warning. Sixteen per cent of the Victorian Black population marched on Friday, the 14th of July, 1972. Aborigines constitute approximately 0.25% of the Victorian population. Now if the Black population in Victoria was as high as the white population, then 16% of 2,500,000 would be 400,000 people, and we would have seen 400,000 black people marching in the Moratorium. The 100 blacks who marched that day (some estimates state that there were 150 blacks) constitute 16% of Victoria's black population. Imagine what would happen if 16% of the Australian black people were put together in one place at the same time, and marched in protest. Anthropological research statistics claim that the black Australian population will double in 13 years. If we blacks can stop the systematic genocide of black infants (the infant mortality rate is one in six kids between birth and two years of age) then the population could well treble in 20 years' time.

The current population of blacks in Australia is estimated at 140,000, three times that is 420,000. Now the white oppressors of blacks, are doing nothing for blacks regarding their rights. So the blacks are discontented - (is that an understatement!), imagine what they will be like in 20 years' time. More wise to the tricks of the white men. Better educated in the ways of the white men. Access to the white man's technology will be less difficult. More militant, better educated (on both white and black values), and more completely disenchanting with the white way. Every day, more and more blacks are realising that a backward step is a forward step, and that the white way is the wrong way.

In conclusion, just one or two other points need to be said - "Whitey, it used to be your ball-game." But today, the blacks of Australia have torn up your book of rules, and printed their own. The title of the new book is "Black is beautiful, right on brothers and sisters, and screw you whitey".

Many white (and some disillusioned blacks) believe that blacks can attain freedom, through a black and white revolutionary coalition. That is just plain R.S. Oppression is just as bitter a pill to swallow under a socialist regime, as it is under a capitalist regime. In other words, we blacks must smash racism, before we consider

letting whites piggyback on our backs to aid their cause. I agree that capitalism is a pig system, but capitalism is kindergarten stuff compared to racism.

I know many Marxist, Leninist Maoists, as racist as any capitalist I know. If we can smash racist doctrines, under a capitalist system, then let's do it. I am sure that freedom from racism would be just as sweet, no matter what political set-up we exist in. We must think black, we must educate our kids black, we must reject white racist values, and above all we must reject the white education system. Black Power in Australia is real, no matter what the stooges for white power say, Black Power is here. The only way we can have powered Black Power is to "put it together".

FOOTNOTE: Bruce McGuinness can be contacted at ASCHOL, Monash University, Melbourne, Victoria.