

THE PERSONAL OPINION OF THE EDITOR

Peoples of many races, beliefs and nationalities will soon be stopping work for a few days in acknowledgement of the annual mid-winter commercial jamboree traditionally called Christmas. Those peoples will be saying to friend and foe alike with the same token sincerity the well worn words, "Happy Christmas". In other words, either be happy Christ is born or have a good holiday.

If one treats Christmas as the birth of the personification of the principle embodying 'neighbourliness', remember that in many nations as a matter of policy and as a matter of fact that principle is not practised.

Consider those nations where human beings of particular sects, creeds and colours are actively persecuted, suppressed and deprived by selfish persecutors who are activated by cruel, machiavellian governments.

Whatever the official reasons for such oppression, there can be no real justification in the eyes of Christ-mass celebrants or humanists who maintain that every adult human being of sound mind and provided his conduct harms nobody else should have perfect freedom, legal and social, to act freely and be judged by the consequences.

Persecution by a powerful minority is worldwide and particularised in North West Brazil, Portugese Guinea, Angola, Northern Ireland, Greece, Rhodesia, Czechoslovakia and The Republic of South Africa. Also there are states where the nominal majority will not tolerate minority groups. Whitehall is a bit of both.

To alter that pattern is almost impossible for never will a popular unarmed uprising depose military power. In the event of direct confrontation, the sword is mightier than the pen. Czechoslovaks learnt from the Hungarians that goodwill and reason cannot defeat extreme political militarism.

The frustration felt when the individual is swamped by the faceless, inquisitive bureaucrat is familiar to us all. Imagine that bureaucrat to be a tyrant with a rifle.

You will perhaps be curious why these thoughts appear in the magazine of the rugby club of a small city. However, a pattern begins to evolve when the words rugby, Springboks and demonstration are mentioned.

Facts reveal that in the Republic of South Africa, inter alia, there is deliberate, violent, repression of human beings. The victims of such anti-human behaviour cannot by vote remove their tormentors - they cannot vote, nor can they publish their objections - editors and others have been imprisoned; nor can they preach against the regime - more prisoners prove this; what can they do? A fight will be bloody and costly in terms of human life. Without a change in their circumstances they will fight. After 1789 and 1917 when?

The Springbok touring team is the personification of the intolerable attitude of mind by the South African government in so far as the selection involved the manifestation of those principles endorsed and practised by the government. To those who naively whimper that sport and politics are not related, it is agreed that two sportsmen embodying the original olympic ideals are not shackled by political chains and should not want to see other sportsmen so restricted. However, any team called by and referred to as a national team is a political representative and ambassador for the policies of its home country.

All people interested in rugby want to watch the best possible rugby played by the best. The Springbok side is picked not only by playing merit but also by subjective selection based on unilateral and oppressive political policies.

When these policies are carried on the backs of sportsmen to peoples in more tolerant nations, these peoples have the opportunity to object to these policies on behalf of the silenced victims. This is why there are genuine objectors demonstrating the feeling to South Africa's government by impeding the progress of the Springboks. There is not much else they can do.

I abhor the policies the Springboks represent. I sympathise with those demonstrating their objections. I understand and appreciate that any instances of violence are (apart from fringe hooligans) born out of mental frustration nurtured by stubborn, prejudiced administrators.

These instances whether by way of stubborn resistance, retaliation or even aggression are harmless and insignificant when compared with the evil and violence practised by those whom the Springboks represent. These demonstrations are the humanitarian thin end of the wedge which will become bloody and resolute as well as bold.

I have resigned from the Worcestershire C.C.C. for its recent attitude apparently motivated more by materialism and tour profits than humanity.

One word for the Police - Poor human beings caught between objectors to violent oppression and the agents of the oppressors. Between the proverbial devil and the deep blue sea; thanked by the bullies and cursed by the agents of the bullied. They need the sympathy and understanding of us all. No policeman should be made to safeguard the Springboks.

I am sorry that rugby players are creating the appearance of condoning political bullies.

I only hope that this Christmas and in our individual, freely chosen manner, we can pray, hope and act for peace on earth, goodwill and tolerance towards all men in all nations, states and homes. What else can be done? The future is not bright.

David S. Hallmark.

IMMEDIATE FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

- Saturday 20th December, 1969 - KNOCK-OUT DARTS COMPETITION after the home matches and at the Club House; free for Club members.
- Saturday 27th December, 1969 - CLUB DANCE featuring "Source of Power". Top up your Christmas celebrations at your Club.
- Wednesday 31st December, 1969 - NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY. Start 8.30 p.m. Free Food - yes, free food - free admission to Club Members - late extension applied for.

LONGDISTANCE FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

Since the November Edition, the Centenary Ball Committee has released details of their proposals for the Ball to be held at the Winter Gardens, Malvern during the Centenary Year.

Hire of T.W.G.: £105; Buffet and Wine for 400 @ £2 per head: £800; Main Band: £300; Supporting Groups: £150; Incidentals: £100.

These figures when broken down are £2 for the food; 15/- for the main band; and approximately 5/- for each of the supporting groups, hire of T.W.G. and likely incidentals. That sounds like very good value and the Committee are warmly congratulated.