

## PASSAGE BY SIR ALFRED SHERMAN

MOST PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY REGRET THE DEEP RIFT BETWEEN PARTIES WHICH DOES NOT REFLECT CORRESPONDINGLY DEEP DIVISIONS AMONG PEOPLE BUT, ON THE CONTRARY, IS IN DANGER OF CAUSING THEM INFLAMING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST WHICH ARISE IN ANY SOCIETY. HOW CAN WE TORIES, WHO ARE ALWAYS PRIDING OURSELVES ON BEING A NATIONAL PARTY, CONTRIBUTE TO MAKING POLITICAL LIFE LESS CONFLICTIVE? HOW CAN WE RESTORE SOME MEASURE OF COMMON LANGUAGE IN POLITICS, MUTUAL TOLERANCE AND ACCOMMODATION? HOW CAN WE RESTORE THE SENSE THAT OTHER PARTIES AND PEOPLE WHO DO NOT AGREE WITH US ARE OPPONENTS AND NOT ENEMIES?

THE WAY NOT TO DO THIS IS TO ADOPT OUR OPPONENTS' IDEAS AND TERMINOLOGY, FOR THEY ARE THE SEEDBED OF DIVISIVENESS. THE CULT OF CLASS STRUGGLE IS DEEPLY ROOTED IN THE SOCIALIST IDEA OF CLASSES, THE BELIEF THAT PEOPLE ARE FIRST AND FOREMOST MEMBERS OF A SOCIAL CLASS, AND MUST THEREFORE SHAPE THEIR POLITICAL ALLEGIANCE AND ACTIONS ACCORDINGLY. A SECOND MAJOR SOURCE OF POLITICAL CONFLICTIVITY IN OUR SOCIETY IS THE BELIEF THAT UNLIMITED DEPENDENCE ON AN ALL-POWERFUL STATE IS DESIRABLE. FOR THIS INVARIABLY LEADS TO THE EMERGENCE <sup>AND</sup> /SOLIDIFYING OF EGOISTIC GROUPS SEEKING TO GENERATE AND EXPLOIT POLITICAL MUSCLE, SO THAT THEY CAN TAKE OUT MORE AND PUT LESS INTO THE STATE JACKPOT. AN ALL-PERVASIVE STATE GENERATES COLLECTIVE SELFISHNESS AND CORPORATE EGOISM, BECAUSE

/ EGOISM

EGOISM OF A GROUP BECOMES A SURER ROAD TO ACQUISITION THAN HARD WORK INITIATES OR THE OTHER FREEDOMS AND TALENTS WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIAL AND INDIVIDUAL WELLBEING.

No. WE MUST FIND A TORY WAY OF DIALOGUE WITH ELECTORS AND OTHER PARTIES, BASED ON CONSIDERATION OF ENDS AND MEANS. LET US FIND AS MUCH COMMON GROUND AS WE CAN WITH ALL OUR FELLOW CITIZENS ON THE ENDS AND OBJECTIVES WE ALL SEEK. THEN LET US EXAMINE THE MEASURES WHICH HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN DURING THE POST-WAR ERA TO ACHIEVE THESE ENDS. LET US ASK WHETHER THESE MEASURES SUCCEEDED IN TERMS OF THEIR OWN STATED OBJECTIVES. IF THEY FAILED TO ACHIEVE THEIR OBJECTIVES WE MUST ASK WHY THEY FAILED. THEN WE CAN THINK AFRESH ABOUT THE BEST MEANS OF ACHIEVING THESE COMMON ENDS. LET US EXAMINE THIS COUNTRY OF OURS QUITE FRANKLY TO ASK WHAT IS RIGHT WITH IT AND WHAT IS WRONG. THERE IS A GOOD DEAL WHICH IS WRONG. WE HAVE BEEN IN POWER FIVE YEARS AND WE HAVE ONLY JUST STARTED DOWN THE ROAD OF REGENERATION. WE SHALL BE ON THAT ROAD ALL OUR LIVES AT BEST. EVEN WERE WE TO SUCCEED IN RIGHTING ERRORS SINCE THE WAR WE SHOULD STILL HAVE MUCH LEEWAY TO MAKE.

I SEE US ENTERING A NEW ERA OF REFORM, COMPARABLE TO THAT WHICH OUR FORBEARS INITIATED DURING THE SECOND HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. THIS ENTAILS MUCH MORE THAN RIGHTING MISTAKES AND ABUSES. IT MEANS POSITIVELY GIVING SCOPE FOR THE NEW POTENTIAL GENERATED BY SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS AND BY OUR BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF HUMAN SOCIETY'S WORKINGS.

AT BEST SUCH AN ERA OF REFORM WILL REQUIRE SEVERAL PARLIAMENTS. BUT BY THEN NEW PROBLEMS AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES WILL HAVE ARISEN.

THE BRITISH PUBLIC IS READIER THAN EVER TO ACCEPT OUR MESSAGE. WE ARE A PRACTICAL NATION. WE ASK: DOES IT WORK IN PRACTICE? IF NOT, WHY NOT? IDEAS, DOCTRINES, THEORIES, ALL WELL AND GOOD, BUT TO ILLUMINATE REALITY NOT TO SUBSTITUTE FOR IT, AND IDEAS HAVE TO ACCORD NOT ONLY WITH REALITIES BUT ALSO WITH OUR FEELINGS AND BELIEFS, WHAT BURKE WOULD HAVE CALLED PREJUDICES. AND I BELIEVE WE ARE NOW <sup>MORE</sup> IN TUNE WITH THE BRITISH PEOPLE THAN EVER BEFORE WITH THEIR BELIEFS AND FEELINGS BECAUSE WE ARE TRUE TO OURSELVES.

AFTER 35 YEARS, SOCIALISM IS ON THE WAVE. BUT THIS MUST NOT MEAN ANY RELENTING IN OUR QUEST TO INCREASE THE SUM OF HUMAN HAPPINESS, TO ALLEVIATE THE TRAGEDY INHERENT IN THE HUMAN CONDITION, AND TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR ALL PEOPLE TO GIVE ALL THEIR BEST.

from A.S.

SS.

Notes for Blackpool

Our commitment to well being.

Institutions must serve people, not become ends in themselves.

Let us analyse calmly the differences between ourselves and Labour over the welfare state. But to do so we must begin from the common ground. I believe that we are committed to many of the same goals: we are, after all, one society. The trouble is that Socialists have become fixated increasingly on means chosen a generation ago, and are unable to ask the vital question: has the path we have travelled taken us in the right direction? If not, how do we make the right adjustments.

We are all committed to the goal of greater well being, increasing the sum of human happiness. We have no dogmas, no blueprints, only common sense and a few guidelines garnered from our understanding of our own history and that of mankind generally. The welfare state, as such, will be judged by how far it has advanced well being, particularly of the poorest, the most vulnerable. The national health service, the nationalised health service, was not instituted as an end in itself, or as a benefit for staff. It was instituted in order to ensure that all our citizens enjoyed adequate health care. Have we ever come near to realising this?

The "Black Report" says no. <sup>"Black"</sup> This is not a description, but a personal name, though it paints a black picture. Sir something Black was chief medical officer at the DHSS. He was joined by a couple of scientists and two pop sociologists of the lunny left, Townsend and Cyril Smith. (This is relevant, because they loaded the report with way-out socialistic panaceas, which Black and scientific membership swallowed, proving that Ennals had appointed all socialists to the committee. This lends weight to their condemnation of the workings of the NHS over thirty years.)

The Black report dealt not only with the NHS's record but with the nation's state of health, trying to take into account a much wider range of factors than just health care. It draws the conclusion that over the last thirty years discrepancies in health standards between the classes have grown, and that the lower classes are in a terrible state. I recognise that the NHS has failed in this and other respects. (Any competent person could draw you up a summary in an hour.)

The report shows radical structural defects which no amount of extra resources will cure, indeed they may worsen it. We know of course the problem of mobilising state resources, hence the view that we must find ways not only of better use of given resources, but of allowing members of the public - which is what is meant by 'private' - who can afford to fend for themselves in whole or in part to do so, freeing state resources for those in most need, and indeed enriching state resources. Starting from where we are now, we are seeking such practical ways, of fruitful cooperation between state and private, for the common good. This is the logic of the mixed economy.

The nation is committed to pensions which will permit the elderly to live in comfort and dignity. The commitment has grown since the early years of this century. We should never go back on it. But to be intellectually honest, we have to ask the perennial question: how can we maximise support while minimising dependence. Because if we simultaneously make more and more elderly people wholly or mainly dependent on state welfare, we shall defeat our own objective, or common national objectives of two generations.

For by increasing dependence, undermining independent provision for old age, we increase the burdens placed on the working generation which must support old and young. This means less to go round, whereas the aim of policy should be to create a situation in which there is more to go round, not less.

Social welfare was designed to alleviate poverty and failure. It should be a safety net, not a snare. What has been happening, is a professionalisation of welfare, a large administrative bureaucracy increasingly concerned with professional status, budgets, politics. The poor, the disoriented, those who need helping on their way, become the objects of policy, pawns in the struggle.

We have to go back and ask: how best can we help our fellow human beings, and, where possible, help them to help themselves? There are no easy answers. If there were a simple blueprint for utopia, the human race would have discovered it a long time ago. The quality of compassion is not strained. It entails thinking, re-thinking, assessing what we have done until now, and asking if we could not do better.

I should like to see our first spell in government regarded in retrospect as the beginning of a great new age of reform, preparing Britain to take the world lead as we prepare to enter the twenty first century, just as our forebears did in the middle of the nineteenth. Lord Acton said that only a foolish conservative would judge the present by the standards of the past, only a foolish liberal would judge the past by the standards of the present. The nineteenth century was a great age of reform, progress, leading from where they began to where they handed over, making Britain a model admired and emulated the in much of the world. Since then, we should have moved on, we have not moved on as far as we could have done. Our aim must be to move on faster, from where we are to where we should be, and once again take the lead. We should not say: if it is not done elsewhere, why should it be done here?, but: how can we improve the lot of mankind, starting here and now?

other subject: what the party can do, and that means each member.

In local government, defence, recasting welfare, we need a much greater effort by Conservatives nationally and locally, to create understanding and rally support for government policies, in general and in their particular, local applications. One example is Lady Olga Maitland's "women for defence campaign", whose enthusiasm made up for lack of experience, and turned the tide against the CND. Another would be in local government, to help Patrick carry through his essential surgery against the opposition of vested interests, including, unfortunately, some of our own people who ride on the gravy train.

Are you interested?