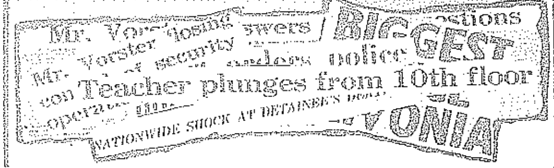


I shudder for those still in detention

TO DATE 17 people have died while being detained by the Security Police. Not only did one of those detained over the weekend die, but another ended up in hospital three or four days after his detention, it makes one shudder for those unfortunates still being detained.

In spite of these horrifying facts the overwhelming majority of South African Whites return to the polls again and again to elect people who explicitly or implicitly support detention without trial.

Judicial inquiries are all very well. Increased contact with unprejudiced doctors etc. is not enough. It is the whole system, in fact the whole of South African Society that must be changed.

Do the three million White elite in South Africa not realise that they are individually guilty of the atrocities that make their fatherland the pariah of the free world?

They cannot plead ignorance, these matters have received extensive publicity in papers such as the Rand Daily Mail.

Until we have a free society in which all races can participate in the Government and have at least equal educational and economic opportunity, repressive legislation will be necessary. A government which does not rule by the will of the people must rule by force.—KOBUS DU PLESSIS, Northways, Hillbrow, Johannesburg.

Change exam times, so critics of police action can protest

CIRCUMSTANCES being what they are in South Africa, one would not wish to draw any odious comparisons with the police forces in fascist and authoritarian states.

One might rather turn to reproach the English language universities for their [illegible] and with an appeal to some of the more thoughtful and resourceful of their intelligentsia to use their reputed mental faculties in an original manner.

Terms

It need hardly be pointed out that at the ends of terms (when it is difficult to make any concerted protest or demands for legal justice) and very often at crucial exam times, there are police swoops and arrests, mainly affecting teachers, church people, students and lecturers and people connected with the more liberal kind of publications and organisations.

Further, a large proportion of these people are connected, either themselves, or through members of their families, with educational institutions which (particularly the English universities) are the last semi-effective bastions of protest, and of thought free from the extreme effects of Nationalist Government propaganda in South Africa.

Values

Surely then responsible academic leaders who can see more clearly what is being done to people and civilised values in South Africa, could use their gifts of intelligent reason and adaptability to weaken the effectiveness of these recurrent intimidatory police activities — at least in some faculties and departments.

This they might do by devising means of making the year's record more significant and exam times less crucial and in future enabling, if necessary, concerned and responsible people — including staff and students — to organise and demonstrate their abhorrence of such police state methods as have now, once again, been used, including the arrest of individuals with the usual refusal to allow any legal access or to give any information or reasons, not even to lawyers or anxious relatives or friends.

In this situation, end of term examination periods make conscientious Christians, academics, students and their families comparatively mute in the face of wide-spread intimidation, and hyper-vulnerable to the most calculatedly odious police methods.

Honest

The persons so widely affected are usually honest critics of apartheid who are only in very few cases charged and ever validly proved to have committed any true offence or crime.

The exam system already has its shortcomings and when it can be abused from outside to add effectiveness to police oppression and intimidation, then it is high time that a few enlightened academic heads got together to devise means of showing that unscrupulous cunning cannot win every move in the dirty game of political persecution.

A little intelligent reason and planning could obviate at least one small aspect of a politically rotten situation — i.e. the victimisation of a section of the population which tends to exercise what should be the legitimate right to oppose and criticise the Government, and at times of the academic year when circumstances rather make it appear that there is little general reaction. — PRO VERITAS, Durban.

Weep for Justice: R.I.P.

To Mrs. Hawa Timol:

Weep mother,
for the fruit of your love
fallen from the tree of stone,
weep for the earth
that caught his blood,
and for those who dig the grave:
weep for your child
and for his people.
Above all,
weep for the shattered fragment called JUSTICE
crushed beneath the jack-boot.

D. MATTERA, Johannesburg.

Fast with me . . .

DURING the past eight years, at least 17 people have died under mysterious circumstances, while being detained by the Security Police.

I am distressed by the occurrence of such events. I am also distressed by the fact that such events can be allowed to occur.

I ask all those who share my sympathies to join me in a 17-day fast, lasting from sunrise to sunset. This will begin on November 3 and last until November 19 to coincide with the last 17 days of the Fast of Ramadan. — GRAHAM FLAX, Regent Street, Yeoville, Johannesburg.

We're all to blame for his death

I HAVE BEEN deeply shocked and saddened by the death of Mr. Ahmed Timol.

Coming as it does at the end of the Rev. Wrankmore's fast, I would point to an utter contempt and disregard by the police for public opinion.

Each one of us is responsible for Mr. Timol's death.

We have, by our own actions, allowed a regime which permits such shocking happenings, to continue in power for 23 years.

If we did not vote for them, we have by our complacency and selfish laziness, allowed them to stay in office.

I would like to suggest that everyone, who personally feels the death of Mr. Timol, should be able to make a public gesture.

Could not a gift to Mr. Timol's school be considered in the form of additional amenities?

Let each one's contribution show all races in South Africa that indeed we do care and admit to our responsibility. — CONSCIENCE STRICKEN, P.O. Bryanston.

It's despicable and tragic

AS THIRD YEAR medical students, we cannot disguise our hurt and disgust that one of our colleagues, Mohammed Salim Essop, should suffer such arbitrary State action.

That he should be summarily arrested in the early hours of the morning two weeks before his final examinations is bad enough. That he should become acutely ill in the intervening days with no explanation, is ominous.

We find the circumstances of his sudden disappearance and unexpectedly severe illness quite unacceptable.

Salim, in our opinion, is a reasonable person and we feel the very fact that he is pursuing a career in medicine is indicative of his humanitarian ideals.

Little

Despite the fact that we can do very little, we remain firmly convinced that the events reflect a despicable action by the State and constitute a severe and tragic form of injustice.

— L. FRIEDMAN, M. RODWIN, S. BERBER, A. F. GREG, M. R. DAVEY, A. TAYLOR, C. R. BARLIN, L. S. MILNER, D. F. MACDONALD, R. J. ARMSTRONG, E. KLOPPER, J. MANN, C. KUER CHEONG, J. MALTZ, L. SINAI, M. JOFFE, A. KARPOS, J. COHEN, C. KAPLAN, S. L. DAVIDSON, O. C. SPARROW, A. L. USSHER, A. G. BLECLIN, B. A. CAPLAN, J. J. ACKERMANN, K. R. ELLION, D. BRAUDE, S. LIPSCHITZ, D. WEINSTEIN, N. N. WILLIAMS, B. TZAPPLER, K. RAW, T. GRIEVE, D. BAGGENHEMER, J. R. MORTON, M. R. GLENSHAW, R. W. MARTELL, D. A. MURRAY, S. E. GREEN, S. M. JOHNSTON, K. HAYBITTEL, J. PITCHER, D. E. COHEN, G. K. BALLENDEN, E. C. SCHUTZ, M. SEGEL, G. SCHNIDER, A. M. STEYN, A. TWOMEY, R. M. F. BERARD, C. F. ZEERVOGEL, E. COHEN, M. COREN, G. CORN, M. REINART, B. SANDLER, A. LEWIS, T. SWERDLOW, A. LEVITT, B. POSNIAK, J. S. TOBIAS, M. OLSPANGER, J. E. JOSEPH, M. R. DANSEY, J. SIMOES, J. ROBINSON, C. SCHMIDT, R. SCHAMROTIC, S. RABIN, M. FORMAN, L. SANDLER, D. T. N. IRVIN, R. HARRIES, M. C. FREED, M. HAHN, R. BREITZ, M. SETZEN, A. G. KAGAN.

Those Victorian inventors were not all zany

VICTORIAN INVENTIONS, by Leonard de Vries. London: John Murray.

WANT a moustache guard — delicately suspended from your nostrils and guaranteed to keep the trailing hairs out of your soup? Or a device to stop your wife from snoring? (Extended applications for this gag-like contraption are tactfully not recorded.)

Or a talking alarm clock which will shout "Wake up!, Get up!", or "It is now time to get up!", according to your personal preference.

If you are adventurously inclined perhaps you would rather have an aerial velocipede, enabling you to bicycle happily through the air; or better still, a "natural flying-machine", which will harness ten eagles to draw you through the ether?

Alas! These inventions are now out of stock, if indeed they ever (literally or figuratively) got off the ground.

It is the zany side of Victorian inventiveness — enhanced by authentic illustrations positively hilarious in their solemnity—that gives this book its most immediate appeal.

But it serves a more serious purpose in reminding us that, compared with the Victorians and their immediate successors, we are not a particularly innovative generation. As Peter Drucker has pointed out elsewhere, the 50 years that came to an end with the Second World War produced most of the inventions that underlie our modern industrial civilisation.

Mr. De Vries mentions a few in his introduction: "the typewriter (1867), the telephone (1876), the phonograph (1877), the electric incandescent lamp (1879) and, before the end of the century, the automobile, the electric tramcar and train, X-rays, the cinema, the wireless.

"Most electrical domestic appliances of today, such as hotplates, kettles, cooking pans and hot blankets, were shown at the exhibition held in Vienna in 1883, and the electric vacuum cleaner, the washing machine with spin-drying system and the electric dish washer were already in existence."

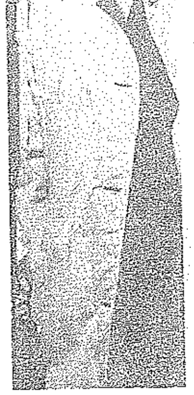
The author also points out that as early as 1847 a train running between London and Birmingham attained an average speed of 55 mph and a top speed of 75 mph (reaching there, Mr. Schoemann?) and that at the turn of the century there were more than 2-million registered telephone subscribers in the United States.

It is refreshing to know that there were environment nuts in those days too. Many well-known Frenchmen signed a petition denouncing the Eiffel Tower, which dwarfed all existing buildings in Paris, as "nothing less than a tremendous profanation of the arts." They were apparently unmoved by an engineer's ecstatic cry: "But, sir, it is a masterpiece without an equal!"

To one reader at least it comes as a surprise to learn that in 1883 ice-cutting on the Hudson River near New York was a highly organised industry with many ice stores holding up to 100,000 tons each, and that among the countries to which the ice was shipped was South Africa.

Whether read in a spirit of serious inquiry or viewed in the tradition of Heath Robinson and Emett, this is a splendid book and will prove a welcome accession to many coffee-tables.

J. N. McC.



Graham Greene, author of 'A Sort of Life' reviewed below.

His novels reflect his own life

A SORT OF LIFE, by Graham Greene (Bodley Head)

IT IS characteristic that Graham Greene, one of the most creative and successful of living English novelists, should end the first volume of his autobiography on a note of failure ("Failure . . . is a kind of death: the furniture sold, the drawers emptied, the removal van waiting like a hearse at the end of the lane to take one to a less expensive destination").

For the principal characters in many of his most successful books have been concerned with failure, and have been forced to seek another destination.

This temptation, to read a novelist's life and in reading to identify the situations and the characters in his novels, is strong. For novelists lead only "A Sort of Life". They spend as much of their lives with imaginary characters as with real men and women.

To end on a falling note is not only characteristic but interesting, for curiously enough the most fascinating part of a novelist's life is usually the time when he is a failure, on the verge of success, seeking his true identity and learning his craft.

A member of a large and successful family (his Aunt Alice ran a school in South Africa and was a friend of General Smuts and of Olive Schreiner) Greene's father was headmaster of Berkhamsted School.

While a boarder at his father's school he ran away. Following a family consultation he was sent to a psychoanalyst for what he describes as the happiest six months of his life.

Living in a sympathetic and civilised environment in London he moved easily from puberty to manhood.

The ennui, the boredom with life, as opposed to the life of the imagination, that affected his whole being began while at school and was relieved by playing Russian roulette. Spinning a revolver with one live cartridge — he now suggests that the "live" cartridge was likely to have been a blank — relieved this feeling of boredom.

After Oxford he thought of joining the Nigerian Navy, worked for a few weeks for a tobacco firm, tutored for a while before going to the Nottingham Journal and eventually The Times.

During this time he became engaged to a Catholic girl, went through the "humiliation" of the General Confession, married, learned to write, published "The Man Within" which sold 8,000 copies, and a disastrous second novel which disappeared virtually without trace.

For 10 years after this he was to remain in debt to his publishers. Learning the difficult craft of writing successful fiction.

The book ends abruptly and characteristically with an opium smoking scene in Siam: "We were happy that long evening as we passed the pipe to and fro . . . and analysed our differing failures without guilt or regret. Hadn't Buddha failed too? The starving, the sick and the mutilated dogs lay around his temple where the yellow-robed shaven priests picked their proud way."

FRASER MACDONALD.

Analysing Britain

THE NEW ANATOMY OF BRITAIN, by Anthony Sampson, London: Hodder and Stoughton.

A FORMER EDITOR of South Africa's Drum, Mr. Sampson, is quite clearly placed at the top of socio-political analysts by this book. It is informed, witty, penetrating, but at times just a little ponderous.

He has done his homework well, but the edges of his criticism lack the crispness of lettuce too long out of the fridge. Nevertheless one can dine out on his analyses for many a week ahead.

Here are some of his comments:

On the Royal Society: It is in danger of being lured into the sleepiest regions of the establishment. It can easily get absorbed in its own mumbo-jumbo, and it has been accused of having lost every faculty except that of reproduction.

On Banks: Only thirty per cent of the British population use banks — which is hardly surprising because they are open when everybody is at work, and close before they come home. In 1968 the banks unanimously decided to close on Saturdays, the only day free for potential new customers. This defiant attitude to the public is the result of Victorian attitudes towards management.

On strikes: Although in Britain in 1968, 328-million working hours were lost through illness, there has been a huge increase in loss of production through strikes. There were more strikes in 1970 than in any year since the General Strike in 1926: 3,888 strikes were called, 1,789,000 men called out, and 10,970,000 working hours were lost.

On the Times: The sixty-system style of The Times has always encouraged readers to believe that it is, like Eton or Buckingham Palace, a permanent part of the landscape which has no real connection with commerce or profit. Certainly none of its three owners during this century has made money out of it. It might be said that it is the historical role of The Times, like that of a great courtesan, to lure the richest newspaper owners into sacrificing their fortune for the sake of deeper pleasures. Thompson and his managers showed no creative instinct for journalism. His team of market researchers had this capacity to demoralise the most enterprising of editors.

On Lord Thomson of Fleet: He enjoys shocking people about his money-mindedness: he lists his hobby as "balance sheets." In the same way that some people enjoy exhibitionism about sex. His politics were naive. "I've got money so I'm a conservative."

On universities: The hold of Oxford on British public life may not be quite so strangling in the future. The Civil Service has spectacularly diminished its proportion of Oxbridge entrants. The Oxford accent can no longer in itself demoralise earthier voices.

On industrial management: The oozing of power away from the centre, back to the shop floor, reflects much more than the legal weakness of employers and unions: it is part of the deep questioning of authority, the need for self-assertion, the process of democracy "breaking out all over" which can be [illegible] of hope as well as danger.

A difficult book to write, [illegible] is a fascinating one to read, even if it does not stay in [illegible] gear all the way.

BRIAN ROS[illegible]

PAUL IRWIN

No night for a dog to be out

EVERY dog has his day. But that day isn't November 5, which, as if you didn't know, is the 366th anniversary of the late Mr. G. Fawkes's attempt to blow up the British Houses of Parliament.

Four nights to go to the Big Bang. Wonderful for most kids and practically every father who is still a boy at heart — but sheer torture to most dogs.

Not only dogs, either. If you could take a plebiscite of cats, the pyrotechnical percussion associated with Guy Fawkes Night is something they would quite willingly forego.

What's to do about it? For the owners of cats and dogs there is only one thing: keep their pets indoors, safely away from the dangers — and some of the uproar — as rockets whiz into the Great Blue Yonder and the squibs and cannons explode.

Let's say it now. Almost every youngster loves Guy Fawkes Night and the fireworks that go with it. I did myself as a boy. The louder the noise, the better I liked it.

There is no stopping the fun, and I would be the last to suggest that it should be stopped.

However, with increasing age, and a highly-strung dog on my hands, I must confess that I'm glad when it is all over.

Maybe I developed an allergy to explosive noises in the last big war supposedly undertaken to end all big wars.

As for the Irwin dog — her name is Viki, and she is as soft as tuppence — it is not a pretty sight to see her suffer the tortures of the damned whenever she hears a firework go off.

Why, only yesterday, when a young pyromaniac was holding a full dress rehearsal for November the Fifth a few gardens away from the Irwin acres (okay, three-eighths of an [illegible]) Viki was cowering under our best bed.

Simply a few crackers, and the odd thunder-flash. No matter, she was a shivering bundle of terror.

And just to think the Night of the Big Bangs is yet to come.

Yes, I know. There are dogs — and cats — that don't feel a thing when a firework explodes. Alas, they are in the minority.

So, if you are intent on making a really noisy night of it, do have a care for our four-footed pals.

Keep them well away from the noise and the action if you happen to have pets about the house. If you don't, you could easily have a neurotic animal on your hands for the rest of its days — and who wants that?

As for us other pet owners, hooked to hear the noises off, as it were, much the same advice goes. See that Fido or Tibbles is tucked away safely indoors.

If that doesn't cushion the uproar, then administer a tranquilliser.

One note of caution. Don't go digging into the medicine chest and think any old pill will do.

The mild tranquilliser that relaxes you could easily be death to a dog. So, as a veterinary surgeon said yesterday, get the right sort of pill from the right man — your dog's vet, that is.

If that sounds like a plug for the animal doctors, forget it. No vet is going to get rich on a miniscule pill that sets you back a few cents.

Only a few cents to save your dog or cat from a hideous fit of the jitters on Guy Fawkes Night. Only a few cents, also, to save you from the sight of the poor creature suffering.

Cheap at the price, isn't it?

Difference

Now, as ever in my life of research, I went to an expert to learn what makes a dog gun-shy — and there's no real difference between the gun-shy pooch and the one that is terrorised by fireworks.

The man I telephoned was "Ginger" Williams, who breeds Labradors at the Kennels he and his wife run out Honeydew way.

My old friend, Ginger, who trains his dogs to the gun, said, and I quote: "Gun-shyness can be hereditary. If it is inbred, it takes a highly nervous dog a long time to get over it. Some never do.

"When you take a young dog out for the first time, you shoot upwind. The trick is not to stand too close.

"What with the distance, and shooting upwind so that the noise of the explosion is minimised, you get the dog used to the gun.

"Gradually, you shoot closer and closer. It takes time and patience, but it usually works with a dog that isn't the nervous type.

"One of the top American breeders, Charles Wolters, who has trained a long line of field trial champions, has his own method.

"Every time he puts down a puppy's feeding dish, he fires off a cap pistol. In next to no time at all, the pup associates the sound of the pistol with food.

"A pleasant sound, just like the boom of the dinner gong to us humans. Bang! and food's up."

So much for gun-dogs. Household pets are something else again, says "Ginger" Williams. Fireworks are sheer torture for most of them.

"They're not conditioned to explosions," said our Mr. Williams. "Thus, with their acute sense of hearing, especially of high frequency sounds that the human ear cannot pick up, they suffer terribly.

"Some dogs can stand up to crackers and thunder-flashes but rush for somewhere to hide when they hear a rocket go up. It's my belief that the high pitch of a rocket whizzing through the air is something only a dog can hear.

"We simply get the whistle. The dog's eardrums get something else again. It is the high frequency whine of the rocket, and it's probably quite shattering.

"So, if you own a noise-shy dog, keep it quietly at home on Guy Fawkes Night. All the better, go to the vet and get him to prescribe a tranquilliser."

Now you know — and a quiet Guy Fawkes night to you and your dog.

NEW NOVELS [illegible]

MARY MORISON

A miss[illegible] Europe[illegible]

THE AMERICAN, by Leslie Allen.

THE CHARLESTON SCHE[illegible] London: Eyre & Spott[illegible]

DECLARATION OF WAR, Jonathan Cape.

[illegible]

The great Ellen Terry

BRIGHT STAR, by Constance Fechter. London: Gollancz.

[illegible]

She was born into the theatre.

Both parents were [illegible] and acting, but money was short. Ellen worked with fierce dedication to the theatre. As a child she used to get up in the night and try out her [illegible] before the mirror.

Comedy, tragedy, Shaw and Shakespeare, Ellen Terry played in everything. For [illegible] years, she was Henry Irving's leading lady. At her funeral, 1928, people dressed up in holiday outfits and tossed flowers before her as they had done in her great days at the Lyceum.

S. M.

Now [illegible] earned on [illegible] is fr[illegible]
See the m[illegible] the golde[illegible] He'll earn [illegible] ...less fo[illegible]