

St Thomas Aquinas thought that the appeal to morality is the appeal from a narrow to a wider view. You say: 'This may be immediately satisfactory, but how does it look in the long term?' He thought, however, that the difference between short-term and long-term satisfaction became more than merely one of degree—we find, if we go into the matter, that what in the long run satisfies us is good in a new way. So you can say that the appeal to morality, for example in social and political matters, is just the appeal to expediency taken more seriously; but you can also say that it is a new kind of appeal.

This was the kind of appeal that Pope Paul was making in his gentle rebuke to his Australian hosts for their racialist immigration policies: 'Do not close your limited circle for the sake of selfish satisfaction.' The point is that the satisfaction available in a limited circle is of a limited kind. The Pope was not recommending that the white Australians should be less concerned about themselves, but that they should be more seriously concerned. The self needs more than selfish satisfaction. 'Man's heart', as he reminded them, 'is made for God', and at least part of what this means is that we can set no human limitations on the aspirations of man. If we build a wall and isolate any human group it will become less human. The society that closes in on itself, contemptuous or afraid of outsiders, will imperceptibly but ineluctably be impoverished: personal relations within it will become brittle and finally its members will grow to hate it for reasons they can no longer understand. We read of nobles, during the Black Death, who sealed themselves off in their castles, terrified of contact with the disease outside, and how this produced its own psychological black death within the walls. (Roman Catholics should be in a strong position to understand this; for until we were yanked out of it by Pope John, we were sinking into a kind of proud isolation, and its result was a Church of barely repressed violence as well as a special kind of bitterness amongst those who 'lapsed', a bitterness still to be found sometimes around pre-conciliar pockets of the Church.)

But practically all the readers of *New Blackfriars* are good post-conciliar Christians and, moreover, nearly half of them live in Britain so it is easy for us to take a high-minded view of isolationism in the antipodes or in the older kind of Church; what we should be doing is keeping an eye open for it nearer home. Are we in Europe, for example, engaged in sealing ourselves off from the largest part of the world, the world that is suffering from the plague of poverty? Are we content to throw them occasional parcels of food from the battlements?

There is nothing new in having poor people, people who have to work hard and horribly in order to live at all, while others live com-

fortably off the fruits of that work. A new and terrifying development in our time is that the poor are no longer needed. In the past at least they could be exploited; now they are no use to anyone. The people living off welfare in Chicago ghettos or living off next to nothing in the shanty towns of Latin America have no part at all to play in the scheme of technological capitalism. They are not servants or even slaves, they are outside the castle. To those inside it would be better if they just went away or, better still, had never existed in the first place. You do not have to accept everything proposed in *Humanae Vitae* to suspect that some advocacy of birth-control programmes is an expression of this feeling.

These depressing thoughts are occasioned by reading a most important pamphlet called *The White Tribes of Europe*,<sup>1</sup> an examination of the effect on the 'developing' countries of the policies of the European Economic Community. As Barbara Ward says in her introduction, it 'provides valuable insights into the degree to which present policies of the EEC are largely indifferent to the problems of world poverty and world development. For instance its agricultural strategy . . . confronts a number of defenceless developing nations with the risk of complete ruin.' The most notorious example is, of course, sugar. In order to protect the highly inefficient sugar producers of Belgium and Italy, the price of sugar throughout the Common Market is guaranteed at a level high enough to ensure a profit even to them. Sugar from the developing countries would, of course, cost much less, so to protect the European producer a tariff wall is built against imports. Meanwhile sugar production has naturally become extremely profitable for European farmers; they have increased production with the result that Europe has a surplus and has actually begun to export sugar. Not only that, but the EEC has refused to sign the world Sugar Agreement on prices and sells her sugar in competition with the poor who have practically no other means of livelihood. Well, shouldn't they have other means? Shouldn't they industrialize? Isn't it bad for them to be encouraged to rely on a single product? We are reminded of Barry Goldwater in the Herblock cartoon saying to a starving woman, 'If you had initiative like me, you'd go right out and inherit a department store'. The fact is that the underdeveloped nations will never be able to industrialize unless they can make the most of the exports they have, in order to earn the foreign exchange to buy the basic manufactured goods they need. As it is, the gap created by the increasing price of the manufactured goods they have to import and the decreasing profit on their exports of primary goods widens every year. 'The International Development Association has calculated that all the aid—loans grants and commercial credits—given by the rich to the poor countries has not on average been enough to fill the gap.'

<sup>1</sup>By Eric Pearse and Robert Kahn. Published by *Action for World Development and Churches' Action for World Development*, 69 Victoria Street, London, S.W.1 (4a).

Finally such developing nations as have begun to industrialize find their manufactured and semi-manufactured exports blocked from the Common Market by a tariff wall. Trade between rich countries, but especially between the nations of the EEC, has increased enormously during the last decade; trade between rich and poor has proportionately decreased. The rich need the poor less and less whether as suppliers or as customers. We can afford to be indifferent to them when we are not actually hostile.

We should not be confused by statistics and economic jargon; what the figures mean is that some of our policies are acts of aggression. The EEC sugar policy is an attack by the rich on the poor; the decision of Anaconda Copper to quadruple its copper production in the U.S. was taken as a conscious blow against Chile, Peru, Zambia and Congo (Kinshasha). We should be quite clear that this is a way of killing people—as effective as an armed invasion, with maybe the difference that in this case the first victims are usually the children. The motives are the same as for most armed invasions—the enrichment and aggrandizement of the aggressor nation. As Barbara Ward says, ‘No doubt those of us who are Christians may not expect to be examined (at the last judgment) on our sugar policy. . . . But if children starve in Mauritius? If worklessness and despair spread through the Caribbean? Shall we be held guiltless through ignorance if “the least of these little ones” suffer ultimate deprivation so that we can protect our wealth and live?’

At the moment in England we restrict our own sugar production so that we can import two-thirds of our needs from the Commonwealth duty-free. This is one of the arrangements we shall be asked to drop if we enter the EEC; there are others of a similar kind. Perhaps the important question is no longer whether or not we should join the EEC but whether we and the other west European states can begin to take notice of the long-term effects of our policies, whether we can see the thing, in fact, in moral terms. In terms of the crude materialism that forms the basic philosophy of the ‘Free World’ we have less and less to gain from contact with the poor nations. The only immediate hope for two-thirds of the world and the only long-term hope for us depends on beginning to see men in a different light, beginning to value them not for their productivity and profitability but for themselves and for Christ in them who died for them.

H.McC.