

NATIONALISATION . . .

lized economy. However, it has to be recognized that Nationalization can to a degree work both as an instrument of growth expansion and income equalization. Where it has failed, the fault usually lay with the policy makers and policy implementations rather than with the policy itself.

The Asian and African countries are, however, not yet won over to the philosophy of Materialism—dialectical or otherwise. Hence the question of maximization of production need not be of central importance in the economic theory and policy of these nations. If they adopt a set of social values which is non-materialist, problems of growth and of income distribution will be less crucial than issues of the direction and pattern of growth on the one hand and of the distribution of economic control and decision making power on the other. Nationalization perpetuates the concentration of economic power within the hands of a Managerial elite which alone determines the pace and direction of economic, political and social development. Hence a nationalized economy—or an economy dominated by the giant corporations—cannot be the ideal of a social order that is based on non-materialist values. Indeed such a social system will have to grapple with the problem of breaking the monopoly power of different sections of the managerial elite in society.

Nationalization in specific industries and in non-productive economic activities is an instrument which can be used effectively to smash the existing monopoly enclaves. For example the state must abolish the system which permits owners of capital to charge a fixed price for the loan of their surplus funds by, on the one hand, organizing a speculative market which determines this price and on the other by determining through the banking system the availability of total liquidity at any moment in time. The State must re-organize the system of borrowing and lending in a way that the flow of funds from lenders to borrowers is not impeded by monopolistic interests. Similarly the State should intervene in all markets where the price does not reflect a competitive equilibrium of supply and demand.

Nationalization as a technique can be useful in this context only if the State itself does not seek to perpetuate its control in any production activity but rather endeavours to create an institutional framework—and also ultimately a technological infra-structure—which facilitates a decentralization of control and promotes co-operation between agents of production. It is evident that a policy of Nationalization within an economic perspective of this sort will be radically different from the policies of State domination of economic life that is being advocated by the Socialists and the Bureaucrats nowadays.

The Malcolm X I knew

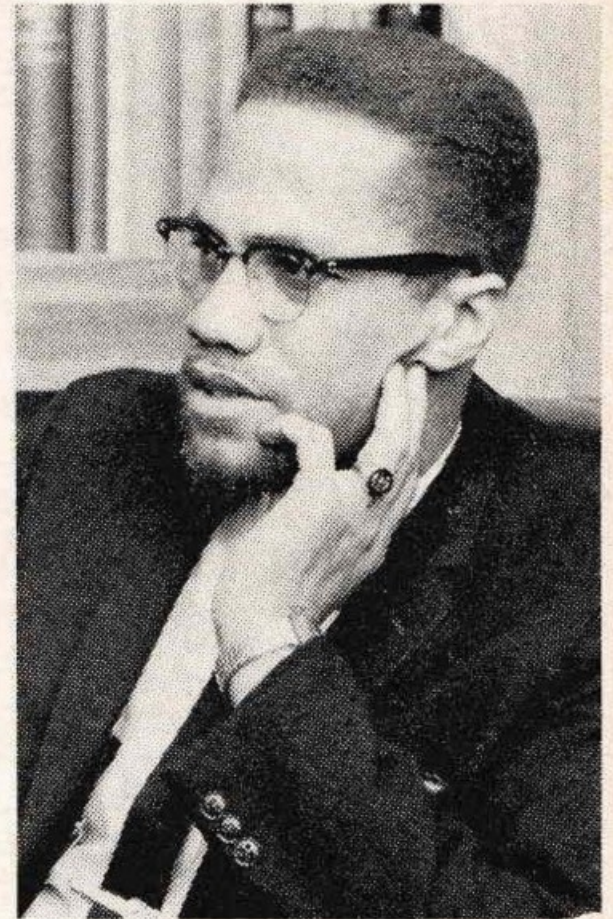
EBRAHIMSA MOHAMED

Malcolm X has enriched the lives of many people. He has provided inspiration for millions all over the world. Yet many of those who invoke his name and claim to follow his message understand him but little. The advocates of black nationalism and the socialists of the Third World who have taken over "Brother Malcolm" are a poor reflection of the Malcolm X I knew. There are several things which distinguish Malcolm X from many of his posthumous followers—his way of life, his personal qualities, and the breadth of his outlook.

I was with Malcolm for most of the time while he was in England just before he died. I travelled with him, I attended meetings with him and stayed with him in his hotel. What struck me was his clean living and his humility, his very simple tastes and his capacity for hard work. He had none of the vices which plague people in organisations which function in his shadow. Many of the black power and socialist groups are made up of people who are extremely corrupt in their personal lives. They drink, smoke, womanise, use foul language with as much devotion and enthusiasm as they shout revolutionary slogans. In so doing they have given a curious twist to the *mot* of Malcolm—"by any means necessary". This would have made him intensely unhappy. It was something that he was very much aware of in a painful sort of way, as he held the firm belief that it was lack of personal character and integrity which was ultimately the greatest danger to any movement.

Malcolm X lived simply. When he died he had very little in the way of material possessions. He never accumulated wealth. At his death he had only a few dollars to his name. The very house in which his family—his wife and five children lived did not belong to him. So simple and spartan was his life that his children often went without the things which other children are used to. For himself it didn't matter but it hurt him to realise that his children were in need and he wasn't able to give them the attention that he felt they needed. He was a compassionate man.

This is another thing which marks him out from many present day revolutionaries. He was humane. He had a genuine concern for people. He was kind and was grateful for any kindnesses shown to him. I remember one day we were travelling on the overnight train from Sheffield to London. Brother Malcolm was very tired for he always worked hard and drove himself to the limit. He fell asleep. I remained awake. There was a lady sitting next to us, who offered me tea and biscuits. When Malcolm awoke, I told him about the lady's offer and he said to me, "Did you



thank her?" This is the human touch which moves you and leaves a lasting impression. How much does it contrast with the arrogance, the lack of warmth, the carping rhetoric of those who call for liberation. The human touch is absent from them. In their presence there is a feeling of unease. They take people for granted. Malcolm X did not. He could lie low in the gentlest of fashion the most hostile of critics and questioners. And this is what audiences in England warmed to. And this was all while "saying it like it is".

He did and was prepared to face the situation in America like it was and is. He was in direct contact with the people. He never wanted to live outside of America and escape direct action. He saw America as the arena of action and did not want to use any outside country as a base. Other prominent black leaders and thinkers are doing this. They have gone to other revolutionary countries and cities to lie low or to cool down. Eldridge Cleaver is in Algeria; Stokely Carmichael is in Guinea and James Baldwin is now in Paris. This unwillingness to face the situation was something very very uncharacteristic of Malcolm X. He faced the situation of the blacks in America very squarely and came up with some very challenging, bold and to some people fearsome proposals. He was one of the first ones to tell the black people in America that under American law they

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had the right to self defence and therefore to carry arms. He was the first one to say that what the blacks in America wanted was not civil rights but their inalienable human rights. And just before his death he was planning to take the case to the United Nations and make it an issue of international concern in much the same way as apartheid in South Africa is now viewed. Also just before his death, he was about to launch a campaign of civil disobedience in America, to urge the blacks not to pay taxes in order to bring attention to the second-class nature of their citizenship, the discrimination against them and the deprivations which they suffer. He had the capacity and the appeal to launch such a campaign and it was at this moment that he was gunned down.

While Malcolm X was in England he talked about the visits which he made to the Middle East and Africa. His conversations showed how percipient an observer he was. He spoke of the many negative things which he saw, the standards of education, the cooling down of revolutionaries after they were established on the soft seats of power and the continuing neo-colonialism. One of the things which pained him most was the indifference of many African states to 'dollarism'. He pointed out that they spent a lot of time condemning apartheid and condemning South Africa but they overlooked the damaging inroads of American economic enterprises in Africa. In fact they became solicitous of American aid to the extent that they were not prepared to raise a finger at America's treatment of her citizens of African descent.

Malcolm X saw and experienced many positive things too. Generosity and open-heartedness were qualities which were impressed on him by the welcome which he received in many places. He also saw brotherhood and the brotherhood of different races and this led him to disclaim racism and to say: "I am not a racist; and I do not subscribe to any of the tenets of racism . . . In the past I permitted myself to be used . . . to make sweeping indictments of all white people, the entire white race, and these generalisations have caused injuries to some whites who perhaps did not deserve to be hurt. Because of the spiritual enlightenment which I was blessed to receive as the result of my recent pilgrimage to the Holy City of Mecca, I no longer subscribe to sweeping indictments of any one race. I am now striving to live the life of a true Sunni Muslim. I must repeat that I am not a racist nor do I subscribe to the tenets of racism. I can state in all sincerity that I wish nothing but freedom, justice, and equality, life, liberty and the pursuit of

happiness for all people."

This was the stage to which many of Malcolm X's followers have been unable to ascend. It required an honesty and a courage (in view of his previous stance and associations) which very few could have matched.

Malcolm X realised the great step he had taken and he knew what dangers lay ahead of him as a result. But Malcolm X was not fearful of his life. He used to say, "I am living a bonus life. I might have died a long time ago."

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'SCRIBE'

From times immemorial the MOON has been the darling of the human race. It has been liked, loved and adored in a number of ways. Its influence has been myriad, but not always for the good. Hence the idea of lunacy: a form of insanity once believed to come from changes in the phase of the moon.

These changes were supposed to cast their influence when man was far removed from it. What about today, when man has already set his foot on the moon? "We are living in a schizophrenic age" says the President of the American Psychological Association. Michel Foucault has written "a history of insanity in the age of reason" and has named it *Madness and Civilisation*. He looks upon the contemporary phase of history as "the immense era of madness". Opinions and conjectures apart, it might need the founding of a new discipline of astrolometrics (like econometrics and panometrics) to establish the statistical correlation between man's nearness to the moon and an upsurge of lunacy in different walks of human life on earth. Who knows this interesting area of investigation may also attract the attention of some researchers, (probably from the United States) and of the Foundations which sponsor them with unceasing exuberance and lunatic benevolence.

Even if there is no correlation between lunation and lunacy, the need for the conquest of madness remains indisputable. Pascal is reported to have said in a rare moment of wisdom that "men are so necessarily mad, that not to be mad would amount to another form of madness."

One of the latest exploits of this realm is a new species of economics— "lunatic economics". The film industry is no longer the pace-setter for fads and fashions. It has now begun to make original contribution to more serious subjects.

The National Film Finance Corporation had its annual gathering on September 1. This provided the film chiefs with an opportunity for self-appraisal. They focussed attention on the lunacy of astronomical fees for leading performers. Like charity, lunacy also begins at home. The fees of the stars are soaring to over a million dollars while industry is running low. According to John Boulting, joint managing director of British Lion Films: "It is absolutely true that in the past seven to ten years there has been a strong lunacy prevalent in the industry. There has been a near disaster . . ."

If profit mongering in the entertainment industry is a form of lunacy what would be the appropriate term for profiteering via one of the greatest pollution industries of our times?