

A QUESTION OF ORTHODOXY

Adherents of Mau Mau have been asked to purge themselves before a district officer. The same arrangements are about to be introduced to meet the requirements of this country.

Q. I understand you wish to present yourself as a candidate for admission ?

I do.

You have no objection to answering a few questions ?

On the contrary.

Good. Can you say a few words about your philosophical outlook ?

I used to describe myself as a Dialectical Materialist; I would now prefer to describe myself as a Realist.

You find materialism inadequate ?

An outlook which is truly scientific recognises the shortcomings of science.

Have you any religious beliefs ?

I feel that the Deity, like our monarchy, has become purely ornamental; one - cannot oppose with any conviction an institution no longer decisive.

You were formerly a revolutionary ?

A revolutionary; a counter-revolutionary—who is to say objectively which is which ?

In what ways have you modified your political ideas ?

Realism is concerned only with the possible in any situation, and recognises the identity between expediency and ethics.

- Q. What do you think of the Atlantic Pact, for instance ?
- A. As a step towards internationalism, it represent a higher stage of development.
- Q. At one time you protested at the siting of American bomber-bases in Britain ?
- A. I welcome them as a concrete instance of international solidarity.
- Q. And if this should lead to intervention in our domestic affairs?
- A. Realism characterises the doctrine of national sovereignty as retrograde and anachronistic.
- Q. I believe you were opposed to the war in Malaya ?
- A. I was, I now see that it was a justifiable police-action, objectively in the Malayans own interest.
- Q. I think we may turn from international politics for the moment. What is your attitude to capital punishment ?
- A. I am, of course, against it in principle; but it will always be used in the last resort for offences against the state.
- Q. And conscription ?
- A. While there is the necessity for armies, there is much to be said for this method of raising them.
- Q. Emigration ?
- A. I have full confidence in Britain's future. Do you suppose I shall have any difficulty in getting a visa ?
- A. That remains to be seen. You are not, I believe, a geneticist by profession, but you have stated that Lysenko is right ?
- A. Yes. He is wrong.
- Q. Are there any other matters on which you have changed your mind ?
- A. Art for Arts sake, Nuclear weapons, Para-normal psychology, Comprehensive education, Free Will—would you like me to go on ?
- Q. What was your attitude to these questions in the past ?
- A. Orthodox.
- Q. And now ?
- A. More orthodox.
- Q. The change has been a sudden one ?
- A. No more sudden than the change from water to steam—as for instance when a kettle boils.
- Q. And why has the kettle chosen this moment to boil ?
- A. There seemed to be a general movement: a question of orthodoxy, you might say.
- Q. Splendid—consider yourself one of us; you have the makings of a useful member of the Establishment.

COMUS.