

BR and TMO

Neither is this the occasion nor do we consider ourselves fully qualified to evaluate all of Bertrand Russell's life and achievements. Our own rather close association with him in the past few years provided ample evidence of the enduring greatness of his mind. It bespeaks one of his impressive



characteristics that, after decades of universal acclaim, he has not put himself up as a prima donna of the peace movement, but is ever ready to soldier for peace. Unlike many a lesser personality identifying with the peace movement and forever willing to come and receive applause from an assemblage of people, Bertrand Russell, even in his advanced age, is still willing to be the first man on Trafalgar Square making others join him in one demonstration of the human conscience or another.

The War Crimes Tribunal he sponsored is likely to go down in history as a turning point of civil assertion that will eventually establish a new type of relationship and a new degree of mutual responsibility between the ordinary citizen and the political leader. The verdict of the judges in Stockholm did not result in the tightening of nooses around human necks the way their Nuremberg predecessors' verdict did, but its impact may be no less, perhaps even more, lasting. For here was a unique assertion, not of a power depository to determine the human conscience, but of the human conscience to generate history-making power.

There can be no doubt that virtually all of the hostility for Bertrand Russell and his peace endeavors is politically inspired. Guilty men are not known to love their judges. Had it not been for Russell's uncorruptible insistence on identifying the real forces that endanger peace and perpetuate world-wide systems of injustice, those who now malign or ridicule him would be boasting his greatness. That he so actively continues to manifest it in his advanced years would then cause them to stand in awe of him rather than providing opportunity for particularly venomous malice.

True as all this is, and unshakable as remains our admiration for Bertrand Russell, we can only wish that all the criticism of his administrative apparatus could be dismissed as equally unjustified. Unfortunately,

such is not the case. For a long time we have been scrupulously weighing our moral obligations with respect to a public discussion of these matters. Would such a public discussion on our part be seized upon by the enemies of Russell and peace to discredit both? Do we have a moral right to embrace political truth whereby inconvenient facts are overlooked, denied or euphemized? Do we have a moral right—in the name of some overriding political purpose—to keep silent about things we judge to be wrong? Does the end justify the means? How truly different is any new politics that is not rooted in morality; and would we not contribute to the perversion of the new politics we profess if we let expediency, any expediency, curb our acknowledgment of truth?

All these agonizing questions had caused us to delay any public discussion of our observations on the Russell-Schoenman relationship. Now, in the hope of having correctly resolved our moral dilemma, and provoked by circumstances beyond our control, we decided that our first responsibility is neither to Bertrand Russell nor to a particular politics but to truth. For its sake we feel compelled to identify with some of the criticisms that have been voiced, often by sources equally as hostile to us as to Russell's secretary.

Legs That Have a Name

Russell's problem is as unique as his life and personality. And as unique as his old age. For his mind is even more sagacious than his body is strong. If only his physical prowess kept in line with his mental astuteness and moral courage, he, without representing any government, would now be the world's most active diplomat. He would be flying from one national capital to another, en route dispatching telegrams to heads of state and prime ministers; he would be participating in international conferences never before accessible to private citizens; he would be scolding kings and reprimanding governments. Physically unable to do these things, Russell tries anyhow. But he must depend on artificial limbs. Their name is Ralph Schoenman. The young, robust and aggressive American is Russell's substitute for lost physical motion. He is his legs and arms.

Because Russell is attracted to his secretary by the latter's agility and physical capacity to do things, he is less solicitous of characteristics he himself does not lack. His assistant's character, and its defects, become of secondary importance. This explains why the virtual unanimity that prevails not only among Russell's enemies but also among his friends and devotees with regard to Schoenman's intolerable personality has consistently failed to impress Russell himself. It is thus that virtually all attempts by friends to influence Russell to disassociate Schoenman from himself have, instead, resulted in Russell's disassociation from so-advising friends.

Moral flaws in Schoenman's character—some of which Russell himself acknowledges—suffice to make his close association with Russell regrettable. They include an almost proverbial arrogance, ruthlessness, connivance and lack of veracity. Materially incorruptible, he nonetheless does not hesitate to engage in dishonest practices to extract money for The Cause. Viewing the world

and history as rings of intrigue and conspiracy, he tries to play his own politics accordingly. Repulsed by the American civilization, he nonetheless is its faithful product in that—ironically enough—he is a great practitioner of the Power of Arrogance (sic) and seems to aspire to mastery of this art.

We do not paint this portrait lightly. Nor merely by parroting the impressions of so many one-time friends of Russell who have been sacrificed to Schoenman's cannibalistic temperament. We also paint it on the basis of direct and costly experience of our own. So costly in fact that this struggling publication has lost thousands of dollars due to Schoenman's financial shenanigans and misrepresentations involving honoraria for Russell's contributions to our pages. Nor are we unique as the victims of Schoenman's financial shenanigans; in this capacity we even keep company with members of the War Crimes Tribunal. One of the worrisome aspects of these financial dealings is that although Bertrand Russell himself has repeatedly stated to have found his secretary "in the wrong" and his practices "untenable," in any real showdown the latter's moral turpitude never weakened Russell's all-out backing of him.

This is no accident. For although Russell is undoubtedly the author of his own ideas, on the operative level, our evidence proves that even while he keeps no secrets from Schoenman, Schoenman does keep secrets from him. No less does our evidence prove that Schoenman occasionally misinforms Russell, convinces him that certain things are done which in actuality are not done, or denies doing things which he is actually doing. Yet, no friendly information and advice submitted to Russell on these matters—even if miraculously escaping Schoenman's censorship—has proved capable of counterbalancing his attachment to the set of artificial limbs he sees in Schoenman.

Schoenman is fully aware of the nature of Russell's devotion to him, and feeds it with all the slyness of his mind. He knows that so long as he is careful to attach Russell's name labels to activities requiring physical motion, he renders himself indispensable to that monument-building which often obsesses men of achievement in their old age.

Typical is the credit monopoly insisted upon by the Schoenman-directed Russell staff in connection with the War Crimes Tribunal. The idea was urged on Bertrand Russell by this publication both in private correspondence and in published editorials shortly after the United States began its air war against North Vietnam. At first Russell's reactions were unfavorable. When at last he did sponsor the War Crimes Tribunal and we editorially expressed our support, passingly alluding to ourselves as "the originator" of the idea ("The War Crimes Tribunal," September 1966 TMO), the Schoenman-directed staff was quick to inform us of Lord Russell's allegedly being "absolutely astonished" at our public claim. This is a measure of the earned or usurped personal credit monopoly that is one half of the puzzling Russell-Schoenman relationship.

More worrisome is the fact that these psychological labyrinths are allowed to affect, and impede, even the most important

of Russell's peace initiatives. Secretive, power hungry and intriguing, Schoenman preferred to see the significance of the War Crimes Tribunal diminished rather than relinquishing its administration from his own hands. Despite Bertrand Russell's repeated instructions that he accept offers of cooperation with the Tribunal which we had conveyed in the name of most prestigious American legal authorities, and despite Schoenman's repeated assurances to Russell that he was doing so, he in fact totally ignored these important offers. Nor are we the only friends and associates of Russell who received this treatment when attempting to enhance the stature of the War Crimes Tribunal. Obviously, Schoenman's tight control over the preparations and administration—if not over the Tribunal's findings which certainly were in the hands of people not open to anyone's manipulation—was paramount. Nor have the Tribunal's own attempts to free itself from Schoenman's administration proved effective. Small wonder that by now there is hardly a man left on the panel of judges who remains on speaking terms with Schoenman.

We profoundly regret having to report these matters. We have resolved, however, that any political administration of truth is foreign to the spirit of this publication. We refuse to deny ugly phenomena when they occur in the political camp with which we identify ourselves, precisely as we would refuse to impute non-existent ugly phenomena to our opponents. There can be no two standards of morality—one for our political allies, another for our political opponents.

Together with many other of Russell's one-time friends and associates we have tried hard to convince him that his seeming dependence on Ralph Schoenman is detrimental to his peace efforts and that it lends an unnecessary degree of substance to press campaigns against him. We have tried to establish our own working relationship with Bertrand Russell in complete divorcement from his secretary. Although Russell himself has on several occasions agreed to this, somehow Schoenman has always managed to interpose himself. Dealings that involve Schoenman seem to necessitate immoral and unfair practices that are utterly unacceptable to us. They also seem to necessitate financial losses whose sole justification would be to cajole a wheeler-dealer mentality that has discovered that arrogance can produce power, and money. Our continued cooperation with Schoenman has become impossible; our insistence on an exclusively direct relationship with Lord Russell has been rejected. Under the circumstances, it seems to be a mutual sentiment that Lord Russell no longer be associated with this publication which he not long ago described as "the leading American journal in the fight for peace" and "the most incisive publication of which I know."

As always before, we have unbounded admiration for Bertrand Russell. As before, we will support his peace activities. As before, we know him to be a leading light in our dark times. The only thing we regret is that some people diminish rather than enhance his efforts.