

his home to the place of employment and back to his home at the termination of the contract is the responsibility of the employer who may, however deduct the cost from the wages of the African. This is a tax on the employer and may be a hardship to the employee. In addition the employer has to pay the sum of R1 for every worker employed by him every year. This must surely be passed on to the consumer and will further aggravate the inflationary situation.

The service contract is for a period of a year and the African must return home for a month. Those employers who avail themselves of the "call in" card system will find it most inconvenient when their particular employees will be at home in a different month every year. To illustrate:-

A service contract is signed from 1st January to 31st December. The African returns home and the next contract will be from February 1st until January 31st and the African again has to return home for a month. The following year he will be away in March. An employer thus will not be able to depend on his trained and regular labour being at work during the busy period of the year and he will not be able regularly to allow leave for his labourers during the slack period of the year.

As the service contract is terminated every year there can be no obligation on the employer to pay holiday wages to his labour. Many Africans therefore may be unfortunate in that every thirteenth month they will be earning nothing.

It is a fair comment to say that the labour force cannot be efficient, stable or contented. For the African it is yet a further restriction on his freedom of movement. He is compelled to defer a portion of his wages to his dependents in the homeland. He can be compelled to pay his transport from and to his home once a year. From the balance of his wages he has to pay transport from his lodgings in the urban area to his place of work and in addition he must pay for his accommodation and food. Unless he is earning a pretty high wage he will have little left at the end of his contract.

It has come to our notice that some Africans have had to pay R1 to the tribal Chief before they can be employed and service contracts attested. We do not know whether this is lawful or not.

These regulations are harsh and restrictive for the African. He has no choice of the type of labour he will perform, nor can he have any say in the choice of employer or for how long he will work. If he breaks his contract for any reason he is obliged to return to his homeland to wait to be recruited again.

The employer too has lost his right to choose whom he wishes to work for him or to decide on the conditions of employment. He is bound by red tape and bureaucratic control which will cost the loss of many man hours of labour not to mention the irritation and frustration involved. And all this to satisfy the demands of the ideology of apartheid.

## JOHN JONATHAN MY JOE

JOHN Johnathan my Jo, John,  
 Syne first we pulled taegither,  
 New 'Border' factories I've built,  
 Far frae ma native heather.

John Johnathan, ye ken I love  
 Your land o' milk an' honey,  
 (An' the chaunce it gies a businessman  
 O' makin' easy money!)

Your canny bra' new Bantu laws  
 I ca' most enterprisin'  
 (They gie a settled labour mart,  
 And keep ma costs frae risin'.)

Ye've got the reet idea, ma mon,  
 Tae hold y'r labour stable;  
 (Remove the reet to strike an' ye've  
 The best cards on the table!)

The plans o' ither feckless folk  
 Would ca' for higher pay;  
 Your best-laid plan for mice an' men  
 Can *niver* gang agley!

The broken homes o' labour's pawns  
 Maun cause me sma' distress;  
 I could not love ye, John, so much  
 Loved I not honour less!

MAC DE MERWE.