

which means much more than theorising about abstract principles.

Finally, this kind of work may well appeal to those who feel that public protests are only a remote and long-term way of tackling the evils that this Government is bringing on the country. Practical work of the kind outlined in our Programme of Action can give immediate results and will suit those who want to "get something done." It is a certain cure for frustration.

FACT AND FICTION

FICTION:

"The Bill to increase Native taxation embodies the principle of self-support, which is the basis of self-preservation as well." (Mr. M. C. van Niekerk, M.P. for Lichtenburg, Hansard 3, page 723.)

FACT:

We regret that the honourable member for Lichtenburg did not brush up his political science before making such a pathetically ignorant statement. Even he should know that the accepted basis for taxation is (a) full representation for the taxpayer on the governing body which imposes the taxes (i.e. Parliament), (b) ability of the taxpayer to pay, and (c) that taxation for social services must come from general revenue.

It is a fact that Africans have no direct representation in either the House of Assembly or the Senate. On this basis they should not be taxed at all. Africans form the poorest section of the community and few have the ability to pay. The average rural African family is stated in the Tomlinson Report to earn £40—£42 per annum, while the average urban African family exists on just under £16 per month. The accepted figure for a family of five for barest essentials for health is £25 per month. Countless Africans are therefore already far below this minimum standard, yet are now expected to pay increased taxes, so that there will be even less money for food.

It is accepted in civilised countries that the poor do not pay for their own social services, but that these are provided from the general revenue of the State. White people in South Africa have free education, but the Africans, the poorest section, already paying poll tax from 18 to 65 years (Whites pay from 21 to 60 years), hut tax, tribal levies and taxes for school buildings, are now to be forced to pay more taxes to provide for their own social services.

It is indeed fortunate for the honourable member for Lichtenburg that the poor in South Africa happen to be black. It would be interesting to know whether, if the poor were white and his constituents, he would dare to defend a bill increasing their taxation. We doubt if, with his high-sounding talk about "the principle of self-support," he would long continue to represent his constituency in Parliament.

M.E.F.

Openbare protesbetogings teen die regering se onmenslikheid is 'n langtermynbeleid. Die behandeling van individuele gevalle is in baie opsigte meer lowend. Praktiese werk soos dit in ons aksieprogram uiteengesit word kan sigbare resultate lewer en sal diegene wat „iets wil verrig" geval. Dis 'n soewereine middel teen die frustrerende gevoel van magtelootheid.

FEIT EN FANTASIE

FANTASIE:

„Die wetsontwerp om die belasting van naturelle te verhoog beliggaam die beginsel van selfonderhoud, wat tegelykertyd ook die grondslag van selfbehoud is." (Mnr. M. C. van Niekerk, L.V. vir Lichtenburg. Hansard 3, bl. 723.)

FEIT:

Dit spyt ons dat die agbare lid vir Lichtenburg nagelaat het om sy kennis van staatsleer op te knap voordat hy so'n onkundige verklaring kwytgeraak het. Selfs hy behoort te weet dat al aanneemlike basis vir belasting die volgende punte insluit: (a) volle verteenwoordigheid van die belastingbetaler in die liggaam wat die belastinge opleë (d.w.s. die volksraad), (b) die vermoë om belasting te betaal, en (c) dat belasting vir maatskaplike dienste deur algemene inkomste gedek moet word.

Naturelle het geen direkte verteenwoordiging in die volksraad of die senaat nie. Gevolglik behoort hulle geen belastinge hoegenaamd te betaal nie. Hul is die armste groep in die gemeenskap en weinig het die vermoë om te betaal. Volgens die Tomlinson-verslag verdien die gemiddelde plattelandse naturellegesin £40—£42 p.j. Die ooreenkomstige syfer in die stede is net onderkant £16 p.m. Dit word algemeen aanvaar dat £25 p.m. die minimum is waarmee 'n gesin van vyf kan klaarkom sonder dat hul gesondheid skade ly. Tallose naturellegesinne verdien nie hierdie bedrag nie. Tog word hul nou verwag om verhoogde belastinge te betaal, wat die geld vir voedsel nog minder sal maak.

Beskaafde lande aanvaar die begrip dat armes nie vir hul eie maatskaplike dienste moet betaal nie, maar dat die koste daarvan deur die algemene staatsinkomste gedek moet word. Blankes in Suid-Afrika geniet kostelose onderwys, maar die naturelle betaal reeds hoofbelasting van 18 tot 65 jaar (vir blankes is dit 21 tot 60 jaar), hutbelasting, stamtrefings en belastinge vir skoolgeboue. Nou word hul nog boonop gedwing om groter belasting vir hul maatskaplike dienste te betaal.

Die agbare lid vir Lichtenburg kan hom gelukkig ag dat die armes in Suid-Afrika toevallig swart is. Mens sal graag wil weet of hy dit sou waag om 'n wetsontwerp te ondersteun wat vermeerdering van die belasting van minderbevoorregtes beoog indien hierdie minderbevoorregtes blank was en in sy eie kiesafdeling gewoon het. Met sy hoogdrawende uitlatings oor „die beginsels van selfonderhoud" sou hy nie lank sy setel behou nie.

M.E.F.