

made up of income from both internal sources (i.e. sale of produce such as wool, hides, etc.) and external sources (i.e. cash wages sent back to their families in the Reserves by absentee labourers). The total expenditure during the same period is £36 5s.—leaving an excess of expenditure over income of £5 5s. 5d. Professor Houghton observes:—

“Family expenditure for the year varied between £251 5s. 4d. and £2 15s. 4d., while the highest and lowest family cash incomes recorded were £355 18s. and nothing.” Shocked at these findings, he asks “How . . . could an individual, let alone a whole family, subsist on an annual expenditure of only £2 15s. 4d.?” He answers, with grim irony, “Real charity is a virtue which still shines brightly in the Reserves.”

But “charity” is no answer to the excess of income over expenditure. It is only met by the peasants getting deeper and deeper into debt. In 1933 it was estimated that the extent of indebtedness to the traders in the Transkei was nearly £1 million. By now it is far higher.

The traders are, however, finding it too risky to extend credit facilities where there is no security. The caution observed by the trading classes was summed up by one trader recently thus: “Who is going to extend credit to an impoverished nation?”

(“**Transkei Tragedy**” will be continued in the next issue of “**Liberation**.”)

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# **BREAK DOWN SOUTH AFRICA'S IRON CURTAIN!**

(A Reply to Mr. Kathrada)

By **ALAN DOYLE**

**I**N “**Liberation**” of August 1956, Mr. A. M. Kathrada advocates what he calls an “international cultural boycott” of South Africa. It is a pity that he uses this rather sweeping term. A careful reading of his article shows that all he really means is that the national liberation movement should appeal to overseas musicians, dancers and actors not to perform in our country, as a mark of protest against racial discrimination in the Union.

In my opinion the movement would not be well-advised to issue such an appeal or to expend its energies and resources in publicising it abroad to make it effective. I think it would do better to work for the multiplication of cultural contacts with foreign

countries, and for the extension of such contacts to ever-wider sections of the population.

It is well known that some musicians have in fact refused, because of the colour bar, to visit South Africa. Among them were the world-famous violinist Isaac Stern and the dance-band leader Ted Heath. Their feelings do them credit. They have, no doubt at some financial sacrifice, obeyed their consciences and made a personal gesture against racialism.

But we should also pay tribute to such artistes as Dame Sybil Thorndyke, Yehudi Menuhin and Larry Adler who, while accepting engagements to play before White audiences in segregated halls, have also taken advantage of their visits here to express open feelings of solidarity with the Non-White peoples, and have insisted on performing before Non-White audiences too.

It is for the liberation movement of the oppressed people here to welcome **all** such noble-minded and spontaneous manifestations of sympathy. They are valuable because they give us heart in our struggle for freedom and equality, and renew our conviction of the justice of our cause. They are valuable precisely because they spring, unprompted, from the artistic and social consciences of these famous cultural personalities. But it would be an idle task to seek to "organise" such manifestations of the artistic conscience, or to attempt to impose a uniform pattern of behaviour upon so exceptionally individualistic a category of people as the international celebrities of stage and concert platform.

And even if such a plan were feasible, I seriously question Mr. Kathrada's thesis that the organised refusal of large numbers of overseas performers to visit the Union would "greatly further the cause of freedom."

The heart of his argument is that such a "boycott" would teach White South Africa a lesson. He writes:—

"The perpetrators of racialism in this country derive strength and courage from the closeness that they feel to the outer world; . . . from the . . . consent and recognition that they receive from particularly the Western countries in the form of cultural and sports contact, economic and military association . . . Racialist South Africans must be made to feel more and more that they stand alone in the whole world in their belief of racial superiority."

If we glance again at the types of "contact" from which we are told the racialists derive strength and courage—"cultural, sports, economic and military"—we shall not fail to be struck by the fact that the latter two, especially "economic" are of infinitely more weight and importance than "sports" and "cultural" contact (especially in the limited meaning which Mr. Kathrada gives to the concept "cultural"). Why does he not advocate an **economic** boycott? It is evident that the cessation of overseas trade and investment would have an infinitely more powerful effect in making the South African ruling class "feel the pinch of isolation from the civilised world," than the absence of that handful of overseas actors and concert artistes who make their way to this outpost.

Mr. Kathrada might reply that it is highly unlikely that the hard-headed businessmen and investors who trade with the Union or who profit from their holdings in our gold, diamond and uranium mines, would forfeit a penny of their gains to protest against the Union's colour bar. As a matter of fact, that very colour bar and the accompanying and interlinked cheap labour system greatly enhance the vast profits of foreign investors in our country.

Actors and artists, he might add, are more idealistic, less commercially minded, and an appeal to their better feelings might be more likely to succeed. But that is only partly true. Many artists, especially in the West, have become completely commercialised; they will play wherever they are paid to go. Moreover, we should not assume that all overseas cultural figures are necessarily democrats or people with a social conscience. Far from it. The majority of British and American platform artists have expressed no protest against racial discrimination practices, parallel to those of the Union, observed in British colonies or in the South of the U.S.A.

I fear very much that the nett effect of Mr. Kathrada's proposal would be to **keep out of South Africa only the most advanced and democratic artists and bearers of culture.**

Which is exactly what the most reactionary circles in our country, including the Nationalist Party, are trying to do. That is why they have repeatedly refused visas for progressive artists to tour South Africa. That is why they ban democratic, anti-racial books and films. That is why we "cannot imagine Paul Robeson or Ram Gopal being allowed to come here." The reactionary, narrow-minded ruling groups of South Africa fear the impact of the liberating, humanist message which is at the core of all genuine culture. It prefers to see the minds of the people doped with the Hollywood film-trash and Springbok Radio soap operas which are the staple "cultural" diet in this part of the world.

This is the great weakness of Mr. Kathrada's position—that he seems to regard culture merely as "entertainment," an "unforgettable experience." He completely overlooks or ignores the dynamic social content implicit (though seldom obviously so) in true culture and fine art.

The Government is trying to set up a cultural iron curtain around South Africa. We want to tear it down! We want to see the minds and the hearts that are frozen by fear, ignorance, prejudice and superstition, opened out and warmed; set racing with daring new perspectives and visions, by life-giving contacts with the great world-stream of culture!

Instead of the sterile appeal for a "cultural boycott" (to be carried out by others) let us demand that the best of the world's talented artists be encouraged and permitted to visit our country, and that all who wish be admitted to see and hear them. And this is an urgent demand—at a time when a huge foreign concern has acquired control over nine-tenths of South Africa's theatres and will no doubt aim to supply us with the products of the American "entertainment industry."

History is running strongly on our side in this matter. The cold

war is thawing out, and cultural contacts are multiplying between peoples of diverse social and economic systems. In vain the petty tyrants seek to raise and buttress the dykes of censorship and travel restrictions; to keep out the seas of liberating ideas. The tides are running higher and higher. They can no more keep them out than they can keep down the Non-European peoples, insistently battering at the doors of economic advancement and culture; the doors of the universities, the libraries, the theatres and the concert halls.

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# ORGANISE TO DEFEAT "GROUP AREAS"

By WALLACE MLINGESI

"GROUP Areas" is a new catchword for an old and accepted South African policy. The policy dates to the 1913 Land Act, and its fundamental purpose remains unchanged, despite changes of government and great economic developments in our country.

Its purpose is simply the dispossession of peasants from their land by law, to drive them to work as labourers for the farmers, or to seek employment on the mines; in other words, the creation of a landless, unskilled, labour force, compelled to sell their only possession—their ability to work—on the labour market.

This policy, followed in other countries during their industrial revolutions, is further complicated by the fundamental policy of White Supremacy, and the cheap labour system, which makes it necessary for the standards of Non-Europeans to be kept at the lowest possible level. The most effective method of enforcing the policy has always been the gradual taking away from African and other non-white groups of their land rights, and driving them into water-tight compartments, so creating these reservoirs of cheap labour. The Union racial segregation policy is based on this system, and has been in practice since the eighteenth century. The Group Areas Act is part of this whole pattern, and is the culmination of the Indian land restrictions from 1885 onwards.

Group Areas, however, while following the same policy-pattern, has special features of its own which make it different from past legislation. In the past, the poorest were dispossessed. It was an "easy steal." Peasants became farm-labourers and workers. Those were robbed who had least, and there was little outcry. But today, Group Areas is scraping the bottom of the bucket to answer the insatiable demand for cheap,