

## Removal of Africans from Western Cape

**I**N 1955 DR. EISELEN, who was then Secretary for Native Affairs, announced that the Government intended ultimately to remove all Africans from the area south of the Orange River and west of the magisterial districts of Richmond, Murraysburg, Aberdeen, Willowmore, Uniondale and Knysna. This policy was the first long term application of apartheid aimed at eventual total segregation.

According to Minister de Wet Nel, between 1959 and 1962 some 26,000 Africans were endorsed out of the Western Cape. However, due to natural increase and an influx of labour between 1955 and 1961, the actual African population in the affected areas continued to increase in spite of the removals.

These removals were carried out under Section 10 of the Natives Urban Areas Act, which gives Africans right of permanent residence in urban areas under very limited conditions.

Latterly, over-zealous officials have pursued and often exceeded the letter of the law and today removals are being accomplished at an ever-increasing rate. The people being endorsed out are for the most part being sent to the Transkei. This area is already seriously over-populated and many of the people concerned are urbanised Africans who have little contact with life in rural settlements.

Reliable population statistics for the Western Cape are not available. Estimates of the number of people affected vary from 241,000 (Minister P. W. Botha) to 150,000 (comprising 65,000 men, 35,000 women and 40,000 children). Of these some 50,000 are registered as workers in the Cape Peninsula and as such form an important and integrated portion of the working population.

The government has repeatedly stated that removals are aimed at (a) an experiment in total apartheid; (b) as a safeguard for those classified as "Coloured" from "unfair" economic competition from the African, and (c) to ensure that there is a minimum of miscegenation between Coloured and African. In this policy the Nationalists

have received support from their own press and from SABRA who originally conceived and propagated the idea of complete racial separation.

*Opposition to the removals has come from the leaders of business and commerce, from, surprisingly enough, sections of the rural population and, of course, from Liberals and Progressives. It is, however, disturbing to note that this opposition has not for the most part been directed against the inhumanity and indignity of the break-up of family life and the intrusion on the civil rights of the people concerned, but rather focused on the economic consequences of the removals.*

### Little reaction

The Coloured population, save for a few individuals, has not reacted to the removal threats. This is disturbing for it is this population group which will be expected to fill the gap left by the exodus of African labour. Unquestionably, even allowing for increased mechanisation which we are told must accompany the removal, this will lead to a lowering of the income of the Coloured population and as such is a retrogressive step which one would have hoped they would have opposed if only because of the economic consequences.

The Africans themselves, intimidated as they have been by police terror (in 1960 thousands in Cape Town were unmercifully and often publicly beaten up by the police) and the threat of the removals, have made little protest. The Liberal Party and SACTU have both on a limited scale tried to organise active opposition but have met with little response. And yet this issue, charged as it inevitably is with tensions and human feelings, is a vital one. Many people in active opposition to the removal policy doubt that the government seriously intends pursuing its stated objective. Yet during the last year removals have been increased, a cabinet committee has been appointed to supervise removals, and a committee of non-government persons has been appointed to advise the government on certain aspects of the scheme.

Finally, and of greatest importance, public

opinion among the white electorate seems recently to have hardened in favour of the removals. This has largely been a reaction to the highly successful 1960 PAC campaign, the 1961 strike and more recently to the Paarl riots and the emergence of POQO as a dangerous movement in the Cape Province. It is interesting to note the large number of cabinet ministers who have been touring the Western Cape and selling the idea of the removals to the Nationalist Party rank and file.

*This is a brief background to the removals. No detail concerning the heartbreak, the indignity or the misery these removals inflict has been given. Enough to say that those members of the Black Sash who regularly attend the daily court sessions at Observatory, where so many Africans are "endorsed out" of Cape Town, leave the courts in tears and that the Advice Office, run jointly by the Institute of Race Relations and the Black Sash at Athlone, has thousands of stories of misery in its files.*

The question is "What to do?" First and foremost what is most needed is a commission, not necessarily government sponsored, to collate all the statistical details concerning the removals and to investigate the effects both in the Cape Peninsula and in Transkei of the economic and sociological implications of forcibly removing 200,000 people. An authoritative document of this nature might then stir industry and commerce into active opposition and lead to more than the few memoranda they have drawn up.

Details on the human side must continue to be brought to the public's attention and a continued effort must be made to organise active African opposition, one hopes eventually on a vast scale.

Many Africans still have a legal claim to remain in the Western Cape. However, suggestions of a change in Section 10 of the Natives Urban Areas Act have been made. The policy of removals from the Western Cape is the thin edge of the wedge. Apartheid is inevitably going to fail and to ensure it has a secure laager to retreat to, white South Africa may demand complete partition and once again the Eiselen line will be pushed back — at who can say what price?

## Life in "Free" Bantustan

UNHERALDED by the Press and unnoticed by the public 66 pages of Government Gazette Extraordinary arrived on November 16th, 1962, to swell the flood of rules and regulations which direct and circumscribe the lives of South Africa's African people. These particular 66 pages comprise the "Regulations for the Control and Administration of Townships in Bantu Areas". Any innocent who believes the myth about Africans being free "in their own areas" should read them.

The regulations are interesting not for the fact that they are so very different from regulations we have seen before but for the fact that they are so very like them. What gives them their specially interesting flavour is that they are *not* regulations for a Municipal location (as one might begin to think after reading a few sections) but for a township in Bantustan — a place where African people, we are assured, will enjoy rights not materially different from those their white neighbours enjoy over the border from Bantustan.

A few minutes' reading shows that the people who will wield the real power in the townships in free Bantustan will not be the "Bantu" but the same people as now wield the power in the urban locations and the reserves. They will, in descending order of importance, be the Secretary for Bantu Administration and Development, the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner, the local Bantu Affairs Commissioner, the "Manager" and the "Superintendent". This is the same hierarchy with which every urban African in "white" South Africa is so painfully familiar.

**Between them these officials will decide whether a man is a fit and proper person to reside in or to "own" land in a Bantu Township. They will decide where, how and in what kind of house he will live, whom he may have to stay with him and for how long they may stay. In a township in free Bantustan anyone who wants to pay a visit lasting more than thirty days had better get himself a "lodger's permit".**

A "certificate of occupation" in a township may be cancelled by the manager if in his opinion a person holding a certificate ceases to be "a fit and proper person to reside in the township". Under certain circumstances a "deed of grant" of "ownership" may be declared forfeit by the Minister.

*Section 1 of Chapter 6 lays down that "The Bantu Affairs Commissioner shall have the right to control, supervise, restrict or prohibit any meeting or assembly of Bantu persons within the township". Applications to hold a meeting will have to state what business is to be discussed. "A meeting or assembly shall, if circumstances warrant it, be under the supervision of the police and authorised employees, who shall have absolute power to control such meeting or assembly and whose instructions and directions shall be obeyed".*

As if as an afterthought Chapter 8 on Page 43 allows the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner when he "deems it expedient to do so" to establish Township Councils. The members of these Councils will be people *elected* by the residents and others *selected* by the Commissioner. *Selected* members may not exceed *elected* members, although there seems no reason why their numbers should not be equal. There may, in addition, be another member of the Council, a "Chief's Representative". The Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner may "direct" the Chief to appoint such a representative to the Township Council. If the Chief appoints somebody the Bantu Commissioner doesn't like, the Commissioner can veto the appointment. If the Chief fails to make the appointment the Bantu Commissioner may "himself appoint a suitable person".

The Township Council is "responsible for the local administration of the township". Its powers are petty ones of local administration, some of those which the Bantu Commissioner would otherwise exercise — such as the disposal of nightsoil and the control of livestock.

Even within these narrow limits it seems that the authorities fear the Council might get out of hand. They have taken steps to prevent it doing so. The Bantu Commissioner may veto any order

or direction given by it, he may tell it what to do and, if it fails to do it, do it himself in the name of the Council. He may decide that in future a council should only have advisory powers.

Briefly these are some of the facts about life as it is to be in a township in Bantustan. Anyone who has grown up in an urban location should feel quite at home there. Except for the occasional bit of window-dressing the one will be no different from the other. Final control and authority will rest firmly with Pretoria. If anyone has illusions about that, better forget them quickly.

## Intimidation

THE LAST FEW MONTHS have seen concerted attacks on liberalism by cabinet ministers and the SABC, the publication of the list of "named" communists, the banning of *New Age*, "house-arrests" and bannings get into full swing.

All these recent steps of the Government are part of a softening-up process designed to persuade people who do not support apartheid not to oppose the Government. Make no mistake: the campaign is already achieving results. Fewer and fewer people publicly protest against what the Government does.

The Liberal Party has been quite unequivocal in its criticism of every single one of these recent Government actions. Within the Party their main effect has been to rally and consolidate the membership. This is just the opposite of what the Nationalists hoped for. It is important that rank-and-file Liberals responded without hesitation in this way. On them rests the responsibility of seeing that civilised standards of public life are maintained in South Africa in the days ahead.

‡ Published by the Liberal Party of S.A., Room 1, 268 Longmarket Street, Pietermaritzburg, and printed by Lincey & Watson (Pty.) Ltd., 364 Voortrekker Road, Maitland, Cape Town.