

Again, if he would frankly face the issue of the Coloured people and their rights, if he would go back to the Coloured franchise as it was, better still if he would extend it, there would be joy not only in heaven but in London, Paris and Washington too.

We cannot imagine in our wildest moments of hopefulness that Mr Vorster will consent to abandon the conception of the "homelands". But if he would agree to replace the scattered fragments of Kwa Zulu into a single State, and to place the white sugar farmers and wattle farmers, who are the cause of the fragmentation, under a Kwa Zulu government, that would undoubtedly improve his image abroad.

Many of us would like to see much more done than has been indicated above, but the actions advocated here would at least be an earnest of good faith, and a ground for hope.

Will Mr Vorster, can Mr Vorster, do as much as this in six months? It would be nothing short of a bloodless revolution.

Would his Party follow him? Would the United Party rise above its past record, and refuse to make political capital out of these reforms among conservative white voters? Would not the Herstigte Nasional Party return from the banks of the political River Styx and stage a joyless resurrection in the South African world? These are all possibilities which Mr Vorster will have to take into account. Will he be big enough to face them? South Africa will be with him if he is.

There is one last possibility which might still, for a time, even the voice of independent Africa. That would be the calling of a National Convention adequately representative of all the races to deliberate freely and frankly as to the future of South Africa. It would be useless for Mr Vorster to do this unless he could promise that some at any rate of the major recommendations of such a National Convention would become law. This is perhaps the most striking action which Mr Vorster could take before May, 1975, and it would be wholly good in itself. If it were taken, 1975 might even see a South African Rugby Team playing overseas without hostile demonstrations, and University students cheering for a Nationalist Prime Minister.□

ONS VIR JOU SUID-AFRIKA



Dr. Anthony Barker

The Natal Witness

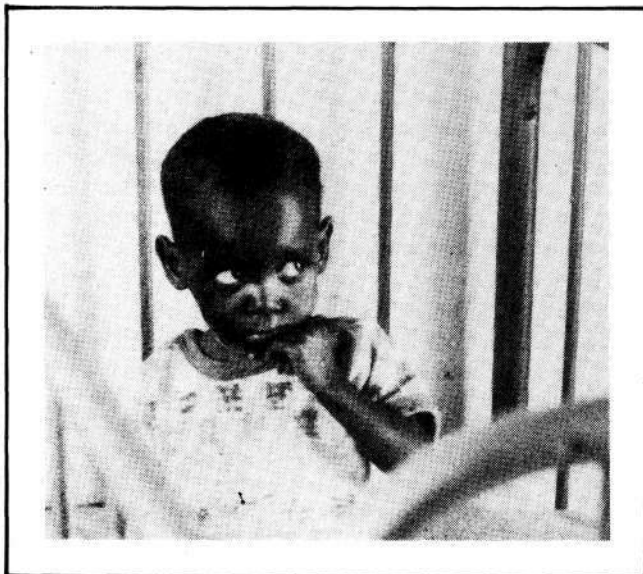
by Anthony Barker

'You will love me when I am dead', say the Zulus. Or, when I've gone you will at least find excuses for me. So the moment of leaving is proper for reflection; a time to realise how much we have loved, and to remember how much love has been extended to us. Yet this can be a dangerous exercise. None of us knows if his departure is final. None of us can be quite sure he is not making his ultimate bow one moment before stalking off the stage through the wrong door, whence he must reappear in shame, his exit-line botched and ridiculous. There is a danger, too that, freed from the necessity of coping with tomorrow, we see tomorrow's problems as insurmountable. I think none of us gets through the last week before the holidays with any great credit. So, as I sit down to write my farewells, I give due notice that we may well be seen again, haunting the old, familiar and loved places, if only on holiday. Those who drink the waters of Africa, return to drink them again.

An early instinct is to say thank you. It is a good instinct, because a loving one. And who among those who have lived in South Africa, can have failed to have loved the country? A thousand memories determine this: of tawny winter grass and turquoise horizons: of the fire of the aloes: of the Piet-my-vrou on a hot, damp summer morning. The stars seem nearer to South Africa, and the moon more silent here than anywhere else in the world. I never saw the shadows so blue as the shadows of early spring on whitewashed walls.

Beyond, and best of all, are the people. Which, for us in KwaZulu, has meant the Zulu people. Here are our neighbours, unbroken below forces too big, too menacing, too powerful for their manipulation. Here is a people who manage to receive the pain of society with a sort of joy which is as beautiful as it is unexpected. I make my astonished salute to these who have survived even the official plans for their betterment. They seem to have within themselves, a generosity of spirit which the weariness of the west has drained out of us whites. They really do forgive insult, whether intentional or by the insensitivity of our people. They laugh when I couldn't laugh: and love, where to me there might be blinding hatred. Ignorant, they teach: poor, they add to my privilege. This is a mystery whose key lies in their unforgotten humanity. Zulu people do not put up barriers against other men, because they value humanity more than do westerns. Blacks could not have invented Apartheid.

From my privileged seat as a country doctor, the view has been clear, grand and consistent. Though, in my time, I have known every sin to have been committed: though murder has been done, and rape, and the offending of little children, there has been missing from all this disgrace, any form of calculation. Violence has not been systematised, or worse still, rationalised, as it has been in the white world of power. Medicine gives an incomparable opportunity for seeking this man-ness in men. Young men, who would pass in city streets with scorn in their eyes, smile from their sickness. I have seen dull, defeated old women come to life with the returning strength of their recovering grandchildren; or vast in dignity before pitiful death. The blind, who had groped among their possessions in the blind houses of KwaZulu, have seen again after operation, and cried out with joy in their restored vision.



This doctor's point of view is perhaps an unfair one? As taken from a privileged position? Certainly it is. Yet I am glad to be able to report to the Nation that here, under the harrow, is still a man, a woman, a creature of like passions to ourselves. Which we have been in danger of forgetting. I value this people who have taught me so much, above all the tourist attractions of our land: above the rhinoceros in the game park, the thunder of smoking waterfalls, the blue of our heavens and the creaking of our ox-axles. For this, I thank God.

But what of the State? What of its rulers: the money of it: the prisons: the Acts of a sovereign Parliament: the national shames that make us so apologetic before our friends, so furious before our critics? Here is sadness which is not diminished in my mind by the thought of my leaving it. I hate the spying and the informing: I hate the hypocrisy: I hate Apartheid: I hate bannings, imprisonments and all the fearful penalties of disagreement. But, most of all, I hate the dishonesty which marks every aspect of our national life. We have become a people dedicated to make what is **not**, look like what is. And we have bolstered up our deceptions by lies. I quote the Russian, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, writing of the communist state which has the same problems with its ideology as we do here with ours:

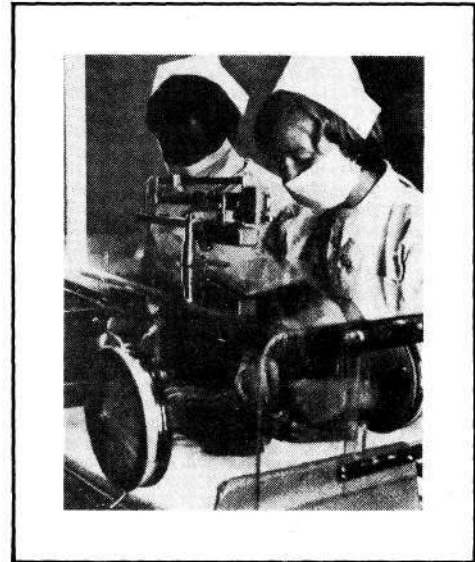
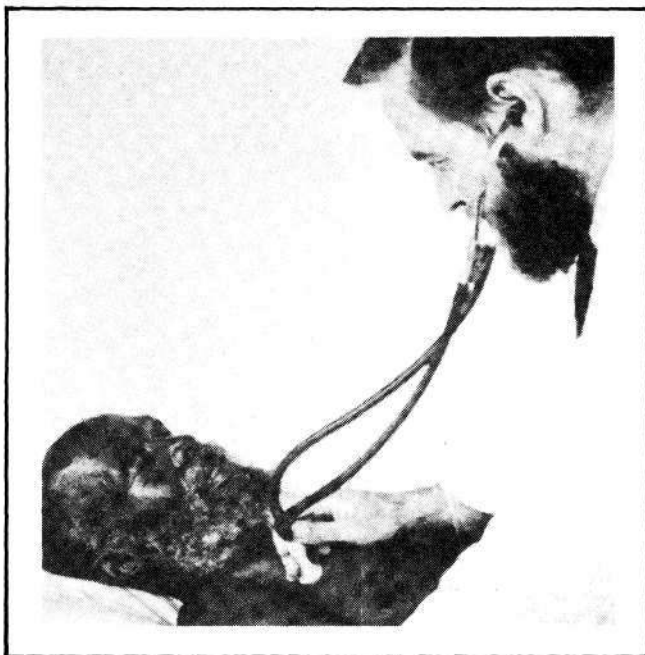
"This ideology does nothing now but sap our strength and bind us. It clogs up the whole life of society—minds, tongues, radio and press—with lies, lies, lies. For how else can something dead pretend that it is living, except by erecting a scaffolding of lies? Everything is steeped in lies and **everybody knows it**—and says so openly in private conversation, and jokes and moans about it, but in their official speeches they go on hypocritically parroting what they are 'supposed to say', and with equal hypocrisy and boredom read and listen to the speeches of others. . ."

No less than Hitler in the '30s, we here have dreamed up an ethnic dream. As Hitler, in the name of his dream, set about the Final Solution by slaughtering 6 million Jews, so—though in lesser degree—we curtail the privilege and reduce the humanity of more than twice that number. Moreover, our ideas are held under a religious sanction which must grieve the heart of God. For we do not call what we are doing discrimination, but differentiation: not oppression but development, a separate development which, we say, will give each man his true value in his own area. Is the part greater than the whole? I think not. Men are men, surely; and Blacks are men, like English men and Afrikaner men. Here is the dishonesty that, though we dress it all up to look like justice; or even like respect for old custom; or even to resemble kindness itself; there lies at the heart of it all, but one thought: to preserve white identity and to create a white state in Southern Africa which shall 'never' admit to black sharing of power, privilege or citizenship. It is on this hidden rock that all liberalism is caused to founder. He is the greatest enemy of this state who teaches the universality of man; the commonalty of human experience, the undivided nature of human aspiration. To National thinking, the idea of a shared society is the supreme unacceptability. The idea is **so bad, so irresponsible, so evil**, that it can be plucked out, root and branch, with confidence that those who pluck are doing God's uncontested will.

In the name of this white nation, men are picked off, one by one and group by group, for their disagreement. Driven by despair, or urged by their yearnings, men and women have expressed their distaste for the system. They have been rewarded with banning, imprisonment, disgrace and deportation. Despite assurances to the contrary, many of these disabled ones are never told their faults, though they are given five years of ample leisure in which to make their guesses. Insistence on orthodoxy gives us new forms of censorship, not to keep us pure and unspotted from the dirty imagery of the childish and the pornographic, but to hide us from the bursting light of liberty which might prove too bright for our hooded eyes. This insistence, also, makes us spend millions on military exercises which we euphemistically call defence: but where is the enemy? Not, I think, the faceless forces of international communism, but the rising spirit of men who also want to live and share in the pleasant things of our privileged lives.

Just because we think as white men, in white terms, all sorts of things go wrong, all sorts of things are unjust. We have an uneven health service for this reason, so that most of the nation's doctors are in the white areas, doctoring whites. In our hospitals, black patients lie under the beds, though this does not happen in white hospitals. We preach Family Planning, providing free contraception, but do not guarantee a good quality of life for those already born. For the preservation of white identity, we perpetuate migratory labour, even though we know it as a cancer in the heart of our society. We speak piously of Christian marriage, yet make it impossible for men and women to live in any sort of hallowed association whatever. Our thoughts on the homelands but make these things worse, since we want the hands of black men to work our mills, but we don't want the black man himself, whom we mendaciously refer to as a guest worker in our cities.

Therefore we are humbugs. We spoil this great land by our greed, and despoil our fellow men by our determination to stay on top. We are aware of our duplicity, and sometimes will surprisingly admit to it, in the right company. But we



avoid public debate, preferring to ridicule the question: it is naive ("you will understand when you've been here a bit longer") to ask why we don't have normal human association with blacks? The tolerant smile answers the earnest question. Perhaps this is just as well, since our attempts at public rationalisation have had about them the musical-comedy quality of the ridiculous. Our sports policy must be the supreme example of this, its intricacies couched in words which, Humpty-Dumpty-like, 'mean what we want them to mean'. See the Minister of Sport fighting his way through the absurd phraseology—I am convinced he really knows what to do—towards openness and the eventual enjoyment of game by anyone who wants to play them! The poor man is in an unenviable position, no doubt, but he must forgive my lack of enthusiasm for those occasions when he manages to cheat himself and produce a bit of open sport. Job reservation is suffering the same fate as multinational sport, with the former Minister in charge of railways as the principal architect of its downfall. Here we have seen a frontal attack launched by a Minister of State, and loudly applauded by the legislators of this unwholesome law.

But who is going to have the guts to wipe these silly laws off the statue book? Who is going to say: O.K., we were wrong: Verwoerd was wrong: Malan was wrong, the whole structure is erected on wobbly foundations? It will be very hard for National politicians to do this, since they cannot easily de-throne their seers. We may have pity here, for retreat is never easy, and seldom gracefully conducted, especially while they are watching who dwell in the other camp. But clearly, these unworkable laws must be repealed if we are to remain honest men. This is most true of the Immorality Act, which has broken so many, and caused so many suicides even within the citadel itself. But the necessity is there for all these acts. Are we going to scrub them out, or just go on pretending that they don't lie there, couched in the terrible language of the Gazette?

The photographs on pages 4, 5 and 6 were taken at the Charles Johnson Memorial Hospital. Dr Anthony Barker has just retired after being in charge of the hospital for over 20 years. He and his wife Dr Margaret Barker devotedly helped the Zulu people and will be greatly missed.

Between those who yearn for a white nation in all its purity, and those who cheerfully long for a shared society with the restrictions down (albeit they must be dismantled with care), there is a great gulf fixed. We are unsure how this is to be bridged. I wish I knew that National theorists **wanted** to bridge it, for, at the moment, I don't think they do. Yet what an eruption of glory might come were we to start trying! Ons vir jou, Suid Afrika! really we are. We desire with all our hearts that a fit society might be set up in South Africa with a measure of justice spread through all the people.



We are far from this ideal, not only because our thinking has been slow and incomplete, but because we are all caught up in a long neurosis, which has us in thrall. This sickness, that incapacitates us more than we know, is bred of festering memories that we should have forgotten this 50 years back. It is compounded of guilt and ennui and physical anxiety. It makes us tetchy, exclusivist, nationalistic, chauvinist and brimming with hurt pride. People, we say, decline to play Rugby with us because they are our enemies. But is this really so? I think not. I think rather that people are telling us to grow up, to put our house in order, and, above all, to laugh a little at ourselves whose mouths go down at the corners, and who live in such self-righteous gloom. Our image is bad because people expect us to be good. The world is disappointed in us. It sees us as sinning against our own understandings, and against the marvellous and hard-won traditions of European liberalism.

We see our problems as unique, incomprehensible to those not born and bred here. But, again, is this really so? Aren't we really seeing the predictable end of a story that began when Farewell and Isaacs and Fynn settled under the watchful eye of Shaka Zulu at Port Natal? Isn't today just an extension of the murder of the Trekker leaders by Dingane, from whom those leaders were seeking land for their settlement? Far from having an unexpected or unique quality about it, our history fits well into the pattern of Empire. It is the story of the meeting of cultures and the struggle for land and resources. If this is so, and our South African dilemma can be so readily traced to its origins, then we are at fault if we do not use our reason for the solution of our problems. In the homeland policies there is more than a hint that we have not entirely given up the old Imperial formula of Divide and Rule. With a little application, we might alter that to a more humane policy of Unite and Live.

At this time of going, we leave with a genuine expression of love and concern that we might all try to set the national scene straight. No one doubts that this will take a lot of doing. No one doubts that we might not get it right straight away, but that is no sufficient reason for our not trying. Essentially, this is a spiritual exercise, demanding penitence. Perhaps that sounds naive, unrealistic? Penitence is generally held not to be applicable to nations, but we talk a lot about our Christian heritage here in South Africa, so I don't think the idea of penitence is entirely unfamiliar to us. Might we not acknowledge our faults? Might we not make public statement of our lack of freedom to do the right thing, locked as we are in history and myth? Such would startle a critical world which presently looks upon us as more misguided than evil. Such would be a strong act of a sensible people and must win us many friends with ability to help.

Then, we could start rebuilding. Or must we wait until we are forced, to begin? I think we should start by preparing our minds for the change that is inevitable and that is being taught us by the altered circumstances within the former Portuguese territories in Africa. We may not, ourselves, be the agents of change, though we seem to have all the power in our hands at present. Change will come from the powerless, by a series of minor upheavals and hopefully in a peaceful guise. It has always been little things that created the mood; the horeshoe nails of history which alter the course of battles and topple eternal dynasties. When that time comes, shall we be ready for it? Will our ideas of preparedness be a bank-account in Switzerland, or a joyful acceptance of a new order? The latter is the true patriotism, and may yet be found more commonly among those who at present, in their doubts about the National System, are made to appear unpatriotic.

It would be a great time to live through, and a time to stay around for. It would be a time of enhanced productivity and wider sharing of the sweets of our economy. We might expect education to become free and universal; medicine to be liberated from its vested interests; agriculture to be stimulated by hope and an open market. It will be a time when everyone will be able to give, both black and white, and everyone able to receive also of the riches that others bring. It would be a time when BOSS became obsolete, and the Special Branch an anachronism; when the burden of military finance would be lightened, because we should not, by then, be so threatened as we feel ourselves today. It would be a time when the prison doors might open again to release many from lifelong and bitter incarceration.

Utopian? Certainly. But as André Bieler has written: "The world has arrived at a point where Utopia alone is realistic." □

