

in this issue . . .

EDITORIALS: 1. CARNEGIE AND THE VOTE	2
2. MORE VIOLENCE	3
THE HOEXTER COMMISSION AND THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDICIARY by David Unterhalter	3
THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT by Vortex	6
HEALTH SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS IN ZIMBABWE by Anne Raynal	7
A REPLY TO Dr. O. DHLOMO by Peter Colenbrander	10
THE CARNEGIE CONFERENCE by Norman Bromberger	11
SPLENDID LICENCE : A review of Wole Soyinka's <i>Ake: the Years of Childhood</i> by Alan Paton	14
CONTROLLING VOICES: A review of Richard Rive's <i>Advance Retreat</i> by M.J. Daymond	15
VARIATIONS ON ORTHODOXY: A review of van Wyk Smith and MacLennan's <i>Olive Schreiner and After</i> by Jill Arnott	17
UNITY by Philip de Villiers	19

COVER PHOTOGRAPH by Joe Alfors: *WORK-SEEKERS AT EMPLOYMENT BUREAU. From LESOTHO – THE ROAD TO THE MINES; CARNEGIE ENQUIRY EXHIBITION.*

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EDITORIALS

1. CARNEGIE AND THE VOTE

Over fifty years ago the first Carnegie Inquiry produced a report on the extent of white poverty in South Africa which resulted in a programme of government action, which, allied to the rapid industrialisation of South Africa in the war years and after, has largely eliminated that phenomenon from our midst. The second Carnegie Inquiry, concerned mainly although not entirely, with the problem of black poverty, brought together a remarkable amount of research material on the subject at its conference at the University of Cape Town in April. The conference itself is discussed elsewhere in this issue of **REALITY**, and we hope to publish some of the papers presented to it from time to time in this journal. It is important that they reach as wide an audience as possible.

The research material presented at UCT was much more wide-ranging and comprehensive, relative to the total South African condition, than was that collected 50 years ago. It will now be sifted and collated and a

final report is to be compiled next year, from which recommendations for a programme to eliminate black poverty will presumably come. What chance is there that its findings will be translated into a government-supported effort which will see an end to black poverty in our country within a time-span comparable to that in which white poverty was eradicated? It is not easy to be optimistic under present circumstances. The first Carnegie Report brought the white poor much sympathy and no doubt the second will bring the same to the black poor. But the white poor had the vote, and it was the vote and not the sympathy which provided the lever for change.

Until black people get the vote at the place where real financial power lies, which is Pretoria, it is not likely that the recommendations from the second Carnegie Inquiry will get the same government support as did those from the first. Nevertheless, both we and the government will know the size of the problem and how it might eventually be resolved. □