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COVER PHOTOGRAPH by P. Weinberg

A DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH

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EDITORIAL

THE ORDERLY MOVEMENT BILL

Financial journalist John Kane-Berman told a recent meeting of American businessmen with interests in South Africa that it must be "one of the cruellest and most massively destructive laws currently being considered by any government anywhere"; church leaders from at least four major communities in South Africa have said that they will not be able to obey its provisions; the Black Sash has called it the "Genocide Bill". It is the draft "Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill" circulated by Dr. Koornhof's Department of Cooperation and Development for comment.

The Bill proposes to put a clamp on the life-prospects of every black man in South Africa. If he is lucky, and qualifies within its terms to live in urban, industrialised South Africa, his opportunities for developing his economic talents will be considerable, and his opportunities for developing his political talents will be nil. He will be part of

a small, economically privileged, politically neutered minority of the black community.

His brothers who work in the towns but don't qualify in terms of the Bill to live there, will have to reconcile themselves to becoming perpetual migrant workers — and their descendants thereafter, and for evermore. His brothers who live on white-owned farms in rural South Africa will find that their chances of escape to the towns from the feudal straight-jacket into which many of them are born will be eliminated by this Bill. Their **only** escape from the farms will be to the homelands. And what will they find there? A vast and growing mass of people entirely dependent for their survival on procuring a permit from Pretoria to allow them to go and work in "white" South Africa, where the only jobs worth having are. The possibilities for their consideration, as they

spend despairing days in queues at Labour Bureaux, will be starvation, crime, or revolution.

Mr. Kane-Berman told his American audience that it was nonsense to say that the Nationalist Government had no plan for Blacks in urban and rural "white" South Africa. On the contrary, they had a very clear and comprehensive plan, and the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill was it. He called on them, and business leaders in South Africa, to raise the strongest possible objections to the Bill

to try to persuade the Government to abandon it.

We haven't particularly noticed them doing so, but other people have, and rumour has it that the Bill may be shelved. Shelving it is not enough, the incinerator is the only right place for it. But even the incinerator won't help as long as the "solution" this Bill offers to the situation of black people outside the homelands remains a cornerstone of Nationalist policy. For then all that will arise from the flames will be the same monster with a different name. □

SIR ROBERT BIRLEY

a tribute by E.M. Wentzel.

To honour Sir Robert Birley is to assert the value of his coming to South Africa. Few of those who met Sir Robert or knew his contribution to South Africa would challenge that value and yet, according to much conventional wisdom, that engagement with South Africa ought to be a matter of controversy. South Africa is after all a pariah; beyond the pale to decent people. Equity bars its members from any involvement with South Africa as the silent intervals in the film of the Royal Wedding so effectively asserted. There can be no normal sport in an abnormal society, assert those who boycott. Many academics would never enter South Africa. Shirley Williams cancelled her trip. There is a strong voice for disinvestment in South Africa. And so on.

It is to this leper land that Sir Robert came. He taught at a university not free to admit all those it would wish to admit. He tried to make that step-son of the system, the Soweto school, a place more worthy of its pupils. In fact, his was a prime case of working within the system. It was not even a case of one who worked within a system within which he was domiciled, but rather of one who elected of his own free will to do so.

Does his life among us not tell us that these issues are too complex to formalise into a rigid moral rule?

There is an appropriate moral disgust which decent people abroad feel for South Africa. A holiday — pure and simple — in South Africa can be avoided. The sports boycott was salutary and cannot be answered by some half-hearted response, nor will that be permitted by those who boycott us. No one is obliged to take the undue profits which an investment in a society grounded on cheap labour may give. These are but some examples of moral and practical action against apartheid.

But that all being said, let this be a means not an absolute moral end. The wages of total isolation is a certain delivery into the power of those who will not bend until broken; but will not serve those who know that Sir Robert's coming was no evil but a hopeful engagement.

His experience in Germany taught him that the future of that society was built on those who within Germany — modestly and often in fear — engaged themselves because they were there, but reserved the commitment of moral loyalty to their hopes for what might be and not what was.

Sir Robert came to South Africa to encourage just such people and in their tribute to his memory they acknowledge this. □