

LIBERAL OPINION

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NATIONAL CONFERENCE REPORT

The Importance of Carrying On

THE LIBERAL PARTY'S 10th Anniversary National Conference took place in Cape Town—the scene of the Party's birth in May, 1953—over the first week-end in July. The state of the South African Press being what it is, the Conference did not get the publicity it might have. Nevertheless, it was an important and significant occasion.

The Chairman's report for the past year and the decisions taken for the future by the Conference showed a political organisation which has come a long way, and done a great deal, during the past ten years.

ACTIVE ALONE

In spite of the encroachment of apartheid legislation, growing Government powers and increasing intimidation, the Liberal Party has become the one effectively non-racial political organisation active in South Africa. Its plans for the future show that it has no intention of being content to remain only that.

During 1962/1963 the Liberal Party either led or participated in almost every important protest against Nationalist laws encroaching on civil liberties. The campaigns against the General Laws Amendment Bill ("90-Days Detention Bill") and the Bantu Laws Amendment Bill were the most important of these.

In the future one of the Party's principal roles will be to continue to protest against infringements of human rights. As the volume of public protest, black and white, declines in South Africa, it becomes all the more important for Liberals to persist in this. If they do not, South Africans will soon forget what human rights are, and they will no longer even know when they are losing them.

THE FUTURE

During the coming year the Liberal Party will continue to proclaim the principles in which it believes at every opportunity. These principles are fundamental to the creation of a decent South African society. The fact that the Nationalists don't like them and have attacked them more vigorously than ever during the past year is the best assurance there could be that these ideas are the right ones.

Also the Liberal Party will continue to fight the application of apartheid policy wherever it can. Apartheid is not a theory which goes no further than the impersonal discussions of a drawing room or debating chamber. It is a policy which, in its practical application, reaches right into the hearts and homes of millions of people. It separates wives from their husbands, children from their parents, uproots settled communities and puts people out of their jobs. Everyday it commits a thousand offences against the human dignity of ordinary

OPPOSITION

It is at the point of its application that it must be opposed—in the Group Areas proclamations, in the Job Reservation proclamations and in the uprooting of settled communities from their long-established homes.

On the grand scale the practical application of apartheid means the establishment of the Bantustans, the Western Cape removal of Africans and the destruction of freehold African rights in "white" South Africa. Liberals have fought this too, throughout the past year, and will continue to do so in the future.

One day apartheid is going to go. Nobody knows exactly how or when this will happen. All that we do know is that it **will** happen and that when it does, we want something different, and much better, to take its place. What will that new society be? It will have to be a very different society from the one in which we live today and one which is prepared to do something about the vast differences in wealth and opportunity which characterise South Africa today. It must be a society which guarantees individual liberties and rejects authoritarian solutions and methods. Its framework is going to have to be very carefully worked out. During 1963/1964 the Liberal Party will conduct discussions at all levels of the Party designed to produce practical solutions to the problems which will confront South Africa the day after apartheid.

PROGRAMME

This then is what the coming year holds for the Liberal Party — a programme of continued protest against each new encroachment on individual liberties; the vigorous and repeated statement of the principles by which the Party stands and which the Nationalists find so objectionable; opposition to every new application of apartheid, whether locally or nationally; and detailed discussion and planning of the new South Africa which will, we hope, succeed the old apartheid one.

VICTIMISATION BY POLICE

IN THE THREE MONTH PERIOD since the last issue of Liberal Opinion was published the Liberal Party has suffered considerably from action taken against its members under the Suppression of Communism Act.

Jordan Ngubane, National Vice-President of the Party, one of South Africa's most distinguished critics of authoritarianism and staunchest opponents of all racialism, has been served with a series of banning orders, each effective for five years. Mr. Ngubane was away on a writing assignment in Swaziland at the time and his wife returned from work to find the notices pinned to the door of the house.

The effect of the bans is to confine Mr. Ngubane to the Inanda Magistracy, some miles from Durban; to prevent him from attending any kind of gathering for a period of five years; and to prevent him from publishing anything in South Africa. As Mr. Ngubane is a journalist and writer by profession, the effect of the ban would be to take away from him his means of earning a livelihood. Faced with this prospect he has decided to stay in Swaziland, where he can write and publish freely.

TERENCE BEARD

Terence Beard, Vice-Chairman of the Cape Division of the Party, has also received a 5-year banning order. Mr. Beard is a lecturer at Rhodes University, in Grahamstown. He was at Fort Hare as a lecturer at the time the Government took over that institution. He was sacked by the Government on the grounds that he was "sabotaging" the implementation of apartheid there. It was then that he obtained an appointment at Rhodes, where he has been since.

Although Mr. Beard is ostensibly banned for "furthering the aims of Communism" it is a

BLACKSPOTS

A "BLACKSPOT" is an African freehold area in "white" South Africa, an offence against apartheid and something which it is Government policy to remove ELSEWHERE. That this policy will cause great insecurity, heartbreak, and the uprooting of between a quarter and half a million people, seems to be a matter of complete indifference to the powers-that-be.

The Blackspot "problem" is centered on Natal, where there are some 250 of these condemned communities. An organisation called the Northern Natal African Landowners' Association has been established for some years and its object is to oppose the removals. On Sunday, September 1, 1,200 Blackspot residents attended a mass prayer meeting at Roosboom, one of the threatened areas. At this prayer meeting the following appeal was adopted:

We people of Natal, faced with the threat of losing our land and property which we have owned honourably and legally for more than half a century, are assembled here to pray to God to help us and give us courage, and to ask Him that we should be left in peace in our lands. We make this appeal to our White fellow Christians and fellow citizens:

- *Pray for us that we may be given courage and be left in peace on our lands.*
- *Speak for us who have no voice to speak for ourselves. Intercede for us with the Government and the Authorities.*
- *Work for us so that this terrible plan of removal may be abandoned.*

The Landowners' Association intends to go ahead with its plans to oppose and publicise the removals, some of which are imminent.

reflection on the abuses to which this Act is put that, at the time of the introduction of Mr. Vorster's original "sabotage" Bill, Mr. Beard produced a document drawing the most telling comparisons between the methods of Mr. Vorster and those of Joseph Stalin. This document was quoted extensively by the Parliamentary Opposition in the debate on the Bill.

Mr. Beard was detained in Umtata earlier this year when, with three other Liberals, he was investigating allegations of police brutality in the Transkei.

With him at that time were Dr. C. F. Goodfellow, Mr. Cromwell Nododile and Mr. Hammington Majija. In the period under review both Dr. Goodfellow, another Rhodes University lecturer, and Mr. Nododile, have been summoned before a magistrate and warned to desist from activities "calculated to further the aims of Communism". Mr. Nododile is the Liberal Party Organiser in the Cape. His work is exclusively calculated to further the aims of Liberalism. Is this what he must now stop doing?

An attempt was made to arrest Mr. Majija after he had spoken at a meeting at Bumbane, the home of Paramount Chief Sabata of Tembuland. Tribesmen attending the meeting were so incensed that the police decided to let Mr. Majija go—for the moment.

"WARNINGS"

Magisterial "warnings" have also been delivered to Mr. Peter Rodda, Chairman of the Port Elizabeth Branch of the Party, and to Mr. Norman Bromberger, a Port Elizabeth member of the National Committee. As in all cases of "warnings" the Magistrate has been quite unable to tell the people concerned what it is they must stop doing. The usual answer is "You should know!"

The first Party member in the Cape Province to receive a 5-year banning order was Peter Hjul, Chairman of the Cape Division. On July 31, Mr. Hjul was arrested and has now been charged with having contravened his banning order. It seems that the case against him is that he had refreshments with friends at his private club. Mr. Hjul was released on R800 bail and appeared in court on August 19. His case was remanded to the middle of September, the magistrate refusing to reduce bail.

On the same day, August 19, 18 Cape Liberals appeared in court charged under the Criminal Laws Amendment Act for having staged a poster demonstration on February 16 in protest against the original ban on Peter Hjul. They were found guilty and fined R50 (or 25 days). Neil Ross, the "organiser" of the protest, was fined R75 (or 30 days). The matter has been taken on appeal. If the appeal is dismissed the whole future of poster protests may be in jeopardy.

VAUGHAN STONE

Vaughan Stone, Johannesburg schoolmaster and long-standing member of the Liberal Party, was detained for several weeks under the 90-days detention Act and was then taken straight from his cell to Jan Smuts airport and deported to Britain. Mr. Stone was a British subject and the police alleged that he had organised an escape route to Bechuanaland for political refugees.

Maritz van den Berg of Pretoria won his appeal against a conviction, and sentence of 30 days imprisonment, without the option of a fine, for allegedly entering a "proclaimed native area" without a permit. Peter Brown, National Chairman, appeared in the Mtunzini Magistrates Court in Zululand in July, charged with having held a meeting in the nearby Mangethe Reserve without the Bantu Commissioner's permission. He pleaded guilty and was fined R20 (or 20 days imprisonment).

To these examples of their free use of their powers under the law the police have added continuing attempts to intimidate Party members. This intimidation takes the form of visiting, and questioning members and by trying to persuade their employers to sack them. Unfortunately this last technique is too often successful, especially where employers are dependent on Government permits to remain in business.

The Abuse of Power

(Address by ALAN PATON at the Public Opening of the National Congress of the Liberal Party, Cape Town, 1963)

THE LAST TIME I was here was when we held a meeting to protest against the banning of Peter Hjul. On that same evening Randolph Vigne received his banning order. This National Congress of the Liberal Party sends them both, their wives and their families, our warm and affectionate greetings. We also send our affectionate greetings to our National Vice-President, Jordan Ngubane, who has since been banned, and to his wife and family.

Smears

We also had another anxiety on our minds—for the first time a newspaper of repute, reporting the hearings of the Paarl Commission, came out and reported, by means of a headline, the identification of liberals with the murders at Bashee River. The name of the Liberal Party was also mentioned, in an oblique way, so that while no direct accusation was made, the smear was left. We reacted so strongly that Mr. Justice Snyman protested that Mr. Advocate Steyn (representing the S.A. Police and others before the Commission) had been wounded at the very root of his honour.

The Judge was not in the least concerned that we had been wounded at the very root of our honour, and in a much graver way.

Mr. Justice Snyman has now made a kind of retraction. He says the Liberal Party was not implicated "as such" in the Bashee River murders. As far as we are concerned he can keep his retraction.

Unfounded Charges

Judge Snyman ought to answer an important question in the public interest. He says that white persons were concerned with the violence in the Transkei. He says—I quote—"Some of them have been described by witnesses as members of the Liberal Party. Some were described merely as liberals". **BUT WHO WERE THEY?** I am astonished at this. The Judge tells us what witnesses say—but not one scrap of evidence has been adduced to show that these witnesses spoke a word of truth. This is what I can only call astonishing behaviour.

Mr. de Wet Nel has acted similarly. He also has evidence but it is not in the "public interest" to say what it is. One can hardly credit such a situation. A leading Minister has evidence relating to murder, but he cannot reveal it. Many people conclude—and many say that they conclude—that whatever evidence the Minister has, it would not bear testing in a Court of Law.

We, as Liberals, must defend ourselves. The days have passed when the civil liberties of all are defended by all.

A leading newspaper can smear us in a bold headline, and yet give little prominence to any reply. A judge can say there was evidence, and never test that evidence to see if it was true or false. A Minister can say there is evidence relating to murder, and regret that he cannot reveal it. A Member of Parliament can make charges against the Liberal Party "as such", and take good care not to repeat these charges outside the House.

Power Abused

These are signs of the times. You can say pretty hot things about the Black Sash, Nusas, the Progressives, the Universities of Cape Town and Wits, and get away with it. You can say

pretty well what you like about anybody, provided you are on the side of power. These people who say these things—and here I exclude the Judge and the Prosecutor for sound reasons—would not have the courage to say them if they were not on the side of power. What is more, many of these same people, if there was a marked shift in power, would be the first to come to the Hjul's and the Vignes and the Ngubanes, and say: **"You are right, what can we do to help you?"** And some of them would be impudent enough to add: **"We knew you were right all the time"**.

If I am ever a member of a government, I give you my word it will be the government of a State in which those who have power will have no greater civil liberty than those who have no power at all.

While I am speaking about power, let me say one more thing. Some opponents of the Government lose heart because everything seems to go right for the Nationalists. This is a pure illusion, maintained by power. Things are not going right. Things aren't going right when Dr. Donges includes one-and-a-half million Coloured people and half-a-million Indian people with three million White people, and talks of five million hearts **beating as one**.

Absurd Appeal

Ten years ago Dr. Donges' Party wanted all the Indians sent back to India. Why should all our hearts now beat as one? As we gather here, the Indian citizens of Johannesburg are being squeezed out of the heart of that great city, and forced into the veld twenty miles away. Indian traders in Durban are facing the same calamity. Here in Cape Town Coloured people are being forced out of homes in which they have lived for generations. Both Coloured and Indian people live in the shadow of the Group Areas Act and Job Reservation and Population Registration.

Why should they suddenly want to stand shoulder to shoulder with the makers of these cruel laws? Why should Dr. Donges utter such

an absurdity? Is it because he feels so certain and secure? Why should Mr. Fouche think that Africans will suddenly want to defend our common country? Why in God's name should they want to fight for the Urban Areas Act and Job Reservation and the removal of freehold rights in hundreds of areas?

Let me tell Dr. Donges one thing, that there are tens of thousands of Coloured and Indian people who have no intention of being used as tools against the African population.

I can imagine with what contempt the Nationalists of old would have regarded an Afrikaner who allowed himself to be used as a tool for maintaining Afrikaners in a subordinate position. And that is what Dr. Donges wants to use Coloured and Indian people for, is it not? Hasn't he made it clear that they must fight for the "traditional way of life"?

On an occasion such as this, one must take stock. We have been in existence for ten years. When we began, we knew we had set out on an unpopular and perhaps dangerous course. We knew that we were dealing with a Government for whom such things as freedom of speech and assembly and association were nonsense. Habeas Corpus is now nonsense too. And the reservation of penal action to the Courts. Well, we've run into the dangers that we foresaw.

Courage

It takes courage to set out on a dangerous course, but it takes even more courage to continue on it when the actual dangers are met. One gets tired and frustrated, and sometimes ostracism and political loneliness are harder to endure than one foresaw.

Did we go wrong? Was it perhaps wrong or foolish to condemn tremendous schemes of national reconstruction like the Group Areas Act and Bantu Authorities? Was it perhaps wrong to organise people and make them more militant, only to find that the more militant

they became, the more ruthlessly they were punished for their militancy? Are we not perhaps living in a crisis of law and order, and shouldn't we support the forces of law and order until the crisis has passed? And lastly, isn't Apartheid perhaps good after all; not absolutely good, but the best you can get in an imperfect world? Isn't it true, perhaps, that races just can't live together, and that the best thing to do is for them to live separately?

If I, as your National President, as a man who is, as Angus Wilson once described him, a private man pushed into public life, can make it again clear why we founded the Liberal Party, and can reaffirm our beliefs and principles and policies, then I am glad to do so.

Let me talk to you just a few minutes as a writer rather than a politician, and talk to you about plucking the flower Safety from the nettle Danger. They talk about the diversity of the Cape flora, but the nettle Danger is all I see growing around here. And I can't promise to pluck the flower Safety from it. What you have to do is to pluck some kind of life from it, some kind of meaning for yourselves and your children.

Ten years ago we thought that the only way to do it was to work for a non-racial society; people said it was impossible, and we said Apartheid was even more impossible. We still say so. We see no future for Apartheid at all. We see an illusion of a future, but that's only because the Government has power. We see, not only ourselves in this country, and people likeminded, but also we see the whole world turning against Apartheid with a massiveness of revulsion that has not been equalled before now. We know it would be more immediately comfortable to believe in Apartheid, but we knew that at that moment of surrender it would be our reason and our integrity that surrendered.

Surrender

If Vigne and Hjul and Ngubane had surrendered to a belief in Apartheid, they could be sitting pretty, writing text-books for Bantu

Education. Sobukwe wouldn't be out on Robben Island, and Mandela wouldn't be in gaol for five years, and Luthuli would be getting a big job in Zulustan. I myself would get a splendid job on the Publications Board, and you'd hear me on the S.A.B.C., talking on such topics as "Who Says Our News is Slanted?" and "Who Wants these 48 Playwrights, Anyway?" and "The Greatness of Portugal". And, in my bravest moments, you'd hear me on the subject "The English Press is not 100% bad".

All these things could happen if we were allied with power. But what a petty, blind arrogant, local power it is.

Dr. Verwoerd's foreign policy is in ashes, and he himself admits that he would embarrass the nations of the West by visiting them. I don't blame Eric Louw for this. He merely took a bad policy and made it look worse. Dr. Verwoerd and Eric Louw have never understood that you can't have a foreign policy with Apartheid in it. You can't have relations with people abroad when you reject their brothers at home. Eric Louw has had only one debating argument in his whole life, and that is: "You say I'm bad, and now I'll prove you're bad too."

Blindness

I am astonished when I read and hear of all the reasons for our dangerous isolation. It was once due to agitators and Communists. Then the Liberals, and to a lesser extent the Progressives were blamed. Then the P.A.C. and Poqo took the centre of the stage, and that gave Mr. Vorster his new and colossal powers. Now the searchlight has switched back to the A.N.C. I am most astonished when the United Party is blamed for our isolation. But, of course, one expects the Black Sash, NUSAS, and the English Press to have their turns. Even that impeccable organisation, the Rotary Club, has been accused of subversive work.

One thing it seems the Government will not see—and it will not see because it does not want to see—that it is Apartheid, segregation,

Job Reservation, Group Areas, the discrimination of the powerful against the weak, the holding of a man back because he is not white, the suggestion that White and Coloured people and Indians are all in varying degrees superior to Africans; it is this that has isolated us from the rest of the world.

The Government, which looks upon itself as so practical, fulminates against Africans and African States as short-sighted, nasty-minded ranters, who are biting off their noses to spite their faces. What effect do such arguments have?—precisely nothing. Whatever may be the faults of Africans, one thing is certain—they hate Apartheid with all their hearts, and long only to destroy it. That is the cardinal fact.

The crisis of South Africa today is not one of law and order. It is said to be, because thus many lovers of law and order are seduced, and give their moral support to the regime.

The crisis of today is fundamentally the crisis of Apartheid, and of Apartheid in its worst aspect, namely baasskap. It takes courage to say so in these times, but that is what we have to do. Dr. Donges is appealing to Coloured and Indian people to support White supremacy, for the sake of a few scraps.

Is Apartheid in its other aspect, namely, Separate Development, worth dying for? It certainly is not. There is one charge that Apartheid has never been able to meet, and that is: how can a thing be good if it can be achieved only by cruel laws? How else can one describe the Group Areas Act? And Job Reservation? And the Urban Areas Law? And the removal of the Black Spots?

We are told that such steps bring peace, but how can they bring peace when they leave people with such a memory of hurt and injustice? Is this the way to bring about harmony? People die, but do their children

forget such a dispossession? Did Afrikaner children forget? I have noted that South African supporters of Apartheid abroad are excellent in their speeches, and resentful, and often angry, in the face of questions. The reason is simple—the speech deals with Separate Development, but the questions deal with **baasskap**.

Temptations of the Laager

Let us not be tempted by the laager. I promise you this, that once all the White people go into the laager they will never come out of it again.

No, the value enshrined in our policies on May 9, 1953, were right beyond all doubt. In those liberties we believe now, as strongly as we believed then. That Apartheid will come to an end, no sensible man can have a doubt. The Afrikaner Nationalist always believed that his passion was stronger than economics. The passion of liberated Africa will prove the same.

I do not doubt that at Paarl Judge Snyman looked into the pit. He saw Paarl, partly in the conventional White way, of "agitators, plotters and Communists", but he also looked into the abyss and saw it as a crisis of race relations. He saw a vision that had been seen by others before. But he was right in what he saw. Unless race relations are improved, our future is dark.

I ask Judge Snyman: how does he think race relations can be improved so long as Black men are regarded as chattels, so long as Mrs. Mapheele can be thrown out of Paarl and separated from her husband, so long as Ministers take offence because a woman invokes her rights under the law?

I tell him, and the Liberal Party tells him, that there is no hope whatsoever of any improvement in race relations so long as there are these cruel laws.

Our way is dangerous because all life is dangerous. The way of Apartheid, call it baasskap or separate development, is the way of certain death. Hofmeyr was ten times the politician I am, but he expressed the truth in very unpolitical language. He said it was a choice between faith and fear. It still is.

This faith we have expressed in our policies, which are as sensible a blueprint for the future as a party could produce. It is not only a universal suffrage which we regard as the inevitable future; it is a drastic revisal of our whole system of possession and privilege.

I agree with our National Chairman that our task is not easy. It is to continue the work we have begun, to win support for a non-racial society in which there is opportunity for all, and from which the grossest economic disparities will be removed.

Our policies, and our sanity, may be needed sooner than we believe possible to-day.

The Paarl Report — A Closer Look

FROM November 20 to 22, 1962, there were serious riots in Paarl, resulting in the deaths of at least seven people. Five of these were members of a party of African migrant workers who marched 4½ miles to town, where they attacked the Police Station and Gaol and other buildings. Two of them were young White inhabitants of Paarl.

A judge of the Transvaal Division of the Supreme Court, the Hon. J. H. Snyman, was appointed sole member of a Government Commission to inquire into the riots and their cause.

Liberal Opinion put six questions concerning the Inquiry, and the Report, which has just been published, to Mr. Edwin King, a member

of the Cape Bar, who represented Africans of Paarl and the S.A. Institute of Race Relations, before the Inquiry. We print them below, with his answers.

THE BLAME

1. *Am I right in saying that the Report blames the riot on Poqo and the corruption of local officials, and rejects your evidence that it was the product of desperation caused by the Government's policy towards African migrant labourers?*

Not entirely. The Report does name Poqo as the immediate cause of the riot—and it was. A certain portion of the blame is attributed to corruption by local officials and there is no doubt that this did inflame African opinion.

However, the Report does not reject my criticism of the Government's policy regarding migrant African labourers; paragraph 161 states:

"They (the Africans) resent the control of their movements under the Influx Control Regulations"
and further on the Report states that the restrictions on movement of the African are not understood by the bulk of the African people.

Measured terms, to be sure, but it should be remembered, firstly, that early in the Commission's sittings, Counsel for the Department of Bantu Administration and Development announced that neither he nor his clients were concerned to defend Government policy regarding Africans (which they presumably did not consider was "in issue") which made it somewhat academic to launch a full-scale attack on Government policy and, secondly, the bulk of my witnesses were for obvious reasons disinclined to attack the Government and, in any case, they represented the conservative element amongst African opinion who were not migrant labourers and had a certain security of tenure.

I conferred with scores of migrants, many of whom had just been released from gaol, and there is no doubt whatsoever that they bitterly resent influx control and the whole "Pass" system.

AFTERMATH

2. *The Commissioner reported that Poqo has been "crippled" since the riot: if this is so, has the possibility of future disturbances at Paarl been minimised, or would you say that local grievances are still intense?*

I have no doubt that feelings in the Paarl location are still intense—the crippling of Poqo has made no difference. How could it? The reasons for Poqo's existence in Paarl still obtain. Up to now, almost a year after the riots, precisely nothing has been done to alleviate the suffering of the Paarl Africans.

One of the grimmest aftermaths of the riots was the wholesale "endorsing out" (i.e. returning of Africans to their so-called "homelands") of scores of men who had been arrested in the general rounding up of suspects after the riots and then released (some after months in prison) without being charged. These innocent men, most of whom had been in Paarl for years, were simply kicked out of Paarl for no better reason, presumably, than that they had lived in the single-quarters of the location, which had been the headquarters of Poqo.

The possibility of future disturbances has been minimised—for the time being, at least, because the Poqo organisation has been weakened, perhaps eliminated, in Paarl. Whilst the causes for grievance remain, however, so does the possibility of future trouble.

WHITE AGITATORS

3. *Did the Inquiry produce any evidence to support Mr. de Wet Nel's allegation, made before it had commenced sitting, that "certain White agitators were behind the riots at Paarl"?*

Not as far as I know, although Counsel indicated at the hearing that all the evidence available to the Minister and on which he based his views would be placed before the Commission. This qualified answer may sound strange, but I must point out that the Commission adopted the unusual procedure of admitting "secret" evidence in the form of confidential information placed before it by the

Security Branch of the South African Police and which was not disclosed "in the public interest"; not only was it not possible to test his evidence in cross-examination, but it was also not possible to address argument on it.

However, although the Commissioner found that

"White persons were concerned in the subversive activities and with the violence which took place in the Transkei" there is no such finding with regard to Paarl and one can thus infer that in fact no such evidence was placed before the Inquiry.

The Commissioner's comment when the Minister's statement was brought to his attention is not inapposite:

"It is not only embarrassing to the Commission, it is also capable of embarrassment to the Minister himself for the views which he expresses may not be supported by the Commission's findings."
They were not.

RELEVANCE

4. *Would you comment on the relevance of the evidence taken in the Transkei? We could not escape the conclusion that an attempt was made by Counsel for the South African Police to give some substance to Mr. de Wet Nel's allegation, by leading evidence about Liberals being associated with the murder of chiefs and headmen, and with the Bashee murders, evidence which the Commissioner appears to have accepted without question.*

Because the Paarl riots were Poqo inspired and because the Commission was concerned to examine the nature and character of the Poqo organisation, evidence of its activities in the Transkei—or anywhere else—could not be described as irrelevant.

It was, I think, necessary and desirable for the Commissioner to present as full a picture as possible of the Poqo movement. To that extent too, I suppose, the participation of White persons in this militant African nationalist organisation is of sufficient significance to merit mention in the Report.

However the frequent reference to "liberals" in the evidence recorded in the Transkei (which, incidentally, was not tested in cross-examination) and the reiteration in the Report itself of the fact of this reference, only illustrates the unfortunate connotation which this term has acquired in South Africa. "Liberal" and "communist" are used today in very much the same breath, often to describe organisations which are essentially neither, but African nationalist.

A.N.C. CONDEMNATION

5. *Was the Report's lengthy condemnation of the African National Congress based on evidence heard by the Commissioner? Do you consider this passage has any relevance to the riot and its causes?*

No oral evidence was placed before the Commission concerning the present position of the African National Congress. It was apparent from the start that Poqo and not the A.N.C. was the body behind the riots; indeed as far as I could ascertain, the A.N.C. is virtually non-existent in Paarl; it was discredited there years ago because of its moderation and ineffectiveness.

The ambit of the Commission was so wide ("the causes which gave rise to" the events at Paarl) that it is difficult to dismiss any matter concerning African political organisations as irrelevant. However, the passages in the Report dealing with the present condition of the A.N.C. can only with difficulty be construed as relevant to the riot and its causes.

The lesson of Paarl in this respect is that the effect of prescribing one organisation is to invite the creation of another, more extreme one, in its place; the need felt by the African for some means of expression of his frustrations and his ambitions is not removed by stroke of the Legislative pen.

PAARL'S MESSAGE

6. *Do you agree with the words "that is the message of Paarl" which appear suddenly in capital letters just after the Commissioner had urged*

"upon the Government something in the nature of a special drive" for better race relations? What do you think the "message", or the chief of them was? Did it reach the people of Paarl, White, Coloured and African? Has the Report done anything to give your idea of the message a chance of fulfilment?

There were a number of "Messages of Paarl", chiefly:

(a) **No manipulation of the laws governing the lives of African migrant labourers will remove this festering sore. As long as man is denied freedom of movement, freedom to work where he wants to, is separated from his family and subjected to so many indignities and restrictions that he cannot begin to call his life his own, so long will the vast bulk of our African population be restive and dissatisfied.**

(b) **White South Africa is ill-equipped and unprepared to meet the sweeping and inevitable changes in the racial structure of the country. Here again this is not a question of legislation—I believe that you can as little force integration by legislative enactment as you can compel Apartheid. To this extent, an improvement in race relations is desperately necessary, but it must come from the people, not from Parliament; Parliament must echo the people's will.**

The message has reached the people of Paarl to some extent, yes. And we must be thankful for small mercies. There is an almost imperceptible, but nonetheless, significant change. People who have been brought up to regard Africans as an impermanent, menial adjunct to the social structure of the country are beginning to realise that they, the Whites, have to live with them, that the Africans have feelings, opinions, frailties and ambitions—that they are human beings.

It is difficult to say what has prompted this realisation. Fear, perhaps; perhaps resignation, perhaps even in genuine accept-

ance of past injustices and a desire to remedy them; but, if I, too, may be permitted capitals, THERE HAS BEEN A CHANGE.

It is difficult to say to what extent the Paarl Enquiry has contributed to this. It certainly brought home the realities to many people who had previously been unaware of them, deliberately or otherwise.

We must be not too sanguine; a happy South Africa will take longer to construct than ancient Rome! but I am hopeful that White South Africa is becoming aware of the challenge, and now that the time has come, we will not be found wanting. This I must believe; it is worth believing in and there is no alternate belief.

RELATED EVENTS

These questions refer only to the Inquiry itself, and not to other events connected with it. These events, which came to eclipse the Paarl Riots and the Inquiry, were:—

- The unexpected publication by the Commissioner of an Interim Report on Poqo, which contained allegations that White people, who pretended "to be Liberals or even members of the Liberal Party", were instigating Poqo violence. No supporting

evidence for these allegations has yet been produced and none was forthcoming at the Bashee River murder trial in early August—although it had repeatedly been implied in Parliament and elsewhere that such people as the Commissioner referred to were involved in some way in this attack.

- Press conferences and Parliamentary statements by the Minister of Justice, Mr. B. J. Vorster, which claimed the Interim Report as justification for the second General Laws Amendment ("No Trial") Bill.
- The Commissioner's surprising letter to Mr. Vorster (Annexure B to the Report) approving the Special Courts and 90-Day Detention clauses in the Bill.
- The support for the major part of the Bill by the official United Party opposition.
- The mass arrests and 90-day detentions which have followed the Bill's enactment.
- The apparent change in the Inquiry's course which led to its visit to the Transkei and the publication thereafter of the Interim Report.

None of these questions is covered by this article, but they certainly warrant separate, and full, treatment.