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## AFRICA AND THE WEST

THE recent passage of the Vice-President of the United States through parts of Africa and his presence at the independence celebrations of Ghana signal the increasing importance of Africa's millions, their attitudes and aspirations, in the shaping of to-morrow's world. The peoples of Africa have been known to the West, with profit, for centuries now. That they also have opinions to which regard should be paid was only yesterday discovered. But then the scramble for raw materials and markets between the West and the Soviet Union, the whole delirious rush for alliances, has given to the countries of Africa and to the riches inside them a luminous value even the most near-sighted politically can see. With great reluctance the West has learned at last that whoever may own them at present, it is the peoples of Africa who are ultimately in possession of the countries of Africa. And with Russia piping now in the Middle East, the opinions of these peoples have suddenly been invested with an urgent significance.

This re-assessment of Africa by the Western world has come only just in time. For were the West to go into forced liquidation now, it is improbable that there would exist enough goodwill to constitute an asset. And the world has arrived at a point where good-will is becoming both more profitable and permanent than possessions. True Ghana has been given, and Nigeria promised, independence. But in Kenya the Africans have mere squatter's rights in the country of their birth, the title-deeds are as firmly held as ever in the hands of the settlers. The Nyasas will not easily forget the florid hypocrisy with which they were forced into Federation for their bodies' sake. In Angola and Mozambique the clanking of the labour gangs at work shuts out the shouting in Accra. And all over the Continent the symbols of Western civilization are the pass and the pick-up van of the South African Government, rule by baton and sten-gun and the tight-clenched vote.

The West has a great deal to live down, as much of it in the present as in the past. It also has a great deal to live up to. For in its shrill solicitation of Africa, the Western world pictures itself as a city of only skyscrapers and parks, without its downtown tenement houses and its shacks on the other side of the railway line. It rejoices in the liberties it claims all its citizens

enjoy and sanctifies before all the world the enjoyment. And because of this especially, it chastises in its newspapers and over its radios the tyranny of Russia, the many moral mutilations of the Communist world.

No doubt what the West says of Russia is unfortunately true. But its effect upon the peoples of Africa is considerably diluted when the West shows itself as eager as the regime it castigates to deny men their freedom and then suppress the agitation that inevitably follows. Africa would more readily admire the righteousness of the West if the West acted more by example and less by abuse. As it is, the Africans in Kenya may be appalled by the savagery of the Red Army in Hungary. But they are still paddling in the shallows of an Emergency which suppressed much more than the Mau Mau it set out to crush, without eradicating any of the evils that produced the Mau Mau in the first place. And in Kenya they are much less aware of the delicate distinctions to be drawn between terror in Europe and terror at home than those in London and New York to whom Africa is still a dark Continent in which dark things are expected to take place. The Africans in Angola and the Congo are no more free to choose their own governors than the people of East Germany, and the Africans in South Africa are too busy keeping themselves merely hungry and out of the hands of the police to give much of their attention to street riots in Poland or the silent terror in Roumania.

It is questionable whether one really does choose the devil one knows before the devil one doesn't. And however stupid in the long run it may be, Africa can hardly be blamed if in her despair she turns from the West she knows to the Russia she doesn't. Where no liberty exists anyway, the promise of enough to eat carries its own halo. Above all, many Africans feel that they have nothing to lose. And assuredly, for the Africans in South Africa to-day, things could hardly be much worse than they are, and it would be an original tyranny indeed that could manufacture fresh forms of oppression for them to endure.

The evidence of Western civilization stands stark before Africa's eyes. It is the evidence that must be changed. And fondling babies and distributing autographed pens will not accomplish this. America may think that she speaks to Africa in the voice of the festive Mr. Nixon. But she speaks to the Africans of Mozambique in the voice of Portugal and to the

Africans of the Union in the voice of the Nationalist Government. And as Africa hears the West so she will judge it. Africa has hungered long enough for her liberty. Her appetite will not be satisfied by puffy expressions of sympathy and formal proclamations of an ever formless intention.

America should be in no doubt over what to do, she need only remember her Declaration of Independence and the roots of her pride. She must persuade those colonial powers over whom she exercises so enormous an influence to deliver up their colonies to self-government as quickly as possible. And if she cannot persuade them, then she must compel them, by assisting with her money and prestige the national movements working for independence and democracy throughout the Continent. If she refuses to do so and continues to sit complacently in the dress-circle of events, waiting for the winner to be declared before taking sides, she may find herself soon without function or influence in Africa, the leader of the West who having ventured nothing, loses all.

Britain is already a participant and she has the choice of continuing to fight with the certainty of being beaten out of Africa in the end, or of giving up her claims now and surrendering the territories she controls, both directly and indirectly, to the peoples entitled to have power over them. If she does so now, she will in very truth earn for herself the name of a great power, for she will do not only what will ultimately be in her best interests, but what in the final sure judgment of mankind will be recognized as right. For her, greatness is so easy, she need hardly stretch out to seize it. And it is surely more important to be great than to look it for a little while or be called so. That indeed will be the ultimate lesson of Imperialism, the meaninglessness of a colour on the map. And if Britain discovers nothing else but this, she will have discovered all.

Africa will not be bewildered by decorated decoys into believing herself free if she is not so in fact. What she wants and what she must have is the right to govern herself as she pleases, to choose as she wishes between Socialism and Capitalism, Christianity and Islam, Order and Chaos. Nothing less will suffice, nothing less will, in the end, be granted her.

There have been so many denials, so much deceit. There is hardly time enough left to wipe out the disgrace. Yet there is time.

If the West will now give Africa her freedom, her right to

sit and not only serve at the table of nations, whatever the immediate loss in power and riches, it will build into its own future the security of an Africa faithful to the ideals and practice of democracy, an Africa proud and glad in her liberty and strong to uphold it. But if the Union is permitted to continue her orgy of oppression, if France, Belgium, Portugal, Britain and America pay more regard to their Company reports than to the struggles and ambitions of men, there will grow up in Africa a fear and a hatred of the West and all things Western that only a century of flaming enmity will be able to cremate. For the sake of those whites who have made Africa their home, for the sake of the blacks whose home Africa has always been, for the sake in the end of the whole bitterly divided world, Africa must be given in peace its right to be free.

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*It is with deep regret that we record the death of two of our Sponsors — Joyce Cary, the English novelist, and Willard S. Townsend, the American Labour leader. We are glad and grateful that they should have found it possible to associate themselves so closely with 'Africa South'. Let this be our tribute therefore, the magazine itself, which was born out of that same deep love of right that gave to both men the body of their strength and their accomplishment.*

# CHRISTIAN LIBERTY AT STAKE

DR. R. H. W. SHEPHERD

*President of the Christian Council of South Africa.*

TENSION between the Churches and Parliament was never so evident in South Africa as in the early months of 1957. The churches can never forget the injunctions of Scripture that "prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men: for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our Saviour. (I. Tim. II. 1ff.)

The position for churchmen was not made easier by the fact that so many of them had worked in closest harmony with the State: for years they had toiled as unpaid servants of Government in the education field. How often, for example, in the almost forty years that have passed since the writer first became a manager of schools under the Cape Education Department has he heard it suggested that missionary managers were only unpaid clerks of the Education Departments. But the toil was believed to be worthwhile, because it was a means of helping the non-European peoples, and because there was something commendable in the companionship of Church and State in the field of education. Churchmen were not disloyal whatever parliamentary party was in power.

The passing of the Bantu Education Act altered the easy relationships. Many churchmen felt that Government measures were a mistake, not least in timing, and particularly did it seem a mistake when the Churches were given an ultimatum that the training of teachers could no longer be left in their hands. It seemed particularly desirable that men and women who were to be the teachers and leaders of their people should be nurtured in a warm, Christian environment, and not in the cold, official atmosphere that often marks government institutions.

Still, the vast majority of churchmen acquiesced, though probably not with a good grace, because they had no wish to see thousands of African children thrown out with only the education of the streets as an alternative, and because, though they believed church schools should be fostered by the State and not eliminated, they recognized that the education of its subjects is ultimately a duty of the State.

Further difficulties were created for the Churches when Government decreed that the sites of many church buildings would be held on a yearly basis and be subject to cancellation "if in the opinion of the Minister of Native Affairs the activities of the occupier or any of his representatives, whether on the site or elsewhere, are such as to encourage deterioration in the relationships between Natives and Governmental persons or bodies."

Again, in the Tomlinson Report were recommendations that caused the Churches uneasiness, despite the glowing tributes paid to the work of the Churches. Let us put matters in their context by quoting some of the Commission's findings:

"The State and the Churches do not form an antithesis in South Africa. On the contrary, the one is the team mate of the other. In South Africa they are certainly dependent upon one another, especially as regards the spiritual and temporal elevation of the Bantu. Good mission policy is good government policy in South Africa and forms the basis of a sound racial policy.

"Moreover, the State and Churches must accept the fact that it was by no mere accident that European Christianity established itself at the southern point of Africa, but that a high and exalted purpose was intended. In actual fact the Sovereignty and Omnipotence of God is accepted as an article of the Union Constitution, and an article which is entrenched also in the Christian conscience of the vast majority of the citizens. South African Christianity must be made and kept conscious of its vocation as regards the rest of Africa. . . . All this calls for sacrifice. The best of our European sons and daughters will have to serve as 'Missionaries' in every sphere of life."

Concerning this declaration it was said by the Government that it was completely at one with the Commission in its high estimate of the positive religious work of Churches performed in the right spirit, and the undertaking was given that the Government would render all the assistance which was fitting and within its power.

The recommendations that caused uneasiness were, among others, these:

- (1) That the State should grant subsidies in connection with missionary work as such. Support of this kind, it was recommended, should, however, only be given to accredited churches in proportion to the number of European adherents.
- (2) The registration *de novo* of all churches and missionary societies.
- (3) The issue of permits to all missionary workers who wish to labour among the Bantu.
- (4) The issue of special licences to missionary workers who wish to work in the Bantu areas.



It was noteworthy that the Government white paper declared:

"Whether the State should . . . intervene, as suggested, by a system of licensing approved church workers and thereby possibly curtailing religious liberty, is open to very grave doubt. The Government is not prepared to approve of such steps."

The Government also declared that it did not see its way clear to subsidize missionary work, as there were recognized denominations whose outlook on the Bantu and his development was not in accordance with the requirements of the Commission itself, and if they were to be assisted the object of the recommendation would be defeated. At the same time, it would not be in the interest of the State or of the Churches if the State were to discriminate between denominations by granting subsidies subject to certain tests, as the latter might be regarded as based on political or other partisan considerations. The same objection, it was declared, applied in the case of contributions by the State towards the training of missionary workers.

The comfort of such a declaration, which seemed wise and statesmanlike, was considerably modified, however, when it was stated that the Native Affairs Commission, in collaboration with the Department of Native Affairs, would thoroughly investigate the implication of the recommendations on the registration anew of all churches and societies as well as the recommendations on the issue of permits to missionary workers, and in particular to those who desired to work in Bantu areas.

No attack on the autonomy of the Churches was so direct as that contained in clause 29 (c) of the Native Laws Amendment Bill which was read in Parliament for the first time on 20th February, 1957. The clause was as follows: "No church, school, hospital, club or other institution or place of entertainment which was not in existence on the first day of January, 1938, to which a Native is admitted or which is attended by a Native, shall be conducted by any person on premises situated within any urban area outside a location, Native village, Native hostel or area approved by the Minister for residence of Natives in terms of paragraph (h) of sub-section (2), nor shall any meeting, assembly or gathering to which a Native is admitted or which is attended by a Native, be conducted or permitted by any person on such premises without the approval of the Minister given with the concurrence of the urban local authority concerned, which approval may be given subject to such conditions as the Minister may deem fit and may be withdrawn by him after

consultation with the urban local authority concerned, or if he is satisfied that any such condition has not been observed."

It is of special significance that legal experts hold the view that the second part of the clause—after the words "in terms of paragraph (h) of sub-section (2)" right on to the end is not limited by the reference to the first day of January, 1938.

The publication of the clause provoked a sharp reaction from various churches, but most notably from the Church of the Province of South Africa (Anglican). The Archbishop of Cape Town, Dr. Geoffrey H. Clayton, after consultation with some of his brother bishops, addressed a letter to the Prime Minister. In that letter, made all the more impressive by his death on the following day, the Archbishop spoke for many of the Churches when he declared:

"We desire to state that we regard the above-mentioned clause as an infringement of religious freedom in that it makes conditional on the permission of the Minister of Native Affairs (a) the continuance in existence of any church or parish constituted after January 1, 1938, in an urban area except in a location which does not exclude Native Africans from public worship; (b) the holding of any service in any church in an urban area except in a location to which a Native African would be admitted if he presented himself; (c) the attendance of any Native African at any synod or church assembly held in an urban area outside a location.

"The Church cannot recognize the right of an official of the secular Government to determine whether or where a member of the Church of any race (who is not serving a sentence which restricts his freedom of movement) shall discharge his religious duty of participation in public worship, or to give instruction to the minister of any congregation as to whom he shall admit to membership of that congregation.

"We recognize the great gravity of disobedience to the law of the land. We believe that obedience to secular authority, even in matters about which we differ in opinion, is a command laid upon us by God. But we are commanded to render to Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. There are, therefore, some matters which are God's and not Caesar's, and we believe that the matters dealt with in Clause 29 (c) are among them. It is because we believe this that we feel bound to state that if the Bill were to become law in its present form we should ourselves be unable to obey it or to counsel our clergy and people to do so.

"We therefore appeal to you, Sir, not to put us in a position in which we have to choose between obeying our conscience and obeying the law of the land."

This declaration and others like it, from the Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Baptist and other Churches, led the Minister of Native Affairs to denounce the action of the bishops of the Church of the Province as "most unnecessary agitation," and to declare that church leaders should have waited for clarification as to the scope and intent of the clause when the second reading took place in Parliament and for the possible amendment of the wording. To this the retort was given that the Government had already issued a lengthy "Explanatory Memorandum" with a view to clarification of the Bill, and this Memorandum in no way qualified the terms of the clause but repeated them.

On 21st March the Minister submitted his redrafted clause to the House of Assembly in a two hours' speech. The clause as redrafted was found to contain over 140 lines, as against the 20 of the original. The main section affecting the Churches read:

- (b) the Minister may by notice in the *Gazette* direct that no Native shall attend any church or other religious service or church function on premises situated within any urban area outside a native residential area, if in his opinion:
- (i) the presence of Natives on such premises or in any area traversed by Natives for the purpose of attending at such premises is causing a nuisance to residents in the vicinity of those premises or in such area; or
  - (ii) it is undesirable, having regard to the locality in which the premises are situated, that Natives should be present on such premises in the number in which they ordinarily attend a service or function conducted thereat, and any Native who in contravention of a direction issued under this paragraph attends any church or other religious service or church function, shall be guilty of an offence and liable to the penalties prescribed by section forty-four:
- Provided that no notice shall be issued under this paragraph except with the concurrence of the urban local authority concerned, and that the Minister shall before he issues any such notice, advise the person who conducts the church or other religious service or church function of his intention to issue such notice and allow that person a reasonable time, which shall be stated in that advice, to make representations to him in regard to his proposed action: and provided further that in considering the imposition of a direction against the attendance by Natives at any such service or function, the Minister shall have due regard to the availability or otherwise of facilities for the holding of such service or function within a Native residential area."

The rest of the lengthy amendment makes similar regulations applicable to schools, hospitals, clubs or similar institutions; also to places of entertainment, meetings, assemblies or gatherings (including social gatherings).

The Churches are bound to give the redrafted clause careful consideration, but the first reactions were in the form of declarations that the redrafted clause was more objectionable than the original, since its main feature was to remove responsibility for observing the law from the Churches and their leaders to the voiceless and voteless Africans.

Two days before the redrafted clause was published, the Christian Council of South Africa, which represents twenty-three affiliated bodies, including all the principal Churches, except the Dutch Reformed and Roman Catholic, held a representative conference in Cape Town and issued the following statement:

"1. The conference associates itself fully with the statement issued by the bishops of the Church of the Province contained in the letter from the late Archbishop to the Prime Minister.

"2. The conference further takes its stand on the following basic rights of religious freedom:

- (a) The right to assemble for unhindered public worship;
- (b) The right to freedom of association and fellowship;

- (c) The right to preach the Gospel publicly.
- "3. The conference further affirms the right of the individual to worship where he pleases and the right of the Church to admit any individual to its services or fellowship.
- "4. In making these statements the conference affirms that it would act in exactly the same manner irrespective of any political party in power which sought to pass a law on the lines of clause 29 (c) of the Native Laws Amendment Bill.
- "5. With great regret the conference asserts that the Christian Churches would have to disregard any laws or regulations which they believe would infringe these fundamental principles.
- "6. The conference declares that the denial of freedom of association and the enforcement of compulsory apartheid in any sphere of our life is a denial of the law of God and a repudiation of the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ."

After the redrafted clause was made known, the Council, through its action committee, declared it was more objectionable than the original draft, and added: "We shall be forced to disregard the law and to stand wholeheartedly by the members of our Churches who are affected by it."

At the time of writing the parliamentary debate continues. But the issues are plain. For the Churches the invasion of the State on the sphere of worship—any attempt to dictate where or with whom men are to worship—is an issue that admits of no compromise.

Nothing is more familiar in Church history as recorded in Holland, France, Germany, Britain and other lands, than the resistance of the Church in such situations. Guthrie, the Scottish Covenanter, in face of similar decrees by the authorities of his day, declared: "This poor body, I submit to you, to do with it whatsoever you will. But, my lords, this conscience I can never submit." Beza spoke for the Church of the ages when he said to the King of Navarre: "Sire, it belongs in truth to the Church of God . . . to receive blows and not to give them, but may it please you to remember that it is an anvil that has worn out many hammers."

# ASSOCIATION BY PERMISSION

ALAN PATON

*Author of "Cry, the Beloved Country"*  
*National Chairman of the South African Liberal Party*

THERE is, at the time of my writing, a proposed law before the South African Parliament called the Native Laws Amendment Bill. By the time this article is published, it may have become an Act. There seems almost no chance that Parliament, with its overwhelming Nationalist majority, will refuse to pass it, for the Bill represents the feelings of the majority of Afrikaner Nationalists.

We are growing used to harsh laws in South Africa. They all have one common purpose, and that is to separate the races from one another, and especially to separate white people from non-white. But this Bill is the most extreme of all, for it attempts to control by law all association between the Africans of the country and the people of other races.

Not every South African accepts the doctrine of apartheid. In fact many of them have stoutly resisted it and openly declared their opposition to it. As might be expected in a colour-bar country, most politically conscious black people reject apartheid, while most white people accept it. But nevertheless there were, and are, small and vigorous groups of white people who reject it, just as there are large and unawakened groups of black people who either do not question it or passively accept it.

We have, for example, the non-political Institute of Race Relations, an honoured organization with mixed membership and *ipso facto* holding mixed meetings, dedicated to the cause of good race relations, believing in contact and exchange of ideas, many of its members enjoying inter-racial friendships. It goes without saying that the Institute has opposed apartheid, and, in fact, it has from time to time made vigorous anti-apartheid statements.

There is the Christian ecumenical inter-racial fellowship of Wilgespruit near Johannesburg. It believes in a Christian unity transcending denomination and race and practises it too. In general its ecumenicity is confined to the English-speaking and the African churches, because the Afrikaans-speaking churches believe in and practise apartheid.

There is also inter-racial association in the English-speaking

churches themselves, where white and black priests and ministers frequently meet together, in synods and other conferences, although mixing at the lay level is so infrequent as to contribute no challenge to apartheid at all. And here we might mention as examples two priests who have always regarded apartheid as a denial of all that Christianity stands for, and who have consequently incurred the disapproval of the Government, namely, the Bishop of Johannesburg and Father Huddleston.

There are the International Clubs in Durban and in Pietermaritzburg, which practise no colour-bar. And also a number of smaller organizations, Jazz Clubs, Writers' Clubs, and the like, which do likewise.

As might be expected, more aggressive and out-spoken opposition to apartheid is found in political groups, and these would all be described in modern language as being to left of centre. Most left is the white Congress of Democrats, which regards itself as a sister organization of the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Indian Congress (SAIC); it is confined to white people for political and practical reasons, but is utterly opposed to racial discrimination. The ANC and SAIC are confined to Africans and Indians respectively, but are both actively opposed to apartheid. The SAIC in general co-operates easily with white persons; and if it sometimes does not, it is not for racial reasons, for from racialism and nationalism the South African Indian has nothing to gain. The ANC also in general co-operates easily with white persons; and if it sometimes does not, this might on occasion be for understandably racial reasons, for the African is tempted to seek his security in African nationalism.

To the right of these groups stands the non-racial Liberal Party, whose reason for coming into existence was the strong belief of some South Africans that the future lay in racial co-operation in the same political group, no matter whether some of its members were voters and some not. In a country of racialism and nationalism, the Party sets itself to think in new categories that are non-racial and non-nationalistic. It regards "racial harmony through apartheid" not only as a dream, but as a lie as well, and on specific issues does not hesitate to co-operate with the Congresses.

To the sum of these organized activities, political and non-political, must be added those of a number of people, some of whom are members of these organizations, and some of whom

are not, who entertain people of all races in their homes, and who are learning to do so because of their new experience. Some of these gatherings are decorous, some downright jolly; some have liquor, some do not, because of the law forbidding liquor to Africans; some are constrained, some are free as air. These gatherings, when they attract the attention of the Nationalist Press, excite contemptuous and angry comment. To anyone who knows Afrikaans, the Johannesburg newspaper poster reading "Bont gejol in Goudstad neem toe" (Piebald goings-on in Golden City increasing) carries unmistakably the implication that such fraternization is indecent, flagrant, and dangerous.

And that is the point. These inter-racial gatherings, even the most demure, excite anger, disgust and fear amongst the Nationalists. In April, 1957, young University students, picketing a Nationalist meeting to protest against University apartheid, were told "gaan slaap met jul kaffermeide," which means, plainly translated, "go and sleep with your kaffir girls." Any active protest against apartheid arouses anger of a frightening kind, so full of hatred on the part of some, that one understands the real height of white arrogance and the real depth of white fear. It is a venomous anger, a thwarted fury, that there should still, after nine years of Nationalist rule, be people who do not believe in apartheid, and who actively resist the will of the Government; and to make it worse, a will that is so clearly to be identified with the will of God Himself.

It is this anger that lies behind the Native Laws Amendment Bill, whose clear purpose is to bring all association between Africans and non-Africans under Government control. Whether the association was demure or jolly, political or religious, public or private, it will be subject to the scrutiny of the Government. This Bill is intended to correct a flagrant abuse, namely, that while the Government is busy putting people into separate areas, separate races, separate schools and universities, separate occupations, here are individuals who flout the ideology itself. This must be clearly noted; it has become a grave offence, not only to break the laws, but to flout the ideology. That is why the Government is to a greater and greater degree passing "blanket" laws which most people may safely ignore, but which a minority disobeys at its peril; these "blanket" laws give sweeping powers to Ministers and officials, but, of course, the assurance is always given in Parliament that these powers will never be used, and that in any event, they carry terror only for

the subversive and the revolutionary.

The anger of the Government against those persons or associations who encourage inter-racial co-operation is not due entirely to personal revulsion, or to outraged authoritarianism, or to determination to carry out the grand separation plan. It is possible to hear from highly educated and responsible Nationalists the reasoned argument that the African is a child who must be protected from dangerous and unsuitable ideas which sentimental or misguided or irresponsible agitators try to implant in his mind, ideas of equality and freedom. Our Nationalist leaders have openly condemned the articles of the Declaration of Human Rights adopted in San Francisco in 1949. Our Minister of Native Affairs has gone even further and, speaking to the students of Stellenbosch University, appealed to them not to be carried away by the belief that they as individuals could improve race relations on their own initiative by contact with non-European students and liberally-minded people. They must stand firm, he said, and not allow themselves to be immersed in the insidious so-called broad-minded attitudes.

In other words, the Government disapproves utterly of political association between Africans and non-Africans; and it is this particular issue, rather than the other important issues of church and school and club and places of entertainment, which concerns us here.

The implications of the Bill for the political organizations of which I have written are far-reaching. The Minister of Native Affairs may, with the concurrence of the local authority, "prohibit the holding of any meeting, assembly, or gathering (including any social gathering), which is attended by any Native, in any urban area outside a Native residential area," if he considers that such meeting is likely to cause a nuisance, or is likely to be undesirable having regard to the locality in which the premises are situated. And he may by notice to any person, prohibit that person from holding or organizing or arranging such meeting.

It may be argued—it may even be promised—that the Minister will be reasonable in his interpretation of "nuisance" and "undesirability." But bearing in mind his address to the students at Stellenbosch, and bearing in mind the anger with which many of his supporters greet the idea of inter-racial meetings, it seems inevitable that he will bear down heavily on meetings of a political nature, for they, in addition to being



disgusting and "unnatural," are also dangerous.

It is not, however, only the co-operative activities of left-of-centre political organizations that are threatened. It is the whole ideal behind co-operative activity that is in danger. What hope can there be for a relatively orderly solution of African problems, if the last bridges between white and non-white people are destroyed? If these bridges are destroyed, there can be one way only by which the majority of the people of South Africa can bring about a change in the political set-up of the country, and that will be by violence and revolution. And revolution, when at last it is successful, could very well result in the replacing of white domination by black domination, of white repression by black repression, of white injustice by black injustice, and in the final destruction of what the Nationalist is so anxious to preserve, the Afrikaner people.

It is these clouds of uncertainty and anxiety that hang so heavily over our country, but there are still those, both black and white who, having no desire to replace one kind of tyranny by another, have sought co-operation with one another, and with the other smaller racial groups in the country, so that disaster may be averted.

It is the frustrating irony of our present politics that the Government in its desire to stave off the dangers of the future, should have in nine short years intensified racial antagonisms, and should have gone far in persuading *racial groups other than its own* that harmonious co-operation is utterly unrealizable, and that white and black interests are irreconcilable, except where each are pursued separately. The Government has succeeded in infecting many English-speaking South Africans with its politics and its fears, so that many of these now begin to think that irreconcilability is inevitable, and they either leave the country or give their support, sometimes with bitter reluctance, sometimes with shameful consent, to the ruling power. And sometimes with the doomed feeling that even though they do not choose it, they are being forced into an all-white fortress whose safety is at the best problematical.

The Government has also succeeded—but not to the same extent in my opinion—in infecting African people with this belief in irreconcilable interests, and those infected either accept the apartheid ideology or alternatively, regard the expulsion or subjection of the white man as the only solution.

The many racially oppressive Acts which the Government has

passed, have revolted, or wounded, or disgusted, or depressed, or angered people like myself, according to the state of our minds and souls. But somehow the Native Laws Amendment Bill seems the most terrible of all. It is like the closing of the last door, the pulling up of the last bridge into the white fortress, behind whose battlements the white people of South Africa will spend the rest of their historical span; we, the white people of South Africa, are sealing ourselves off from the rest of our continent, and indeed from the rest of the world, leaving open only the sea-lanes to Europe, the continent we have already rejected.

Even though this is doomful writing, I do not feel doomful at the moment. This Government has forced us before this into one alley after another, but we, its opponents, have not ceased to oppose them. What is to be done now, by the Liberal Party which is itself an inter-racial Party, and by the Congresses which have always sought to establish an inter-racial opposition? The political activities of these bodies have, as is to be expected, been largely concerned with opposition to the Government and to apartheid. How under this new law is such resistance to be maintained?

There can be no doubt that, even with the drastic penalties of the Criminal Laws Amendment Act<sup>1</sup> in mind, the idea of disobedience has been alive in the minds of many opponents of the Government. Just as church leaders have openly stated that they cannot accept the exclusion of any person from a church on grounds of race, just so other persons, some churchmen and some not, cannot accept the right of the Minister of Native Affairs to forbid political or social association with Africans. There is no bravado about this, for no one can contemplate lightly the serving of a long prison sentence. One would do it only because it would be the only thing to do.

How far would the Government go in sending citizens, some prominent, some humble, to prison? The Government has certainly been astonished and shaken by the determination of many church leaders to disobey any law that is against conscience. Would the Government bring the Archbishop of Cape Town, or one of the Catholic Archbishops, or one of the Moderators of the Free Churches, before a Criminal Court? I doubt it. In fact, when faced by such possibilities, the Minister of Native

<sup>1</sup> If any person disobeys a law *by way of protest*, he may be sentenced to three years' imprisonment or £300 fine or ten lashes or any two of these, and if he organizes such protest, to five years or £500 fine or ten lashes or any two of these.

Affairs, under pressure from the Prime Minister, grudgingly amended the Bill twice. Neither of these amendments satisfied the churches, but it is important to note that they were made.

I said that I doubted whether the Government would bring a high church dignitary before a criminal court. It therefore seems possible that if the Government pushes through the Bill, they will ignore church activities altogether; and will in fact be able to remind us of their earlier assurance that none but subversive characters would have anything to fear.

Would the Government take criminal action against persons who believe in, and practise, inter-racial political and social association? I think this is far more probable, because in the view of this Government, such association is dangerous and means the final downfall of white, and therefore Christian, civilization in South Africa. What is more, they will hope to persuade Russophobes in America and empire-clingers in Europe that such association is subversive.

Let us be quite clear about this. Two fundamental freedoms are at stake, the freedom of worship and the freedom of association. For people like the Bishop of Johannesburg, the two are well-nigh inseparable, but for many white Christians freedom of worship means nothing more than mere physical togetherness in a building called a church. Now association for political and social purposes is not mere physical togetherness; it implies some more intimate relationship, some communication of ideas, and is therefore more dangerous to an Apartheid State.

Therefore it would be possible for the Government to ignore the physical togetherness of Christians, even if it did constitute a "nuisance" in some lily-white street, and even to ignore—with inward gnashing of teeth—the Bishop of Johannesburg, and having thus granted the freedom of religious association, to pick off one by one those who practise other kinds. This is what I fear may happen, but what I hope will not happen. I hope that this foolish Government will be persuaded by this fanatical Minister to stamp out all kinds of togetherness; a campaign of civil disobedience would then assume considerable proportions, and—let us put it frankly—thousands of Christians, after having swallowed several camels, would strain at the gnat of physical togetherness in a building called a church. Make no mistake about it, the stage is set for the play, if only the Minister does not rewrite the script.

If however, the worst happened, and church services and

church functions were excluded from the Bill, disobedience would be of a more limited kind, but it would still be inevitable. When free association, whether religiously based or not, becomes an article of faith and a pattern of life, there are bound to be those who cannot obey the law and who would rather be punished than obey it. I regard myself as one of these.

*For who or what am I, that my whole life should be ruled by laws external to myself?* One is not only affirming high principles here, one is also affirming oneself, one is affirming the rights of individual man. What the Nationalist thinks to be a local crisis of national survival is, in fact, a world-wide crisis of individual survival, and of the survival of individual freedom. And one would like to strike a blow for it before one dies, having enjoyed it at least in part during one's own life, and having passionately desired it for others.

Events are at the moment in the melting pot, but it is safe to say that the will to resist apartheid *in toto* or apartheid in certain particulars, or alternatively, the will to resist further encroachments by the State upon human liberty, is as strong as it has ever been in South Africa. But resistance, in which I include disobedience, is more complicated for a member of a political organization, and in particular is very complicated for members of the Congress movements, who have already lost heavily by bannings under the various Acts, and by the arrests in December, 1956 of 156 persons on charges of High Treason. The effect of such losses has been very great, and the choice therefore confronting the Congresses and the Liberal Party, is between disobedience to the impending law or adaptation to it for the sake of the Party and the cause, or some course partaking of both.

Adaptation is now likely further to be complicated by another impending development which has been strongly rumoured, nothing less than the banning by the Government of the ANC, and the possible arrest and deportation of two thousand Congress members. This would, of course, be a logical accompaniment to the Native Laws Amendment Bill.

The banning of the ANC would be a disastrous action, because it would confirm the drift towards the white-black irreconcilability of which I have written. Many Africans would take it as the final proof that total apartheid, with its pipe-dream of separate but equal, certainly does not offer to the African people separate and equal political rights. There would follow, either

an overt substitute for the ANC, or an underground movement which might perhaps be directed towards nothing else than revolution and the final ejection of the white man from South Africa.

It should, I think, be noted that while the most determined opposition to the new Bill has come from the English-speaking churches and from political and non-political inter-racial organizations, it has also been opposed in Parliament by the official Opposition, the United Party.

The United Party is in the same position as many Christian laymen, in that it is defending a principle which it has conspicuously failed to observe in practice. The outstanding crime of the United Party has been, in view of the destruction of race relations by the Nationalist Party, its failure to do anything at all to keep any kind of link whatsoever with the leaders of non-white opinion. The United Party, tarred to some extent with the same brush as the Nationalists, and to some extent susceptible to their propaganda, has done literally nothing to arrest the drift towards a more and more complete white-black irreconcilability. Its leaders, white persons, of course, literally know nothing of any kind of non-white political leadership. Its leader-in-chief, Sir de Villiers Graaff, visits all parts of the country, where he meets his party officials, but never one non-white person. Therefore it would appear that the Native Laws Amendment Bill has very little practical significance for the United Party, although naturally one is always grateful for the spirited opposition that some of its members offer in Parliament.

One thing is certain, however, that history will say that the United Party abdicated from responsibility at the moment of crisis, and while no one believes that a United Party Government could ever have been guilty of Nationalist excesses, yet many believe that by consent they have contributed to them. It is frequently remarked that the United Party is much more spirited in Parliament than it is outside it, and this is true. In Natal, for example, the United Party opposition to the infamous Group Areas Act has been almost non-existent, and observers suppose this to be due to the fact that politically it is not useful or advisable to take up the cudgels on behalf of unenfranchised people.

One must here extol the part played by the small Labour Party in opposing the Native Laws Amendment Bill. It is their

representatives and those of the Liberal Party who have been the true upholders of democratic values and human freedoms in Parliament. It is a matter for regret that the representatives of Labour should have found themselves unable to draw nearer to the Liberal Party; it would have been a ray of light upon an otherwise impenetrable scene, had two fractions of the splintered opposition been able to regroup.

It is an extraordinary thing that the Nationalists, having earlier laid the grand foundations of apartheid, should now need to pass laws to prevent people from even speaking to each other (if I may by exaggeration make clear the real purpose of the Bill). It would appear that people still insist on communicating in spite of the walls and the barriers. It would appear that the only way to stop the holes and leaks is not by patching here and there, but by erecting further walls even more massive and forbidding. It would appear that Apartheid so contradicts such fundamental laws of creation that in the end it will have to control, not a few areas or a few schools or a few occupations, but the creation itself. And that attempt is, in fact, what we are witnessing.

There can only be one end to this madness, *if it persists*, and that will be for the fanatics of apartheid to seize absolute control, to abolish parliament or to use it as a pretence, to order that the courts should interpret not laws, but intentions, and to inflict the death penalty on those who will not conform.

Will South Africa end up like that? I do not think so. I do not think that the Afrikaner Nationalist will really consent to it. But he had better wake up, for he has consented to too much already. The sooner he realizes that laws like this one lead straight to white-black irreconcilability, and that white-black irreconcilability leads straight to Afrikaner destruction, the better for us all. Perhaps our determined opposition and our readiness to pay for it, will convince him sooner than anything else.

# AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS AND THE NEW POWERS

ALEX. HEPPLÉ, M.P.

*Parliamentary Leader of the South African Labour Party*

AFRICAN workers' organizations are already subject to so many restraints that it did not seem possible the Government would seek further curbs upon their development.

Yet they have now done so in Section 29 of the Native Laws Amendment Bill. This measure radically changes Clause 9 (7) of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act to give the Minister of Native Affairs, among other things, new powers to hinder the activities of African trade unions.

The significance of these new powers can be better appreciated if considered in the light of the present plight of African workers, and in relation to the many laws and regulations which hedge in African trade unions and stifle their natural development at all points. Official hostility, expressed through a persistent campaign of intimidation and persecution, adds to their difficulties. Employers are persuaded by the Government to refuse to have dealings with African trade unions and a general impression has been created that it is illegal to negotiate with such unions. Actually, these organizations are not prohibited, although they are denied legal recognition. This excludes them from the rights of the Industrial Conciliation Act, which registers non-African trade unions and gives official status to industrial councils, comprising representatives of registered unions and their employers, for the purposes of collective bargaining and the settlement of disputes.

## THE MAZE OF NATIVE LAWS

This serious lack of rights discourages the formation of trade unions in the many industrial and commercial spheres where Africans are employed. Lacking legal authority, the unions are barred access to factories and workshops and find it almost impossible to carry on organizational work. Because African trade unions are frowned upon by the authorities, and because all strikes of Africans are illegal, employers give short shrift to trade union agents or shop stewards. The laws of trespass, as they affect Africans, are so wide that trade union officials

run the constant risk of arrest when they visit the workplaces of their members.

Membership of a trade union is difficult to maintain because of the maze of laws and regulations which govern the lives of Africans. When an African breaks a civil contract with his employer, he commits a criminal offence; his movements inside the urban areas are strictly controlled; he cannot leave one employer to accept better employment elsewhere without the authority of a Labour Bureau; he cannot leave one industrial area to work in another unless he obtains permission to enter the new area; once he leaves the town of his birth to work in another area, he forfeits the right to return and can do so only with official sanction; he must always carry his identity book and be sure that it is properly signed by his employer. These are but a few of many restraints upon an African worker's freedom.

#### TRADE UNION PROBLEMS

The African trade unions themselves have little security. They are fortunate if they can obtain office accommodation. Very few owners of buildings in the industrial towns will rent premises to African trade unions. It is, therefore, most difficult to maintain permanent administrative offices and to provide meeting places. This situation is aggravated by the application of the Group Areas Act, whereby racial zoning invariably defines central city areas as White areas, thus prohibiting African ownership or occupation. Consequently, even those African trade unions which now have premises stand in the shadow of eviction.

In the so-called "Native areas"—(the locations and townships)—there is no accommodation for African trade unions. Not only are these locations and townships situated long distances from the industrial areas and the towns; none of them provides offices, nor would any be made available to African organizations disapproved of by the Government. In any case, trade union headquarters in African townships would be quite impractical, because Africans residing in one township are not allowed to enter another without the special permission of the township superintendent, who inevitably would refuse such permission to visiting trade union members, in view of the official hostility towards such organizations. There are, too, other obstacles, such as transport and the nightly curfew.



To all these difficulties must be added the restraints placed upon trade union leaders through the Suppression of Communism Act and the Riotous Assemblies Act. These laws also give the Minister of Justice arbitrary power to ban meetings and prohibit persons from attending meetings, and have been applied to several trade union officials.

Meetings in urban areas are also subject to the bye-laws of the various municipalities. No meeting can be held in African townships without the permission of the superintendent, who must be given written notice (usually seven days) and informed of the purpose of the meeting, the subject to be discussed, and the names of the organizers and speakers. African trade unions, being considered "subversive" by the authorities, would not be granted such permission, even if they were lucky enough to secure a meeting place.

#### THE NEW POWERS

This brings us to the new powers sought by the Minister of Native Affairs. Not satisfied with the existing wide powers to prevent African meetings in African townships, the Minister now claims the further arbitrary right to ban mixed meetings of Whites and Africans in the urban (i.e., White) areas.

Section 29 (f) provides:

"The Minister may:

- (i) *prohibit the holding of any meeting . . . which is attended by a Native, in any urban areas outside a Native residential area, either generally . . . or in respect of specified premises or classes of premises;*
- (ii) *prohibit any person . . . from holding, organizing or arranging any such meeting . . . if in the opinion of the Minister the holding of such meeting . . . is likely to cause a nuisance to persons resident in the vicinity . . . or in any area likely to be traversed by Natives proceeding to such meeting . . . or will be undesirable having regard to the locality in which the premises are situated or the number of Natives likely to attend such meeting. . . ."*

The Minister could apply these powers against African trade unions with the greatest of ease, and probably would do so. The result would be disastrous. Factory meetings, branch meetings, executive meetings, general meetings, all fall within the scope of these new powers and could be banned. Factories, workshops, offices and other places of employment are almost entirely concentrated in the urban areas. This, of necessity, likewise concentrates trade union activity in such areas. If prevented from carrying on their lawful business there, African trade unions will be virtually outlawed. That is bad enough. But it is not the only evil in this provision.

The Minister will also have the right to ban meetings between

White and African trade union leaders. Until now it has been possible for "registered" trade unions to maintain contact with African workers and their unions, and assist them in many ways. However, on the passing of the Native Laws Amendment Bill, the Minister will have power to put a stop to joint discussion between White and African trade union representatives; to forbid the holding of inter-racial trade union conferences, and to prevent the conduct of labour colleges, lectures and discussion clubs. In this way, the Minister can shut off all contact and communication between experienced White trade unionists and the new army of African industrial workers. It is becoming clear that what the Government has failed to achieve in one way it is determined to do in another.

Instead of encouraging White trade unionists to extend their knowledge and experience to the rising Black proletariat, and to teach them the civilized ways of industrial democracy and efficient, responsible trade unionism, the Government prefers to drop its iron curtain of complete racial separation.

Section 29 of this Bill illustrates again that freedom is indivisible. The denial of rights to the non-Whites must inevitably extend to the Whites and infringe their liberties too. Once again the White trade unions are victims of an apartheid law, as they were with the Industrial Conciliation Act. Wise White trade union leaders have recognized for a long time that African workers must be organized in trade unions if they are not to become an economic threat to White workers. This attitude is strengthened with the knowledge that African workers now constitute 54 per cent. of the industrial labour force of South Africa, while the Whites comprise a mere 28 per cent.

The arbitrary power of the Minister to prohibit mixed meetings of Whites and non-Whites can frustrate all efforts to build healthy trade unionism. It would be foolish to think that the Minister will not use his newly-acquired powers to that end, for his party is totally opposed to African trade unions.



**STRIJDOM:** What can I do? I'm only his boss.

*By courtesy of Leyden and the "Natal Daily News"*



**LOUW:** To whom shall I write about this latest attack, Doctor?

*By courtesy of Leyden and the "Natal Daily News"*

# DESEGREGATION IN THE SOUTH

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## BRIEF HISTORY OF SEGREGATION

The Negro was brought to the United States in 1619 as a slave and not as a free man. He was property and not a person and this was his status in the United States until his emancipation at the close of the Civil War in 1865. From 1619 to about 1820 the Negro was not a problem in the United States any more than property is a problem today. He began to be a problem when Negro and white abolitionists began to cry out against the institution of slavery and became determined to emancipate the slaves. The Negro became a real problem in 1865. The question then was: what shall we do with the emancipated people? As a slave the Negro was welcomed, but he was not welcomed as a free man.

Several proposals were made as to what should be done with the newly emancipated Negro: one theory advocated sending him back to Africa; another theory advocated colonizing him in the United States; a third proposition was advanced to the effect that if you left the Negro alone, he would eventually die out, because he would never be able to compete in American life. None of these theories proved practicable. He was not sent back to Africa and he was not colonized. And instead of dying the Negro multiplied. The fourth and only program, until recently, that America has had for the Negro, was to segregate him. So, roughly speaking, between 1870 and 1910 the Negro was completely segregated in every area of life in the southern United States: government, employment, education, recreation, religion and politics.

## THE NEGRO PROTEST

This situation could not endure forever because Negroes were being educated and they were protesting more and more against the inferior status that segregation placed upon them. Year by year Negroes were becoming more sensitive to the dehumanization of segregation and more determined to throw off its degrading yoke. Their eyes were opened, too, for they fought in two world wars to make the world safe for democracy. It did not make sense to the Negro that he could fight as an equal, die as an equal and pay taxes as an equal, but under no circum-

stances live as an equal in his native United States. All through this struggle, there were many white people in the United States who saw the inconsistency in what we proclaimed in our democracy and what we actually practised. They began to work with the Negro in various ways to help America become truly democratic.

#### THE SOUTH'S ASSURANCE SHATTERED

Southern United States was pretty sure that the segregated way of life was the solution to the race problem in America. The doctrine of separate but equal had been confirmed in the state constitutions and by the Supreme Court of the United States in 1896. People from many sections of the world came to study the policy of segregation, so sure were they that segregation was the answer to the problem of race not only here but in other parts of the world.

The famous 1954 Decision of the United States Supreme Court upset the South in a manner unknown to it since the Civil War. The South boasted for years that it had found the solution to the race problem and that that solution was segregation. But when the United States Supreme Court ruled on May 17, 1954, that segregation in the public schools was unconstitutional the political South became frustrated and furious. The Court maintains that to segregate a man solely on the basis of race or color is to deny him the equal protection of the law as guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution. For the first time since 1865 the South's segregated way of life was dealt a mortal blow from which it probably will never recover.

#### THE SOUTH INVITED THE DECISION

The South brought the Supreme Court Judgment upon itself. Though claiming the doctrine of "separate but equal" and though accepting in part the Supreme Court's Decision of 1896, the Southern states never in fact made separate equal. Since inequality is inherent in segregation and since there was no will on the part of the South to equalize educational opportunities, there could not be two separate equal educational systems. So the South accepted the separate part of the "separate but equal" doctrine but not the equal part. Statistics can be quoted to prove that in education the gulf of inequality in per capita expenditure on Negro and white students did not close with the years but widened. For example, thirteen southern states in the school year 1918-19 spent \$12.91 per capita for each white child of

school age; \$4.42 for each Negro child—a difference of \$8.49. In the school year 1924–25, these thirteen states spent \$27.95 per capita for each white child of school age; for the Negro child \$9.52—a difference of \$18.43. In 1931 these thirteen states were expending per capita for each white child of school age \$40.92; for the Negro child \$15.78—a difference of \$25.14. In other words, from 1919 up to 1931 the per capita expenditure for the white child increased \$28.01; for the Negro child \$11.36. In the meantime, Negro lawyers became skilled in the law and began around 1935 to challenge the inequality in education in the South. It might be added here that it was not until Negroes themselves became skilled in the law that the unconstitutionality of segregation began to be challenged on a large scale. So the South brought the Decision upon itself.

#### THE DECISION AND WORLD OPINION

The May, 1954 Decision of the Supreme Court was inevitable too because the United States emerged from World War II the leading democracy in the free world and the nine justices of the Supreme Court could not tell a billion or more colored people in Asia and Africa and the white people of Europe that the United States believed that a man should be segregated for no other reason than that his skin is black or colored. The justices of the Supreme Court, therefore, had to run the risk of America's losing its moral leadership in the world by allowing the continued practice of segregation or outlaw it and risk a social revolution in the South. Not only had world opinion on race changed since 1896 but the Negro's status in American life had also changed. So the nine justices of the United States Supreme Court living in 1954 and not in 1896 handed down a unanimous decision against segregation in the public schools.

#### INCLINATION TO COMPLY

At first several school boards in the South, outside the five areas involved in the suit, had decided to plan ways and means to desegregate their schools. But soon top state officials, principally governors and attorney-generals, took the position that the Deep South should not desegregate the schools immediately but rather wait for the directives which the Supreme Court was to hand down later. As a result, school officials who were ready to move forward toward integration abandoned the idea. One year later, May 31, 1955, the Supreme Court clarified its Decision. The matter of full compliance with the Court's orders

was left in the hands of district federal judges and the Court set no time schedule as to when desegregation in the schools was to begin and no time was set as to when integration had to be an accomplished fact. The Court made it clear though, that desegregation in Washington, D.C., Prince Edward County, Virginia, Clarendon County, South Carolina, Topeka, Kansas, and Wilmington, Delaware, must move along with reasonable speed.

Some areas involved had already begun to comply, for example, Topeka, Kansas, and the District of Columbia. But Virginia and



#### SEGREGATION'S LAST STAND

*By courtesy of Fitzpatrick and the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.*

South Carolina stubbornly stood pat on segregated schools despite the Court's orders. Since the Court's directives of May 31, 1955 were so reasonable and fair one would have expected the South to go along with the Decision in good faith. But this was not the case.

#### THE SOUTH REBELS

The Deep South states, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi, set about finding ways and means of circumventing the implementation of the Decision. Several state officials stated boldly that segregation would continue in their states. Nullification acts were passed by some states declaring the Decision of the Supreme Court null and void. Georgia, Virginia, South Carolina, Alabama and Mississippi passed acts of interposition.

In some areas the Ku Klux Klan was reborn, and White Citizens' Councils, a modern version of the Klan, were organized to maintain segregated schools, peacefully if possible, with violence if necessary. The reaction against the Supreme Court's Decision has been so ill tempered that nothing has actually been done to integrate the public schools in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida and Louisiana. These are the hard-core states and will resist integration as long as they can. Efforts to desegregate the schools brought about rioting in Mansfield, Texas, Sturgis, Kentucky and Clinton, Tennessee. The Deep South has used the press, radio, and television in an effort to discredit the Decision and prove to the world that the Supreme Court made a mistake.

#### PROGRESS IN DESEGREGATION

Despite stubborn resistance in the eight states named above, desegregation of the schools has gone forward in Washington, D.C., Baltimore in Maryland, Delaware, Missouri, West Virginia, Kentucky, Oklahoma, and sections of Texas, Arkansas and Tennessee. Just recently the federal court ordered Charlottesville and Arlington, Virginia, to desegregate their public schools. Ninety-five law suits against segregation have been launched since May 17, 1954. Sixty-five of the cases have sought to end segregation in the public schools of the 17 states which traditionally had separated pupils by race. Twenty-eight of these have been filed since the beginning of 1956. Every state in the South has been the scene of at least one such action except Mississippi, according to the August issue of *Southern School News*.



As bad as the situation may look, in less than three years great strides have been made toward compliance with the Court's orders. A more detailed statement as to the state of desegregation in the public schools of the South or areas that practise segregation follows:

In the District of Columbia—147 of 169 schools have integrated classes and, in some instances, integrated faculties.

In West Virginia—41 of the 44 counties have integrated.

In Kentucky there are 177 bi-racial district public schools.—92 have integrated and 17 plan to integrate soon.

Missouri has 177 high school districts—166 have integrated. 85 per cent of Negro school children attend integrated schools.

Oklahoma has 261 school districts and 182 of them have Negro students enrolled.

Maryland has 210 desegregated schools.

In Texas—104 school districts have begun or completed desegregation.

One county is desegregated in Delaware, one slightly desegregated, and the third county has not begun to desegregate.

Three communities in Arkansas have desegregated schools. Texas, Delaware and Arkansas are now in the process of moving more rapidly toward desegregation.

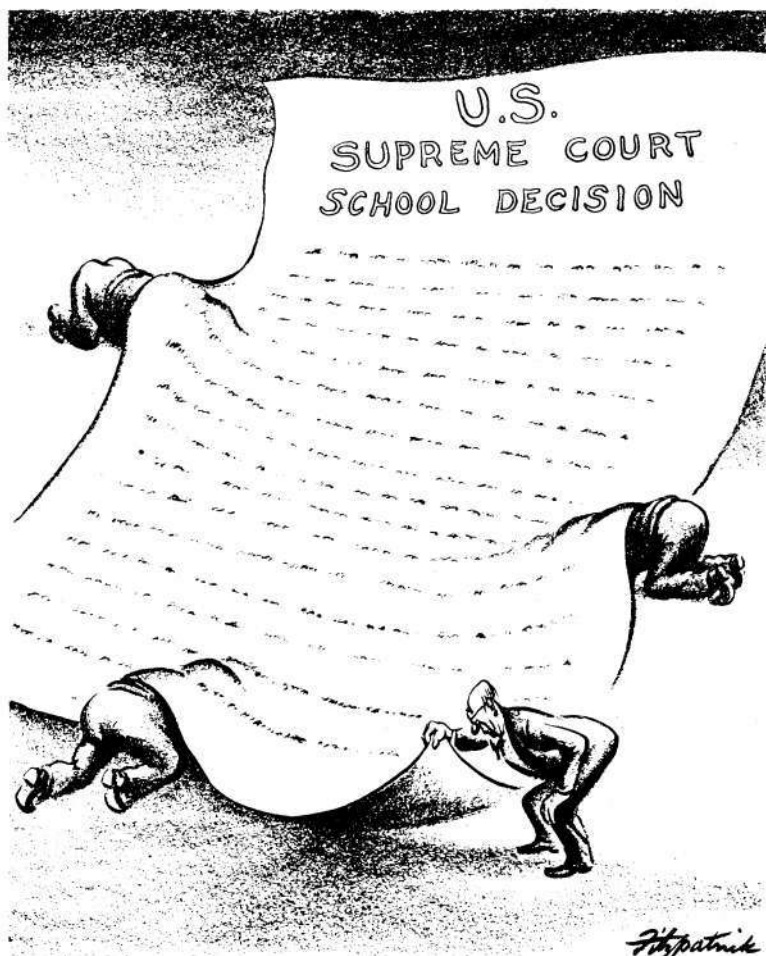
Though not a part of the public school controversy, 110 of 208 tax-supported colleges and universities now admit Negroes.

On the optimistic side, it may be surprising that so much progress has been made in so short a time and with so little violence.

#### SLOW PROGRESS IN THE DEEP SOUTH

What the future will hold relative to integration in the eight Deep South states listed above, no one can predict with precision. It seems clear that these states will resist as long as they can. They care little if anything about world opinion. They prefer segregation based on race and color to a thorough-going, functioning democracy. The state officials in these states prefer segregation to a functioning Christianity. Some of them may even fear integration more than they do communism. It is the belief of this writer that prejudice against the Negro in some southern states is so deeply rooted that if the Deep South had to choose between democracy with an unsegregated South and communism with segregation, these states would choose communism.

It must be remembered that a Supreme Court decision speaks to a specific situation rather than to a general one. People of good intent and good will would not require years of litigation when the highest court of the land has spoken. But I am convinced that not many communities in the Deep South will desegregate on their own. Many of them have made up their minds to sit tight until sued in federal court. They know beforehand that they will lose any suit entered to end segregation. But it takes money and time to wage a suit. In the meantime, the



**THE GREAT GAME OF HOW-NOT-TO**

*By courtesy of Fitzpatrick and the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.*

delay will give them a longer time to worship at the shrine of their vanishing god, segregation.

There will be more federal suits. They will have to be pushed and paid for by Negroes and for the most part Negro lawyers will have to argue the cases. White lawyers in the Deep South will be afraid of social pressure from their white friends and will not argue for desegregation. If nothing is done by the federal government to speed up the process in the Deep South and if Negroes must sue county by county, segregated schools will be around a long time. Complacency on the part of Negroes in most communities of the Deep South, the attitude of newspapers, governors and other state officials, the methods of intimidation which school officials and White Citizens' Councils will use to block the initiative being taken by Negro teachers, and the fear of some teachers that they will lose their jobs in integrated situations will further slow up the speed of integrated schools in the Deep South.

#### SIGNS OF HOPE

There are hopeful signs, however, and segregated schools are definitely on their way out. Integration in the Deep South may come faster than anyone can now predict. The Deep South is already being surrounded by non-segregated states. The process of integration will continue in southern states like Arkansas, Texas, and Tennessee. With the recent federal order that Arlington and Charlottesville, Virginia, must desegregate, it will be easier to get other Virginia counties to follow. Then North Carolina may follow Virginia in due course and so on down the southern line. The fact that rioting and interference with integration were ordered stopped by the United States Justice Department in Clinton, Tennessee, may say to the South that the federal government is not playing.

Then, too, segregation is crumbling in other areas and this may assist the Deep South to get rid of its fears of integration in the public schools. Passenger stations are desegregated in interstate travel. Interstate railroad travel is desegregated. Recently the United States Supreme Court has declared segregation on the buses in the city of Montgomery and in the state of Alabama unconstitutional. Also a federal judge in Miami, Florida, has declared segregation on buses in that city unconstitutional. These related cases will in ways not now predictable have their influence on speeding up desegregation in the public schools of the Deep South. The very fact that segregation based on race and

color is unconstitutional in every area will make it increasingly difficult for public schools to hold out too long.

The moral argument must not be overlooked in this controversy. Apart from the unconstitutionality of segregation, to segregate a man because he is colored or because he belongs to a particular race cannot be defended on moral grounds. Those who fight to maintain segregation must do so with an uneasy conscience, knowing perfectly well that their position can be sustained neither by science nor religion and not by the Federal Constitution. They know that their position is untenable and that they are fighting a losing battle.

This writer believes that there are millions in the South, though preferring segregation, who are law-abiding and if political leaders did not keep things stirred up, would come out boldly for obedience to the Supreme Court. These people are timid and afraid now but in time they will in all probability have their say. It is as plain as day that segregation based on race supported by federal law is gone in the United States and this writer believes it is gone forever.

Negroes in the South will never accept segregation again. They know that there can never be equality in segregation. They know that the objective of segregation is to set the segregated apart so that he can be treated as an inferior. They also know that segregation is designed to make the Negroes themselves accept and believe that they are inferior, that segregation has inflicted a wound upon their souls and so restricted their minds that millions of them now alive will never be cured of the disease of inferiority. They don't intend this to happen to their unborn children. Segregation damages the soul of both the segregated and the segregator. It gives the segregated a feeling of inherent inferiority which is not based on fact, and it gives the segregator a feeling of superiority which is not based on fact.

All Negroes feel this way and millions of white people in America feel this way. So it may not be too long before segregation by law will be gone in every area of American life.

Finally, segregation has no respectable standing in the world. World opinion is against branding a man because of his race and color. The United Nations is against it. Segregation on the grounds of race can find no support in science, none in Judaism and the Christian Religion and none in democracy. The moral weight of the universe is against it. It cannot stand.

# OUT OF THE FELLOWSHIP

MARGERY PERHAM, C.B.E.

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THE extension of *apartheid* to the universities by the South African government has deeply disturbed academic circles in Britain. The universities of the world, except those which have retired behind the intellectual ramparts of communism, are, in some aspects, a community. The higher human minds attain in their search for truth the more they can reach out to meet other minds across the barriers, which are all too high in our world of to-day, of language, nationality and race. If any member of the community of universities becomes weak or diseased or, worse still, inflicts injury upon itself, it falls out of the community and both the community and its lost member are impoverished.

These statements are truisms which are so well understood that they seldom need to be said. The South African policy of University apartheid demands their repetition. They are, moreover, especially real to me because of two special experiences which I have been able to add to my own University work. I have for many years, indeed from the beginning of the enterprise, been concerned as a member of the Executive of the Inter-University Council for Higher Education in the Colonies (the last six words have recently, for obvious reasons, been removed from the title). During the last fifteen years this body has, in partnership with local energies, created University Colleges in the West Indies, the Gold Coast, Nigeria, the Sudan, East Africa and Malaya and has assisted in the founding of the Central African College. I have referred to this partly to explain my personal approach and, more importantly, to show the large and energetic part which British universities have been playing in the extension of higher education amongst colonial and especially African peoples. Thus South Africa is moving backwards in the very sphere in which we have been trying to advance and in which we have gained some experience.

A Nationalist might retort that, in fostering Colleges for Africans, Britain has been doing no more than the Union Government intends to do. It is, of course, true that, in West Africa especially, the future Universities will be mainly for

Africans. But in East Africa, Makerere College is open to all races and some Europeans have already entered it. In Rhodesia, British influence, associating with liberal elements in Central Africa, has helped to make the new College fully inter-racial. In Nairobi, the new Royal Technical College, brought into being with the help of an organization in Britain parallel to the Inter-University Council, is fully inter-racial. The beautifully sited University College of the West Indies in Jamaica, which is residential, is one of the happiest expressions of inter-racial co-operation upon a basis of absolute equality that can be found in the Commonwealth. More than this, the Asquith Commission, which laid down the policy, insisted that the new Colleges should in every way be modelled upon the best which Britain had to offer in traditions, in standards and in staff, and that they should be chartered bodies, independent of state control. Staff and students mix freely socially as well as professionally and as local members of staff increase, they are fully integrated with their white colleagues.

Our Nationalist critic might still contend that it is all very well for Britain to be liberal at a distance, but that those with close experience of dealing with Africans know that they are fundamentally different and are denied by nature from entering into the heritage of Western civilization. It is upon the basis of this belief which is, of course, to label the African as inherently inferior, that attempts are being made to revive what is called Bantu culture and to piece together the shell of tribalism which the white man, in pursuit of his own economic interests, has so completely shattered. My reply to this is based upon the second experience I have had. For some twenty-five years I have been able to number Africans among my students. In recent years, as Fellow of a Graduate College, these have been post-graduates. There can be few closer associations of mind with mind than this between teacher and pupil, sometimes extending over two or even three years, carried on through the medium of the weekly individual tutorial, and often supplemented by close social contact outside the study. No doctrinaire illusions about racial equality could survive this process, even if it did not have to culminate in the stern test of an examination of exacting standard.

What then has been the lesson of this experience? It is neither less nor more than the teaching of all reputable scientists, that there is no inherent difference between the intellectual capacity

of the Negro and the European. It is not at all difficult in the intimate academic relationship of the tutorial system to distinguish the differences of nurture from those of nature; to recognize the struggle of the intellect to overcome the series of obstacles which history and geography have set between the African pupil and the proof of his equality. He has come out of one cultural world in order to assimilate another. His early environment and even his earlier education may have done little to help him to jump the chasm. He works in a foreign language in a foreign land. He may be short of money, cold and lonely; his health is often poor. His life is one long effort of adjustment in small things and great. His arrival at this level of education is often partly the result of accident; he is not, as for Western students, the product carefully sifted out of a whole population through the grid of an all-embracing educational system. Is it not remarkable that so many African students reach the middle standards of our own relatively favoured youth and that some even reach the upper classes of the examination list? This result reveals character as well as intellect, perseverance, self-control and great powers of adaptation. And if our critic intervenes to say that the result is often a lack of balance, even a distortion of character, the answer is that of course members of the first and second generations of pioneers in this severe test do sometimes warp under the psychological and physical strain and that they need every help and encouragement during the period. The conclusion from this is very relevant. It is that in a University with small residential colleges such as Oxford, the non-European students are greatly helped, both socially and intellectually, by mixing fully and freely in a community with their European fellow-students.

It follows from this experience, which many Europeans in South Africa who have taught Africans must share, that separation in Higher Education is an indefensible evil. We cannot accept the Nationalist plea that the Africans will be given equality of education in separation. It is not so much that we cannot believe that a government which in every way treats Africans as both different and inferior will find the staff and the money to provide colleges of equal standards with those of the Europeans. The separation is in itself a betrayal of the knowledge and the values we have inherited and by which, not so long ago in the historical record, we were ourselves lifted out of tribalism and enabled to develop our present wealth and culture. It is

of the nature of this inheritance that it must be kept in movement, in the full light and air of the international forum, tested by criticism and enriched by exchange. It goes bad if it is locked up in a national strong-room, above all in that of a small and isolated nation. And it will be only a small portion of this endangered culture that the Nationalist government will break off and give to the poor and hungry African majority, telling them to go off and nourish themselves upon it in isolation, an isolation, moreover, which close state control will turn into something like a prison.

It is the more tragic that many members of the Dutch Reformed Church—there are important exceptions—should be ready to twist and darken the central, golden strand in our bundle of civilized values, that of our religion. Text is bandied against text in the effort to force Christianity into a confirmation of the doctrine of racial superiority. The whole spirit of Christ's teaching and its extension by St. Paul and St. John is utterly contrary to such a terrible judgment upon our fellow-men and such a Pharasaic claim for ourselves as that enshrined in *apartheid*. This truth must apply at all levels of human life but few can be so conscious of its meaning as Christian university teachers who are trying to share with others the most difficult enterprises of the human mind and spirit. The Christian respect for the individual personality has been grafted upon the freer claim for the liberty of the intellect: to deny both of these is to contract out of the fellowship of Western civilization.

In a recent discussion I had with a leading Nationalist, I was told that no nation which is not endangered by a black majority has any understanding of South Africa's problem or any right to pronounce upon it.

On this second point, national policies and trends cannot be judged by blemishes and mistakes but upon the policies of governments and the more dominant national ideas upon which they are based. On the first point there is, I believe, among informed people in Britain to-day a very sincere attempt to understand the unique colour problem of South Africa. But, however great the difficulties, in this closely integrated world it is impossible for any nation to be wholly a law unto itself. We may last out, in our present context, the political bond of the Commonwealth, the links of neighbourhood on the African Continent, Britain's connection with the High Commission Territories and the embarrassing votes that have to be taken at U.N.O. There



still remains the issue of our many-sided relationships with a group of Universities which may be forced into a position of outlawry from the academic citizenship. And the cause of it would be a matter of such fundamental principle that no appreciation of South Africa's special difficulties could allow compromise. We know from our experience in Kenya and elsewhere that for a period that may be long it would be unreasonable to expect a premature fusion of education between tribal and ex-tribal negroes and Europeans at the lower or even, for a time, at the middle grades of education. But these adjustments of convenience and timing and language fall away at the highest level, and nothing remains but to face the issues of principle which have been stated.

This principle is being magnificently maintained by many of our colleagues in South Africa. For them it is a matter of professional life and death and they are staking everything upon the issue while we can only watch and applaud. It will not be easy for us to decide what we can do to help and it will not be easy for them to advise us. At this eleventh hour we can still hope that the South African government will not take those final steps backwards from the position from which almost all the rest of the world is still advancing, and divorce the races at the one point where they could now meet in full equality and understanding and so perhaps save the Union from a division which may one day destroy it.

There are wider interests at stake even than those of South Africa. The very need of the Africans is their chief claim upon us. It was through no fault of theirs that their inner continent was left out of the world until this latest age. Their own past has moulded them and some of its traditions and habits may long stay with them. But for the most part they must find a new culture, a new religion and form of society. At present, they are asking for a share in ours, but they will only take it if it is given without reserve and with faith in their capacity to take and develop it. Refused, or even grudging, they will turn elsewhere and there are other offers. There is hardly time in South Africa to permit this turning away. The issue is a test of the Western peoples' faith in their own civilization and in the values which prompt them to give or to take risks. The rejection of opportunity in South Africa may well affect the whole Continent, with results that will reach Europe and further weaken our imperilled civilization.

# ETHNIC UNIVERSITIES

PROFESSOR Z. K. MATTHEWS

*Acting Principal of Fort Hare University College*

*Now undergoing Preparatory Examination on a charge of High Treason.*

EVER since it came into power in 1948 the Nationalist Government has made it clear that sooner or later it would invade the field of university education with its policy of Apartheid. At last the legislation intended to implement this policy, the Separate University Education Bill, has been published.

Broadly stated the Bill empowers the Government:

- (a) To establish or disestablish so-called university colleges for non-White students.
- (b) to transfer the University College of Fort Hare to the Department of Native Affairs.
- (c) To transfer the non-European Medical School in Durban to the Department of Education, Arts & Science.
- (d) To limit and eventually to prohibit the admission of non-White students to the so-called "Open" universities.

Before the Separate University Education Bill was published, it was suggested in some quarters that the ethnic universities contemplated by the Government need be nothing worse than an endeavour on the part of the Government to bring university education within the reach of more non-European students, by the establishment of more university colleges to cater for the needs of the 10 million non-Whites. Just as the situation of the universities for Whites in different parts of the country is an undoubted advantage to White students, it was supposed that four or five colleges situated where the different racial groups are concentrated would enable more students to go to university than is the case at present, and that in other respects the new institutions would conform to the traditional pattern of university colleges in this country.

The opponents of university apartheid, no doubt also influenced by a fond hope that certain things simply could not happen here, contented themselves with an averment of their faith in university autonomy as far as the admission of students was concerned. Just as they were prepared to accord Stellenbosch the right to refuse to admit non-White students, they claimed for themselves the right to admit such students. By adopting this attitude they hoped to maintain the unity of the university front against the

Government's proposals. It seems clear, however, that the present Government is not prepared to base its policy on the highest measure of agreement among the different sections of the population. On the contrary, it seems determined to base its programme in every aspect of our national life upon a single view of life—the Nationalist conception—imposed willy-nilly upon all sections of the population.

Thus, as has been pointed out by ex-Chief Justice A. van der Sandt Centlivres, the Chancellor of the University of Cape Town, the University Apartheid Bill is far worse than was expected even by the opponents of academic segregation.

Take the title of the Bill. It is described as "The Separate University Education Bill" and not as the "Separate Universities Bill." There is a world of difference between the two. In other words, it is not intended to establish university colleges for non-Whites in the generally accepted sense of the term, but rather to set up institutions in which something deemed by a Government Department to be equivalent to university education will be provided. The idea that a group of civil servants, however well intentioned, should be empowered to determine the academic standards of a university will be wholly repugnant to the principles of higher education as commonly understood in the modern world.

The long title of the Bill shows that every aspect of the life of these institutions will be subject to direct and rigid Government control. Establishment, Maintenance, Management and Control—when one has deprived a university of its autonomy in these respects, what has one got left but an empty shell into which anything a Government wishes can be poured?

But the actual terms of the Bill relating to the structure of these so-called university colleges are, if anything, even more offensive. The Governing Council of the "University College" which may consist of as few as three members, will be appointed by the Governor-General, no doubt because of their espousal of policy rather than their competence in academic matters or university administration. The Senate, the body normally primarily charged with responsibility for academic matters within a university, will be appointed by the Minister, who may delegate his powers to the Secretary who may delegate his powers to an Officer of the Public Service. The Principal, Professors, Lecturers and other staff members will also be appointed by the Minister and will be subject to a disciplinary

code which will reduce them to mere automata.

But the venom of the Bill seems to be particularly concentrated in the chapters dealing with the University College of Fort Hare and the non-European Medical School of Natal University.

The University College of Fort Hare, formerly known as the South African Native College, has been in existence for just over 40 years. The College has a record of achievement of which it is justly proud. The first graduate was turned out by the College in 1923. By 1955, five students had obtained the degree of Master of Arts, three the degree of Master of Science, four the B.A. (Hons.), six the B.Sc. (Hons.); 544 students had qualified for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 311 for the degree of Bachelor of Science and 69 for the degree of B.Sc. (Hygiene)—a degree specially designed for those entering the Public Health services of the country; 83 had gone on to qualify as medical doctors either in the Union itself or overseas; 582 qualified for professional teaching certificates, and 91 had completed the requirements for Diplomas such as the Advanced Diploma in Agriculture or the Diploma in Theology.

Former students are to be found in all parts of South, Central and East Africa, holding positions of great responsibility and rendering significant service to their communities in various spheres of life—as teachers, ministers of religion, doctors, lawyers, civil servants, farmers, agricultural extension officers, social workers, health workers, laboratory assistants in scientific research stations, chiefs, councillors, political and other leaders of thought.

The staff of the College is mixed, i.e., both White and non-White. Although Whites are at present in the majority on the faculty, all posts without exception are open to qualified applicants without distinction as to race or colour. All members of the permanent staff are subject to the same conditions of service, including salary scales and other conditions of employment.

Now the College Council is to be deprived of the functions and powers vested in it, including all property, movable or immovable, which is in future to be vested in the Minister of Native Affairs. In all this there has been no question of consultation with the College Council, on which the Government itself has always been well represented. Members of the staff from the Principal downwards are to become civil servants. Any member of the staff who is *persona non grata* with the Government is to be compulsorily retired; others will be given

two months within which to decide whether they are going to sell their academic souls for a mess of pottage or leave. That is the cruel choice with which men and women who have spent years of preparing themselves for the work in which they are engaged will be confronted.

The same applies to the students admitted to these institutions who will have to be "approved by the Minister." Having regard to the intense desire of non-Europeans for education and the total absence of alternative facilities for them in the country, non-White students will probably be compelled to seek admission to these "intellectual kraals."

The most important thing about a university institution is that it should not be isolated from other seats of learning. Such an institution may be said to be isolated geographically, if it is situated in an inaccessible part of the country, so that those connected with it seldom have the opportunity to know and feel what is going on in other parts of the country or of the world.

A university wherever situated might also be isolated in the sense of being detached from the world around it, concerning itself with the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake without bothering itself about the requirements of the society of which it forms a part. The conception that the world is too much with us and should consequently be largely ignored by those who are engaged in the serious business of study is not one that commends itself to the modern mind. While pure research is still part of the life-blood of genuine universities, much of the research which is pursued in modern universities is concerned with matters which are relevant and applicable to the problems of modern society.

Finally, a university institution might also isolate itself from other seats of learning because its work is conducted through the medium of a language which is confined to a small area or is spoken by too small a number of people. Obviously all people normally want the education of their children to be conducted in the language with which the children are most familiar. In the higher reaches of education, however, it is undoubtedly of great advantage to the future leaders of a country if their education is conducted through the medium of a language which will make it possible for them to enter into the heritage of world civilizations. This is even more important for people who belong to the so-called under-developed groups of the world.

To a greater or lesser extent their lack of development is due to the fact that they have developed their civilizations, all of which are naturally entitled to respect, in comparative isolation from the more dynamic social and economic systems of the modern world. If they are going to be able to stand on their feet under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, at least their future leaders, both men and women, must be able to understand and appreciate the machinery of modern civilization. For them to be compelled to do so through the medium of languages which are relatively speaking still in their infancy in literary development, is a cruel imposition which can only be perpetrated upon a voiceless and defenceless people.

The Union Government has announced its intention of reorganizing the higher education of non-Europeans on an ethnic basis. The Africans, the Coloured and the Indians are to be separated from the Whites and from one another in their university education as they are largely in their primary and secondary education today. The Coloureds are to have a university college established for them in the Western Cape where the greater proportion of their population lives. The Indians are to have their university college in Natal for the same reason.

When we come to the Africans who constitute the vast majority of the non-White population, although everything hitherto has been done to place them in the same category, for the purposes of their higher education they are to be divided into three groups, namely, (i) the Sotho and related tribes, for whom a university college is to be established in a Reserve somewhere in the Northern Transvaal; (ii) the Zulu and related tribes, for whom a university college is to be established in a Reserve in Zululand, and (iii) the Xhosa and related tribes who are to be served by the existing university college of Fort Hare.

What justification can there be for this re-organization on an ethnic basis or this sudden increase in the number of university colleges for non-Whites from one to five? Is this because the one university college at present in existence—Fort Hare—cannot be expanded to take in more students? The present enrolment at Fort Hare is 400, and that number could easily be raised to one or two thousand at far less cost than it would take to set up a new university college, even with the Native Affairs Department squads responsible for the erection of new

buildings.

The question may be asked whether the present demand for university education among non-Whites justifies this increase in the number of university institutions catering for them. At present the number of non-White university students is approximately as follows: 400 at Fort Hare, 500 at the "Open" Universities of Cape Town and the Witwatersrand combined; 400 at the University of Natal, and about 1,400 external students at the University of South Africa doing their degree work by private study; a total of slightly more than 2,500. Admittedly, just as the opening of more secondary schools for non-Whites in the last 30 years has stimulated the development of secondary education, the opening of more university colleges for non-Whites situated in such a way as to make it possible for more qualified students to take advantage of the facilities offered might give a great fillip to higher education among non-Whites.

But the fundamental defect in the Government's scheme is that it is based upon ethnic rather than regional or academic considerations. If a non-White university college is established in the Northern Transvaal, why should a Zulu student resident within reach of that university college be refused admission to it? Or why should a Xhosa student resident on the Reef be compelled, even "with the aid of a bursary," to go to the so-called Xhosa university college rather than to the one which is nearer to him? The normal student goes to a university to take a degree in Arts or Science or Law or Medicine or Commerce, for success in which his particular ethnic grouping is irrelevant.

But the advocates of ethnic university colleges might suggest that it would be more feasible in such an institution to introduce a Bantu language as a medium of instruction if all the students are drawn from one ethnic group, Sotho in the Sotho college, Zulu in the Zulu college and Xhosa in the Xhosa college. Apart from the immense practical difficulties which the use of a Bantu language as a medium of instruction will present in most fields of study, which brand of Sotho will be used in the Sotho college—Northern Sotho (Pedi), Southern Sotho or Western Sotho (Tswana)? If ethnic attachments mean what the advocates of these schemes suggest they do, Tswana students will resent having to be compelled to study through the medium of Pedi and *vice versa*. And what does one do with Venda or Shangaan or Swazi students, for whom no special ethnic

colleges are proposed?

But the most tragic aspect of the Government's scheme is that these tribal universities are apparently to be organized in an entirely different manner from the accepted practice in the other universities in the country. The pattern of the structure of South African universities is laid down in the Universities Act of 1955, an Act within whose compass Fort Hare was also included. The principle underlying the Act is to allow the universities the maximum measure of autonomy subject to the general supervision of their development and their financial administration by the Union Government through the Department of Education, Arts & Science. The Minister of Education, Arts & Science is assisted in this task of oversight in respect of the universities by an Advisory Committee, which scrutinizes carefully all proposals for expansion, increased subsidy, etc. But apart from this general oversight, the universities are left to direct their internal affairs in their own way through the University Council and the University Senate.

This system which has been built up in the past and is the fruit of the mature experience of persons who have been directly connected with the development of our universities, is, like so many other things, to be sacrificed on the altar of apartheid. Instead of the large measure of autonomy which is associated with other universities, the tribal universities are to be subjected to a rigid form of control by the Government. The Council, the Principal, the Senate, the professors and lecturers are all to be cribbed and confined in such a way as to convert the tribal universities into intellectual kraals, rather than places in which the spirit of free enquiry will prevail. Surely if the policy of apartheid or separate development is all that it is claimed to be, it ought to mean that within their separate university institutions the non-Whites will have all the freedoms normally associated with university life in other societies, instead of being expected to work in an atmosphere of threats and compulsion. Why should the non-White universities not be placed under the direction of the Minister of Education, Arts & Science? There can be no doubt that the Department of Education, Arts & Science is more conversant with the problems of higher education, including higher education for Africans with which it has dealt since the consummation of Union, than the Department of Native Affairs.

And what advantage can be claimed for the system of having



the Council appointed by the Minister? What are the disadvantages of having a University Council in which various interests, including the Government, are represented, rather than one which consists of hand-picked supporters of a particular point of view, as Government appointees are almost bound to be?

The Senate of the university usually consists of professors or the heads of departments who owe their place in this body to their status on the university faculty rather than to Ministerial approval. Admittedly, even to-day, members of the permanent staff of a university are appointed by the University Council subject to the approval of the Minister of Education, Arts & Science. But once a Professor has been appointed by a University Council, it does not rest with the Minister to say whether such a Professor will be a member of the Senate or not. In the tribal universities, however, it would appear as if the situation might arise in which some Professors are honoured with membership of the Senate while others are not.

The discipline code which is contemplated in the tribal universities is altogether too totalitarian and appears to be intended to reduce these institutions into mere purveyors of Government propaganda. There is nothing which is calculated to undermine the development of any people, and more especially the under-developed non-White people of this country, than to have universities intended for them staffed with persons whose attitude to their work will be one of "Keep your mouth shut and your salary intact." Adverse public comment on any aspect of administration on the national or the provincial level will constitute misconduct, and the machinery to be set up for dealing with cases of misconduct leaves much to be desired.

The University of South Africa is to be the examining body of the new universities. It must be borne in mind that the University of South Africa is the statutory university for external students, i.e., students doing their degree work by private study. The students of the new universities will be internal students, whose professors and lecturers will no doubt wish to have a say in framing the syllabuses and conducting the examination of these students. The Universities Bill does not say whether the new universities will be accorded representation on the Senate of the University of South Africa.

That will, of course, immediately raise the question of

whether non-White members of staff will be permitted to participate in the work of the Senate of the University of South Africa. Perhaps that is why the Bill is silent on this point. It looks, however, as if it is intended that the University of South Africa should once more become a federal university with a number of non-White constituent colleges. Those who are acquainted with the days when the University of South Africa was a federal university with white constituent colleges know something of the weaknesses inherent in that system.

Finally, the serious question remains to be asked as to what the connection will be between the White and the non-White university systems. After all, the products of these systems will inevitably come into increasing contact with one another in the public life of the country, not as Whites or non-Whites, but as experts in various fields of learning. To what extent will the comparative isolation from one another in which they have done their work affect their academic or professional standards?

It is significant that in connection with the Government plans for the re-organization of university education in South Africa there has hardly been any consultation with the universities as such. University education is an important aspect of national policy, and one would have thought that before such thorough-going changes as are adumbrated in this legislation were brought about, the whole question would be submitted for investigation and report to a Commission on which all affected interests, especially the universities, were adequately represented. It is true that various committees have been appointed to inquire into and report upon specific aspects of university development, but there has as yet been no comprehensive review of the present and future needs of the country in this field. As the most important State on the continent of Africa, it is tragic that South Africa should permit the development of a sound system of university education for all sections of the population to be bedevilled by the demands of vote-catching, rather than those of the advancement of knowledge and truth.

The opposition to this Bill has hitherto been confined to the universities affected, but it is to be hoped that all people interested in the future welfare of the country will unite and form a broad front of opposition to this monstrous Bill, from the baneful effects of which all universities, White as well as non-White, require to be saved.

# TRIBAL WORSHIP

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A GOOD Apartheid admirer admires chiefs, male gerontocracy, kweta circumcision and kaffir beer. He is less certain about some other things in tribal life. Are polygyny, lobolo, witchcraft, or sacrifices to the dead to be encouraged? How are they to be fitted into the divine mission of Christianizing the heathen? These are awkward questions, to be debated perhaps in missionary and academic circles, but not so as to sidetrack attention from the main idea of 'developing the Bantu on their own lines'.

This veneration for the tribal system is fairly recent. The earlier attitude of officials, traders, missionaries and employers was one of intolerance, even active antagonism. They saw in tribalism the great obstacle to the spread of civilization, meaning thereby security, land, labour, taxes and Christianity.

Hostility was shown especially towards the chief and diviner-priest. They embodied tribal values, and led their defence against the alien. Expediency might gain chieftainship a reprieve in some parts, as in Natal, but more usually the administration, in Boer as well as British territories, set out to destroy it by frontal attack or looked to its gradual extinction by indirect methods.

## THE FUTURE OF TRIBALISM

At the beginning of the century few authorities thought that Africans would not or should not abandon tribalism. This scepticism extended even to anthropologists, though they usually developed a sentimental and vested interest in its survival. Not many would have been quite as emphatic as Werner Eiselen, when a lecturer in anthropology at Stellenbosch. "It may be safely said," he wrote in 1931, "that not one of their culture elements, not even their language presumably, will be strong enough to hold its own against the onslaught of European civilization."

This is pessimism indeed! Few would agree with that part of the prediction which foretells the collapse of the African's language; but the whole of it must now seem like heresy to its author, who, as the Secretary for Native Affairs, ranks high among devotees of the tribal cult. In October, 1956, he told

an audience of chiefs, gathered to consider a proposal to establish a school for chiefs, that "it is very obvious that the old tribal organization is not going to disappear, as certain uninformed persons allege."

This assertion is a declaration of faith, not a demonstration of fact. An overwhelming weight of evidence supports Dr. Eiselen's earlier proposition. It is borne out by experience not only in Africa, but also in other countries where people have gone through the same kind of change. We may be sure that none of the essentials of tribalism—magic, the cult of the dead, a self-sufficient economy, polygony, the extended family, lobolo, male domination, hereditary chieftainship—will be carried over for long into an industrialized, urban society.

The new-found enthusiasm for tribal ways gains little support either from policies in other parts of Africa. Even the British, who claim to have invented indirect rule, have long ago abandoned it for a more modern and efficient type of local government, based on elected councils and providing scope for men with education and progressive outlook.

#### AFRICAN ATTITUDES

Our local self-appointed custodians of tribal values have not even been able to show that they are reflecting truly the hopes and fears of Africans who, one supposes, are the people most vitally affected. Restoration of tribalism is certainly no part of the programme of African nationalism; it is not being asked for by political and trade union leaders; nor does it appear in the vision of the educated élite.

We may assume that tribalism is looked on with favour by chiefs and their henchmen, but their self-interest in the matter is surely too pronounced to make them a reliable guide to the unarticulated, largely unconscious feelings and sentiments of tribesmen. Is it likely that men who spend half their adult, active life in an urban community will want to go back to the narrowly drawn limitations of tribal society?

Our question, therefore, is not whether tribalism will survive, but why it is being artificially boosted when it is in an advanced state of decomposition.

The affirmation of faith in its future has, true enough, a pseudo-scientific basis in anthropological theories that stress the uniqueness of every culture and deny or minimize the fact of social evolution. The faithful lean heavily also on nationalism

and its notion of a racial ethos that is supposed to find an outlet in a people's history and institutions. But the myth of a flourishing tribalism serves to conceal the true state of African society and the real aims of State policy.

#### ECONOMIC ARGUMENT

Tribalism is used, in the first place, as a pretext for low standards of administration, educational and health facilities, and wages.

Tribal mutual aid is a beautiful thing to the Apartheidier. On no account must it be allowed to wither and decay! Therefore it is very wrong to accustom Africans to poor relief, unemployment insurance, free medicine or free meals for children. Mealie meal is held, incorrectly, to be their 'natural' tribal diet; therefore they must not get used to eating meat, vegetables, dairy products and fruit. So also in mining compounds, Africans do not eat their food in a dining hall, around a table, equipped with crockery and cutlery, for these civilized aids to digestion are held to be unknown in the tribe.

Tribal customs are not always the cheapest. For instance, milk is a staple article of diet in the tribe. But milk and other dairy products are expensive foodstuffs. Therefore tribal practice is not a good guide in this instance. Mine owners do not include milk, butter or cheese in the miner's ration, though it is admittedly deficient in animal protein.

Housing is another case in point. In the tribe, separate huts of stone or wattle and daub are provided for each wife, the older boys and the girls, also for visitors. Overcrowding is uncommon where traditional standards still apply. But in municipal locations, site and service settlements or emergency camps, houses are usually small and overcrowded, insufficiently roomed for separation according to age, sex or marital condition, and often built out of packing cases and rusted iron sheets.

Apartheidiers like to believe that such conditions, though really more primitive than tribal standards, are acceptable and even pleasing to the tribal African. He, by definition, 'knows his place', which is that of a servant under white masters. Unfortunately, he is untamed and sometimes unpredictable. South African paternalism, compounded of condescending benevolence, tolerance towards peccadilloes, and jocular familiarity, is at its best in dealing with the old family retainer of the Uncle Tom variety.

This preference for the backward section is shared by the British, who on their own admission do not feel so much at home with the educated produce of colonialism as they do with its uneducated fathers and brothers. But the British have been obliged to overcome their distaste for the middle classes, whose knowledge and talents are needed for the now urgent business of developing colonial resources.

#### LEADERSHIP

A similar urgency would arise here if the Apartheid vision of a separate, progressive and industrialized society in the reserves were to materialize. Blueprints for this fabulous project actually provide for an African élite, occupying all positions except at the top. White South Africans would then be able to emulate the envied stereotype of colonial rule: a metropolis spatially distinct from its colony, well-paid officials trained at 'home' and sent out to exploit the colony's resources with the aid of a local non-White intelligentsia, and investors who draw tribute from the colony in safety and genteel ignorance of such vulgar details as forced labour, land hunger, starvation wages, and repression.

That is an imaginary formula for a mythical future. The attempt to impose a caste system on the most highly industrialized and dynamic society in Africa calls for a different approach—a kind of *realpolitik* impatient of subtleties and subterfuges to hide the harshness of colonial rule. South African urgencies can be conveyed in the terms used by Senator Verwoerd, Minister of Native Affairs, to define the 'right' kind of leader for Africans: "he who can co-operate with the local authorities and the Government." The only Africans who can be relied on to fit the bill are the Chiefs.

These descendants of proud rulers of independent tribes are minor, ill-paid and insecurely-seated officials of the Native Affairs Department. But it finds them indispensable. They act as its eyes and ears in the reserves, a link between White magistrates and tribesmen, an agency of local government, an instrument for keeping order, enforcing law and getting the people to put up with unpopular policies. All this the chief can do as long as his office evokes respect, whether as a symbol of departed glory, or out of superstitious regard for its mystic qualities, or because he still has power to reward or punish.

An hereditary bureaucracy of this kind has all the disadvant-

ages of Georgian patronage or the American spoils system. As the British have found, a forward-looking, expanding society has little time for the illiterate, superstitious and conservative men who make up the majority of chiefs and headmen. They cannot free their people from the shackles of magical beliefs, a primitive husbandry and technological backwardness. They cannot even carry out efficiently the more positive functions assigned by the Bantu Authorities Act: to promote schools, hospitals and better farming methods.

Not all chiefs are uneducated. A few are high school or university graduates, who yet find co-operation with the administration possible and satisfying. But a modern, liberal education is apt to give a wide perspective and distaste for tribal, regional or caste restrictions. Chiefs like Luthuli, who choose to co-operate with their people in nationalistic movements, are definitely 'wrong' leaders and do not remain long in office or with their tribes.

Those others, who remain, have to compete with the new leaders, the trade unionists, political organizers, doctors, lawyers, ministers, teachers who are so liberally represented in the great Treason Trial. The administration has come to the aid of the chiefs, firstly by means of the Bantu Authorities Act, which reverses a century-old policy by restoring some of their powers in a pale imitation of indirect rule techniques.

The other and more important line of attack is to cripple the 'wrong' kind of leaders, who are being produced in countless ways: by schools and universities, churches and trade unions, by the fifty organizations named in the treason trial, by the pressures that force men to evade and break the network of laws circumscribing their freedom of action in every sphere.

Here is the key to the extraordinary powers taken by the administration to ban African opponents, exile them, dismiss them from trade union positions, exclude them from universities, censor publications, prohibit gatherings. The African must be isolated from leaders who teach ideas that are above his proper station. The Apartheid view is that slavery is abolished, never by the slaves themselves, but by the intervention of busy-bodies—communists, liberals, churchmen—who constitute the real menace to the social order. If only they could be eliminated, the African would again realize his destiny as Servant under a White Master.

The institutions contemplated under the Apartheid Universities

Bill have been aptly called 'tribal colleges'. Not only are they to divide students according to race and even tribe, but they are to indoctrinate students with the alleged virtues of their tribal past and the theory of 'development on their own lines'. Such colleges may be able to produce teachers and ministers for identical types of schools and churches; they cannot also turn out doctors, lawyers, engineers, surveyors, agronomists and scientists.

But education is not confined to schools and colleges. Political education is gained elsewhere. And men learn technique and organization by working, in factories, mines and shops. Apartheid cannot and dare not prevent Africans from acquiring industrial skills even while it seeks to push them back into tribalism.

The chances of success are the chances of combining an up-to-date technology with a tribal or feudal outlook. This seems unlikely. The impact of an industrial society unavoidably brings on a radical change in domestic and civil relations, as well as economic life. The effects are substantially the same, whether industrialization takes place within or without the reserves. To the extent that the chief becomes an instrument of State policy, either to develop resources or to preserve tribalism, he seems destined to lose his people's allegiance, and accordingly his value to the administration. Initiative and leadership are bound to pass to men and women who have mastered modern science and technology, and have acquired the ideas and habits appropriate to a progressive society.



# THE BUS BOYCOTT

RUTH FIRST

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"THE tiger has fallen," the people cheered. The streets were strangely quiet. First the great lumbering green buses of the largest transport organization for Africans in the country travelled empty along the route; later they were withdrawn altogether.

But for five and six hours every day endless streams of walkers filled the pavements. Over the rise that obscures Alexandra Township from the main road came the eruption of workers in the dawn hours when mists and brazier fires mingle indistinguishably together. End to end the road was filled with shadowy, hurrying figures. Then the forms thinned out as the younger men with the firmest, sprightly step drew away from the older people, the women, the lame.

In the late afternoons and early evenings, the same crowds turned their backs on the city and again took to the roads. Down the hill the footsloggers found it easier (though by the tenth and eleventh weeks of the boycott many shoes were worn to pitiful remnants), the spindly-legged youngsters trotted now and then to keep up, the progress of the weary women was slower still, here a large Monday washing bundle carried on the head, there a paraffin tin, or the baby tied securely to the back.

In the pelting rain, through the suddenly fierce storms of the Johannesburg summer, running the gauntlet of police patrols, the boycotters walked on.

They gave the cities of the boycott a new air. Here was no protest by Africans hidden among the dusty squares of the segregated locations, but an army of protesters, voting with their feet, it has been said, before the eyes of White Johannesburg and the Reef.

The year 1957 will be remembered as the Year of the Great Bus Boycott, and the cry "Azikhwelwa" ("We Shall not Ride) has left its stamp on contemporary events.

"Azikhwelwa" is one of those terse, succinct, "magic" catchwords that epitomizes a whole legion of African demands, a concept of struggle, an entire campaign. There has been, and still is, "Mayibuye" (May Africa Come Back), which dates from the thirties. Twin to "Azikhwelwa" is "Asinamali"

(We Have no Money), said not self-pityingly, but defiantly, the slogan first used widely in the post-war squatters' movement that swept the Reef as a protest against the chronic housing shortage, and which is again on the lips of Africans in the cities.

For months this year the country hummed with these two cries. From the week the bus company, the Public Utility Transport Corporation, jumped its fares twenty-five per cent., like a single shot fired, the people refused to board the buses.

Throughout the long weeks of the boycott, the political initiative in South Africa passed out of the hands of the Government and the Cabinet and into the hands of the African people. Not since the days of the Defiance Campaign had Africans held so strategic a position. Political controversy moved away from the sterile debates in the House of Assembly, where the Flag Bill receded into petty obscurity, and nation-wide attention was focussed on this demonstration by a voteless, voiceless people.

First beginnings of the boycott were in Alexandra Township, nine miles out of Johannesburg on the Pretoria road, where three previous boycotts have been conducted in the last 13 years. Simultaneously, Sophiatown and Western Native Township joined the boycott, and Lady Selborne in Pretoria. Eastwood joined in, and Germiston and Edenvale. Some twelve days later a sympathy boycott was declared in Moroko and Jabavu, and though the fares on these routes were not affected, these townships marched in solidarity to the end. One thousand miles away, in Port Elizabeth, a sympathy boycott was also declared. Soon 60,000 people were walking anything up to 20 miles a day to work and home again.

The cry "Azikhwelwa" and the boycott song banned by the S.A. Broadcasting Corporation rippled along the highways.

For weeks the wires hummed with the latest boycott news. The press was filled with letters expressing the unanswerable case of the boycotters. The boycott not only held the headlines, it pre-occupied Cabinet Ministers, industrialists, municipal councils and political parties. Hundreds of White motorists responded by giving free lifts to the boycotters and in so doing achieved more for race harmony and amity than scores of public meetings and political tracts.

Everywhere it was common cause that the people's refusal to ride the buses was an instantaneous reaction to the fare increases. Everywhere, that is, but in the ranks of the National-

ist Government. The day he returned from a visit to Europe and as he alighted from his 'plane, the Minister of Transport, Mr. B. J. Schoeman, delivered his Government's ultimatum in sharp staccato terms. As yet no investigation had been undertaken, the facts were brushed aside. The Government would not be intimidated, said the Minister. It was not prepared to intervene. Employers should help to end the boycott by refusing to pay workers for any time not worked, and should penalize them for late-coming or reduced productivity due to fatigue. The public ("misguided") should not give lifts to boycotters. "If they want a show-down they will get it. The Government will not give way, no matter whether the boycott lasts a month or six months."

What *are* the facts? It was the Manager of Pretoria's Non-European Affairs Department who stated publicly that most workers could not pay the increased fares. Over two-thirds of the Pretoria boycotters, he said, earned not more than £9 a month. They were unskilled pick-and-shovel workers, and the last wage award affecting them had been made in 1942. The old fares represented £10 a year, or more than one month's wages. The increased fares would raise that to £12 a year.

Except that the figures have altered in the last twelve years to underline the poverty of the African people more starkly, a Government commission appointed at the time of the previous Alexandra Township bus boycott has the definitive say on the ability of the people to pay increased fares.

In 1944, after an exhaustive investigation, the Commission of Inquiry into the operation of bus services for non-Europeans concluded that Africans could not only not afford to pay increased fares, but "it may be said that they cannot afford to pay anything" (for transport). "They certainly cannot afford to pay anything more in any direction, except by reducing still further their hunger diet."

The Commission found that: "the vast bulk of African workers . . . were in 1940 unable . . . to meet even the minimum requirements for subsistence, health and decency. . . . Notwithstanding improvements in minimum wage rates and the introduction of cost of living allowances, since 1940 the gap between family income and the cost of meeting the essential needs of the family has widened considerably, owing to higher prices. . . . Rent, transport and tax make the most rigid and urgent demands on the African worker. They cannot be

escaped. The worker is compelled to live far from his place of work and must pay for his transport. The tax must be paid or he may find himself in gaol. Owing to the compulsion imposed upon Africans by State policy and housing requirements, rent and transport should always be considered together and these together take too high a proportion of the family income . . ." (in 1944 rent and transport averaged 18 and 6 per cent. respectively of family income). The Commission found that the average monthly deficit in family incomes was £3 os. 5d.

Since 1944 the gulf between income and bare subsistence needs has widened. In 1950 the monthly average family deficit was estimated to have risen to £4 17s. 10d., and by 1954 to £7 11s. 5d.

Over the years the real value of wages has decreased, and the immediate shock effect of the boycott was to impress on industrialists and the general public alike the full impact of the below-the-breadline existence of the vast majority of urban Africans. The Africans could clearly not afford to pay the bus fare increases.

PUTCO, the bus company, on its side, made out a good case for its inability to carry on without further subsidy or a fare increase. Formed after the 1944 Alexandra Township boycott, the company was placed under judicial management in 1951 and began to climb out of its financial difficulties and to start paying a six per cent. dividend to its shareholders only when a Government subsidy was granted from 1952 onwards. Year by year the subsidy on fares on sub-economic routes was increased until by 1956 the Government was paying to the tune of £207,475. (The Government fills two of the five directorships of the Company and approves the chairman of the Board.) Despite the subsidy, PUTCO'S 1956 year-end Company Report presses either for a higher subsidy or for Transportation Board permission to increase fares. "The Company's financial position will become acute by January, 1957. . . . Unfortunately a solution is not so simple, because the Company is not only delicately poised financially, but also in its relations with the Bantu world." So it was with some trepidation that the Company applied to the Transportation Board for a fare increase.

Earlier protracted disputes centred in Alexandra Township were still fresh in the Company's mind, and history was to come full circle in 1957.

It was in October, 1939, that the bus companies then operating to Alexandra proposed a rise in the week-day fare from 4d. to 5d. A committee of residents was formed, campaigned for eight months against the fare increase, presented its case to the Road Transportation Board, and negotiated with the bus companies. The Board turned down the bus company application.

In 1943, however, the Board permitted an increase of the fare to 5d. On the first day of the new fare scale a huge procession of 15,000 people walked the nine and a half miles to Johannesburg. The march continued for nine days, and then the bus companies gave in and the fares were once more reduced to 4d.

The Government's Commission into non-European bus services that was appointed in January, 1944, made its findings known in November, concluding that the people could not afford higher fares; but before these findings were made public, the bus owners were putting forward claims for increased fares. The Government promulgated emergency regulations requiring employers to pay any increase in transport fares over and above those existing at September 1st, and the new 5d. fares were then fixed.

The United Party Government proposed that the workers collect these increased fares from their employers, but this was rejected in almost the identical terms in which the people of the township this year rejected the first proposed settlement to the current dispute, namely, that employers pay one shilling a week to their employees as a transport allowance. The people objected that the allowance would not cover casual workers, washerwomen, the unemployed, children. It placed the burden of collecting the extra 2d. a day on the workers; and many felt that employers would discriminate against Alexandra Township residents in favour of those living nearer the city.

At a residents' meeting in November, 1944, to consider the 5d. fares, a police ban on all gatherings of more than twenty persons was read, but by the morning after that meeting, the people had declared their boycott.

The boycott continued for six weeks. The Government rejected a Johannesburg City Council proposal for the subsidizing of the service. An attempt by the Council to buy the buses and run the service to the municipal boundary was turned down by the Road Transportation Board. In the sixth week of the

boycott there was talk of the people of Alexandra staging a stay-away from work protest, but in the seventh week a subsidized coupon scheme was improvised, whereby passengers bought 5d. coupons for 4d. A number of independent bus companies operating on the route were later taken over by the newly formed PUTCO, and the fares then reverted to 4d., with promises that in time they would be lower still. This boycott had been victorious.

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The parallels between the 1944 and the 1956 boycotts are striking. So, too, are the differences.

In both boycotts the central Government had disowned any responsibility for the dispute and stood aloof from any solution. In both the initiative for a settlement had to come not from the obvious official quarters, but from industrialists, enlightened City Councillors, and African and democratic European bodies.

In both cases the boycotts were settled despite the Government, not because of it.

And yet the differences between South Africa's Governments in 1944 and 1956 are still the most telling factors in the total situation. The United Party Government in 1944 was still to some extent sensitive to public opinion, to public pressures. The Government of Mr. Strijdom is intransigent, intractable, unyielding. And nine years under this Government has changed African opinion too. It is not only more united, but also more demanding, more angry, increasingly suspicious because of promises never fulfilled, of undertakings that were never realized. These changes must be borne in mind in an attempt to explain and estimate the course of this year's three-month-long boycott and the thorny path trodden to a settlement.

It is the national policy of segregation, or apartheid, which has led to siting African townships at the outskirts of the cities where land is cheapest and furthest from the White areas. Apartheid and the colour bar in industry decree also that Africans shall do the lowest-paid, unskilled jobs and at rates of pay outstripped many times by White earnings. So heavy transport costs fall on that section of the population least able to bear them. Africans are not only the victims of segregation but they are forced to pay its heavy cost too.

Far from this or any previous Government's recognizing the State's responsibility to provide cheap and heavily subsidized public transport for the poorest groups in the community,

South Africa has turned normal, twentieth century principles of public finance on their heads. "Africans must pay for their own services" is the constantly recurring Nationalist Government theme, and so Africans face a sharp increase in their poll tax, now have to pay an additional levy for the building of schools in their locations, get the lowest school feeding grant for their children, and in many urban areas have just faced a rent increase amounting to 2d. a day.

A number of technical solutions to the boycott were suggested in its early stages and any one of these could have resulted in a settlement.

An increased Government subsidy to PUTCO rather than an increase in fares was an obvious solution, but the Government was adamant that it would not pay out a penny more. Instead, rather than see the boycott end in victory for the boycotters, the Government bore the weekly losses of the Company to stop its compromising or settling.

An increase in the Native Services Levy, through which employers would have subsidized the bus company, was another obvious solution, but again the Government would have nothing of this, and employers who recognized their obligation to help subsidize transport were driven to try to improvise other voluntary and much more clumsy schemes.

At the outset employers were hopeful of an interim transport fund, but the Government would not lend itself to this type of settlement either.

A war measure which requires employers to pay directly to workers who use the buses the difference between original and increased fares could have been revived, but this, said one Johannesburg daily with grim unconscious humour, could not be entertained by the Government for fear it would be accused of "using authoritarian measures!"

On almost every side there was deep concern that a speedy settlement should be reached. Employers, after all the chief beneficiaries of the system of cheap non-European labour, were convinced that Africans could not afford the fare increases and they were the first to try to devise ways whereby they could foot the extra bill. The Johannesburg City Council, which, in the 1944 boycott, had played the major role in launching the coupon system that led to the final settlement, was willing to contribute towards the subsidy. The public was on the side of the boycotters. The boycotters and their committees

repeatedly announced their willingness to negotiate a settlement. After the first few weeks of the boycott PUTCO, had it been a free agent independent of Government pressure, would have returned to the old scale of fares. Only the Government blocked the way to a settlement. It did more than that. It threw the might of the State machinery against the 60,000 walkers in a desperate bid to smash the boycott.

Despite the denials by the Police Commissioner that the police force was being used to crush the boycott, every day brought fresh police acts of intimidation against both boycotters and sympathetic motorists. In a few weeks of mass raids, 14,000 people were arrested on petty offences, most of the raids being conducted on the routes travelled by the boycotters or in the chief boycott areas. Thousands of summonses were issued under the Road Transportation Act. Men were arrested and detained in the cells overnight for crossing roads against the traffic lights. Policemen armed with tape measures and guns measured car seats to ensure that no boycotter sat on less than 15 inches of seat, scrutinized passes and driving licences, and made haphazard arrests.

And as the boycott continued as strong as ever and these bludgeon tactics of the police and the Government failed abysmally, Minister Schoeman prevailed on PUTCO to issue an ultimatum that if the boycott was not ended by the end of February, the buses would be withdrawn and the routes abandoned. And in case any other company had the notion that it could operate at lower costs, the Minister announced a new Bill prohibiting any company from operating on the routes from which PUTCO was withdrawing. It had become a matter of Government prestige that Africans should be compelled to pay the higher fare, even if there could be a lower one.

Why this attitude of the Government on the boycott issue? Sheer perversity, pique and blockheadedness? Another example to add to the already too numerous instances of the callousness and brutality shown to Africans?

There was more to the Government attitude than all this. The Government alarm at the bus boycott sprang from its pathological fear of allowing the African giant to feel—and use—his strength.

Nine years of Nationalist rule have been spent trying to bind the limbs of this giant, to halter and cripple him, to blindfold and muzzle him. The only answer to African demands that



the Nationalists know is the threat, the restriction, the prohibition, the ban, the deportation order, the baton and the bullet. Deputations are turned away; political leaders dubbed agitators; trade unions outlawed. The Government has taken to itself the power to declare martial law (the Public Safety Act); may impose floggings for political offences (the Criminal Laws Amendment Act); may prevent an African seeking redress in the Courts (the Prohibition of Interdicts Act). The strike weapon is illegal, and the avowed intention of the Minister of Labour is to "bleed African unions to death".

The African enjoys no vote, no representation on municipal or local bodies, no genuine method of consultation with any authority. His free movement is harassed at every turn by the pass laws, tightened up every few sessions by a new amending Bill. His right of free assembly is limited by a network of prohibitions in municipal bye-laws and statutes.

The boycott asserted the right of Africans to protest. Despite all the prohibitions and the mountain of laws curbing African political action, Africans in Johannesburg, Pretoria and the Reef had found a method of struggle which could not easily be stamped out by law. It might come to that, but there is not yet a law on the Union statute book imposing penalties on Africans for walking to work and home again by way of protest against a bus company.

The Government denunciation of the boycott as "political" was one of the sticks it hoped to use to beat the boycott, to ruin all chances of settlement, to frighten employers and the Chamber of Commerce and White South Africa as a whole with this spectacle of a menacing black force, using a fare rise merely as a pretext for engaging the Government in political battle to test its strength. For the bus boycott did, undoubtedly, develop into a political campaign. The economic facts, the poverty of a people that reckons its income in pennies, sparked off the boycott, and those who argue the economic basis for this protest could not be on firmer ground. But those who would separate the economic background from the political, who would see the African protesting only against a penny rise in fares, unmoved and unaffected by Minister Schoeman's "break the boycott" threats, by the daily police intimidation, by the pin-pricks, the humiliations and the abject miseries of apartheid, erect distinctions which must be blown over in the first gusts of any African protest or campaign.

The Government, however, had its own reasons for characterizing the boycott a political manoeuvre. It was thus insinuating that the fare increase was merely a pretext for the boycott, whereas a prompt return to the 4d. fare could have been the most obvious disclaimer. The Government branded the boycott leaders trouble-makers and "workless township thugs". But it is a Government deluded by the notion that it is only "agitators" who are dissatisfied, that only "Communists and left-wing extremists" express the demand for political rights of the African people; that only "red termites" organize protest movements.

This is the fantasy world of the Native Affairs Department empire. It is the golden edict of these Native administrators that the Africans are satisfied with their lot and only those who fall under alien and left-wing influences try to revolt against Dr. Verwoerd's paternal authority. Any expression of African aspirations, however mild, is "agitation".

But Africans are no longer bewildered, mute, raw tribal creatures. The boycott showed that the African in the towns is an industrialized, settled, politically aware individual, organized, articulate, purposeful. His organizations are mature and resourceful. His resolve and his courage are not easily broken.

Raw to criticism, enraged by opposition, and, above all, apprehensive of the bitter harvest which they know their treatment of the African people must inevitably reap for them, the Nationalists were forced to recognize in this boycott that apartheid has not succeeded in breaking African opposition and its backbone is stronger than ever.

It needs to be. The negotiated settlement by which bus users would buy 5d. coupons for 4d. and which finally drew the people of Alexandra Township back into the buses is only to last three months. In the absence of a more permanent solution, new struggles clearly loom ahead. There is also the cry from all sides for increases in African wages. The boycott must be seen as a prelude to many related campaigns.

Above all, the bus boycott highlights other lessons for South Africans. It often takes such dramatic episodes to convince complacent White South Africa that Africans feel their denial of rights so keenly. And it showed Africans what they had suspected and now know for certain: that in active campaigning for basic human and economic demands, their unity holds the key to success.

# PORT ELIZABETH DIARY

C. W. M. GELL

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A RECENT editorial in the Port Elizabeth press expressed horror at finding Port Elizabeth bracketed with Johannesburg as one of South Africa's two main "trouble-spots." This because we also ran a bus boycott and then a go-slow campaign among African dock workers. The paper asked "whether Port Elizabeth deserves to be so regarded and, if so, whether there is anything we can do to remove a largely undeserved stigma."

The curiously tautological phrasing of the question, the editorial's later analysis of "inter-racial friction sparked by agitators," the equally confident (and correct) appreciation that "there is hardly any natural communication between the population (race) groups", all reveal the writer as a member of the honourable fraternity of egg-dancers, a legendary association with large membership in the Eastern Cape. A membership, moreover, that embraces both sides of the colour bar.

This diary is chiefly concerned to discuss some aspects of this interesting sociological phenomenon and the curious juxtaposition of the country's politically most advanced African community with its most retarded white one.

Port Elizabeth is an industrial seaport. Its intellectual component is sited 80 miles away in the cloistered seclusion of Grahamstown, where it maintains the one English-speaking "white only" university. In Port Elizabeth the profit-motive rules unchallenged even by such flickers of enlightened self-interest that intercourse with Rhodes University and the colleges might bring. And without intercourse, as nature provides, the intellectual fertility of Grahamstown itself is rendered pretty barren.

Thus the Eastern Cape, which should be the southern redoubt of the great coastal bastion of the British tradition in South Africa, stretching northwards through Border to Natal, is a cultural desert and a slum of white political apathy, truly representative of that most contemptible of all sections of the Union's population, the British-descended whites. Prosperously established in their industrial and commercial pursuits, too comfortable in their (often anti-Semitic) clubs and their golf links, they fail to throw up ministers for their churches, teachers for their

children, politicians to fight their causes, or even that radical minority which has been the creative element throughout British political history. All you can sometimes rouse them over are the "jingo" issues of Crown, Commonwealth, flag and anthem—and then not for long. Lest I be misinterpreted, I speak of my own people.

Balancing on the periphery of this amorphous mass are Afrikaans and Jewish minorities, and between them an English-language press that is unique in South Africa for (one paper) *sometimes* calling "Natives" Africans and (the other newspaper) *for always* doing so. A credit to Port Elizabeth and district that it paradoxically supports a press which is less inhibited on general colour issues than any other in the Union.

However, our real claim to fame is one not usually much advertised. It lies in our having the best organized, most articulate and proportionately strongest provincial branch of the African National Congress. Why this should be so is due to many causes, few of them connected with the "agitators" and "outside extremists" whom Port Elizabeth white inhabitants like to blame. Partly it is the result of the Amakhosa being a homogeneous linguistic and cultural group; partly of their having had nearly a century of political education through limited representation on the Cape's original common electoral roll. Then there is the topsy-turvy fact that the "liberal and progressive" cities of Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage have more complete residential segregation for Africans than any other large South African towns.

One senior Port Elizabeth city councillor recently told a public conference of Nationalists: "Nothing worthwhile could have been achieved if we had not held fast to one principle in all our housing plans, and that was separation of the races. . . . God gave us the vision to separate the people"—and this was alleged to have cleared slums, eradicated "the evils of race mixture," liquor, dagga, robbery, murder and juvenile delinquency. Seeing that the segregated Coloured and African townships notoriously have much the highest criminal and alcoholic rates—the result of poverty, neglect and frustration, not inherent racial qualities—this is sanctimonious self-delusion. Nor did the Almighty really influence policy. Funds for rehousing Africans and Coloureds were only available—whether the Government was United Party or Nationalist—for segregated schemes. The city council really had no choice. But the virtually complete segregation of the African community has

given a tremendous impetus to black politics, whose character the average white in his ignorance and fear magnifies and distorts out of all reality. This achievement was emphatically not intended by the council and would hardly be regarded as "worthwhile."

One consequence was that, when the African and Indian Congresses launched their Defiance Campaign (of passive resistance) against unjust, discriminatory laws in 1952, three-quarters of the 8,000 people imprisoned were Africans from the Eastern Cape, mainly Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage. When the tensions of that campaign led in October, 1952, to police and administrative heavy-handedness provoking a race riot, which the more easily got out of hand because most of the responsible African leadership was banned or proscribed, white Port Elizabethans, counting all the "benevolence" which they had "given" to their Africans, were furious at such base "ingratitude" as well as very frightened. And they, therefore, acquiesced without much protest in the imposition of a curfew, influx control regulations, labour bureaux and service contracts, and all the other paraphernalia of urban "control" for the subordination of Africans, from which the Eastern Cape had hitherto been free. This final withdrawal of their previous limited freedoms sealed for Africans their breach of trust and contract with the white population, and made them here, who had once known something a little better, even more resentful of their fetters than others elsewhere who had always had to bear them.

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This is the background. Against it the slither down the Gadarene slope has steadily gained momentum. In October, 1955, the self-styled "liberal" city council of Port Elizabeth became the first municipality in South Africa to apply "control" (i.e., ban) over all African meetings of more than nine persons throughout its entire magisterial district. No single measure has so offended Africans or, with delicious irony, better prepared them to carry on underground political activities when the expected outlawing of the ANC is announced. It is a fair comment on the nature of the city council and the people who elect it (all-white, plus a purely token Coloured vote) that the resolution asking Dr. Verwoerd to apply his "new model" banning regulations was passed without one word of opposition or even protest—without, indeed, any reason being offered till five months later, and then it made no sense.

Of a similar vintage (1955-56) were the mayor's attempts to solve the "problem" of "agitators" by asking Dr. Verwoerd to banish four ANC leaders from the municipal area. The request was instigated by the Political Police and the Government's Native Affairs Department's officials, who desired to suppress an incipient boycott of Bantu Education schools. It was facilitated by three "Bantu" egg-dancers who, wearying of the arduous exercise of keeping their shells intact and off the ground, allowed themselves to plop (yolks and all) on the side of the authorities. They produced "Native" evidence in the form of seriously tendentious and imaginatively conceived affidavits about "a wave of lawlessness, arrogance and contempt for law" in the African location. Dr. Verwoerd, however, treated the mayor's original request and several agitated reminders with masterly inactivity until it suited him, twelve months later, to lead Mr. Louis Dubb's "evidence" in support of his "Banishment Bill" imposing on municipalities the duty of doing the Government's dirty work for it.

The mayor's and council's yells of consternation at being thus displayed in the underclothes of their devious intrigues—they called it "a breach of confidence"—were all the more strident for realizing how foolish the predictions of imminent disaster, if the four men were not banished "as a matter of urgency" in June, 1955, looked in June, 1956, when the Minister had done precisely nothing and no calamity had befallen the city.

However, councillors manfully closed their ranks, endorsed the mayor's "every action" and gave him a unanimous vote of confidence. But the tone of their speeches showed that they were a little ruffled by public and press criticism, which was sharp and to the point. It has lost none of its barb by the discomforting ease with which Africans later organized their 14-day sympathy bus boycott and a go-slow campaign in the Port Elizabeth docks, despite the absence in Johannesburg of all four would-be deportees among the 18 Port Elizabeth Africans arraigned at the treason trial.

The dock "strike" has been temporarily broken by the employment first of convicts and "scabs" from East London and Cape Town, then by imported labour from the famine-stricken Transkei reserve, brought in army trucks and at first insulated from local contacts under armed guard. One minor irony is the inability of the Government to use troops as strike-breakers, as is routine elsewhere. For all South African troops are white, and steve-

doring, etc., is manual labour—"kaffir's work."

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A "welcome home" for the treason accused during the Christmas recess produced reassuring evidence that the might of the South African police force is massed to uphold even such trivial laws as Municipal traffic regulations. For, failing to find any other indictable offence, 50 policemen, many armed, led and directed by the Political Branch, arrested seven of several hundred Africans returning from the reception hall in one stream towards their segregated suburb (how else could they go home?) on a charge of "organizing a procession". An appeal against the magistrate's conviction and fine is still pending at the time of writing.

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A different category of intimidation was seen in the affair of Rabbi Ungar. Rabbi Dr. André Ungar came to the Port Elizabeth Reform Synagogue, Temple Israel, in 1954 from Britain. He had left Hungary after the war and graduated at London University. Last October he announced publicly that he was returning to an appointment in London at the end of January. On 8th December the secretary of the Port Elizabeth Jewish Reform congregation received a letter from the Secretary of the Interior announcing the cancellation of Dr. Ungar's temporary immigration permit and ordering him to leave the country before 15th January. No reasons were given.

Nor were any needed. Rabbi Ungar had on several occasions criticized the South African Government's racial policies as immoral and contrary to the Jewish religion, as it is to others. Perhaps his most obvious cause of offence was to address a series of what the local Afrikaans papers described as "piebald" (racially mixed) meetings held to denounce the Group Areas Act, which imposes residential and occupational segregation for the race groups by expropriating the property of non-whites. Dr. Ungar had there referred to "the shadow of the Swastika" (which after all he knew from personal experience) "marching across the Free State" and had called *apartheid* "an abomination"—a strong, if strictly Biblical, term.

Now it is, of course, permissible to differ from these opinions, either by way of agreeing with what the Government seeks to do or in holding that the language was intemperate. Our egg-dancing leader-writer subscribed to the latter view, believing that Dr. Ungar "did not always temper his intellectual integrity

with discretion, did not recognize politics as the art of the possible, or understand that changing public opinion is a long-term process." Nevertheless, lest the whole egg drop into the Government's lap, he proceeded to defend Dr. Ungar's right to say what he felt and to criticize the extraordinary apathy of the white public in failing to take up on his behalf the obvious quotation from Voltaire. For the sad truth was that, except for a number who vehemently said "good riddance," few voices were raised to defend the right to freedom of expression.

Dr. Ungar had, of course, complicated matters by opining that, since the Government already knew he planned to depart, its deliberate attack on a man who had no motive to contest the order could reasonably be construed as a warning to all ministers of religion and to the Jewish community. The latter likelihood was increased by the letter having been addressed to the secretary of his congregation and not to Dr. Ungar personally. The first reaction to this was a letter in the press from a member of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies rather gratuitously denying that "the withdrawal of Dr. Ungar's immigration permit is regarded by the Jewish community as an attack by the Government to intimidate such Jewish citizens who may be critical of Government policy."

Rabbi Ungar replied, setting out the deductions from his own case in greater detail, mentioning the press and parliamentary campaign (described by Senator Rubin in the last issue of *Africa South*) designed to intimidate or at least neutralize South African Jewry and seeing Mr. A. M. Spira's letter as a successful product of that policy. The fat began to sizzle. "Port Elizabeth Jewish Citizen" desired to record his "indignation at the abuse of the freedom of the press by this non-desirable visitor to South Africa." Furious that the Jewish community's "friendly relations with its non-Jewish fellow-citizens" were being jeopardized by this "irresponsible and undignified" Rabbi and owing allegiance only "to the Government and people of this country", this correspondent pronounced the traditional Hebrew blessing of "Boruch Sheptorau" ("thank God we are getting rid of this Rabbi").

There were some more in this vein and a few belated, though resolute, replies. But more significant than the outspoken virulence of a few was the silence of the many. For Mr. Spira's letter was the only comment of a Jewish representative character. The Rabbi of the large Orthodox congregation in Port Elizabeth,



who is not slow to seek press publicity on issues he supports, was conspicuously silent throughout. It was impossible not to feel that, behind this vociferous silence of the bulk of the Jewish community, there was more than personal antipathies or the old schism between Orthodox and Reform. The Jewish community in South Africa is smaller and more vulnerable than the British. Yet it has far more reason in its recent history to know how little is gained by ducking before the storm, how every vindictive discriminatory action hits at us all, black and white, Gentile and Jew. The Jewish churches, understandably outspoken in defiance of injustice to Israel, are less justifiably quiet on the moral implication of our present colour policies. Dr. Ungar was an exception. It was left to an Anglican priest to emphasize the ethical obligations of a religious ministry and to protest at Dr. Ungar's expulsion for having expressed his conscience.

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*Apartheid* from the cradle to the grave is bad enough. It has been spotlighted by Archbishop Clayton's testamentary wish to have his ashes interred in soil that is not reserved "for Europeans only". But in Port Elizabeth there is a danger that apartheid will drop living people into their graves more speedily than is really necessary.

Not long ago a little girl was seriously injured in a street accident. A spectator, who was evidently colour blind, phoned for the non-white ambulance. When it arrived, its attendants were refused permission to lift the girl in by an officious white eye-witness who knew that the child was white. A delay of 20 minutes occurred while the "white" ambulance was summoned. The girl later died in hospital.

No one can say that the delay was cause of the effect. But one day it will be in a similar case. Shortly after, the white ambulance drove past an African who had been squashed by a bus. Probably he was dead then. He certainly was when the non-white ambulance got him to hospital. But still . . . And, although more sensible and practical orders have now been given to the ambulance crews, no one can guarantee they will be carried out. For if the non-white ambulance is called to one of those innumerable borderline cases, where people insist on differentiating where the eye cannot, are the non-white attendants going to be able to act in the face of white intransigence such as delayed that little girl?

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In February the Cape ANC, whose headquarters are in Port Elizabeth, announced a consumer boycott of products and firms which are Nationalist controlled or financed. This is obviously a long-term policy whose effects will only gradually be felt. But, even before it has really got under way, some chickens have come home to roost. For one thing, the list of products and firms originated with a Nationalist-front organization in Natal, which was exhorting all true Afrikaners to "buy Afrikaans." For another, the State Information Office has long been casting careless statistics on the waters about "the Bantu's" immense spending power, in order to prove how affluent and well-cared for our Africans are. There is some truth in this, though a deal less than the S.I.O. affirms. But the developing purchasing potentiality of the non-white market is something on which most local industrialists have had a keen and avaricious eye. After all, 12 million consumers are a much healthier foundation for an industrial economy than 3 million, even if the latter are the third highest (to the U.S.A. and Canada) income group in the world.

Industrial and commercial firms, as well as advertising agencies, have all been researching into the extra 9 million potential. Many employ African P.R.O.'s and research assistants. So that it came as a surprise only to the uninformed that, within a fortnight of the economic boycott being announced and long before any results would be visible, representatives of four listed firms were seeking interviews with ANC leaders to prove, if they could, their freedom from Nationalist control or finance. One firm artlessly announced that it was just at that moment launching a scheme to employ Africans. . . . "Would any of your chaps care for a job?" Another concern revealed that it had just occurred to it to consider recognizing African trade unions for the purposes of negotiation, even though the Government will not allow them to be registered. Thus the shape of things to come.

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Whites soliciting interviews with "kaffirs"! There is a new South Africa for you. And if the Port Elizabeth I have written about is unrecognizable to its average white inhabitant (as I have no doubt it is), I am confident that it will long outlive the mirage city which he thinks he sees. For the seeds of the future are deep in *my* Port Elizabeth.

# CENTRAL AFRICAN FEDERATION

## (I) THE ATTACK

ELIAS M. MTEPUKA

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IMAGINE yourself a liberal white American with dollars to invest and you want to know officially some basic facts about the Central African Federation. You will no doubt be told that it is a group of three British territories lying within the tropics south of the equator—namely, Southern and Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland—covering an area (485,000 square miles) larger than either the Union of South Africa or the American States of New York, California and Texas put together. It has an eminently healthy climate, as most of its land lies at an altitude of over 3,000 ft. above sea level. Its population is 7,260,000 consisting of 251,000 Europeans (to increase at the present immigration rate to 2½ million by 1980), 6,980,000 Africans and 30,000 Asians and Coloureds. It has enormous natural resources, a sufficiently diversified economy with copper mining as the mainstay, and a buoyant export trade in copper, chrome, tobacco, tea, lead, zinc, asbestos and tung.

Its government is geared to the maintenance of civilized standards—that is, European standards. But being dedicated to a policy of racial partnership which is enshrined in its Constitution, the country has a unique and immensely significant position in Africa, if not in the world. For it is the only country settled by Europeans which has deliberately adopted a policy of racial co-operation, as opposed to the South African policy of "apartheid" and the British Colonial Office policy of handing over power to inexperienced African politicians and therefore betraying the white man's trust and mission of civilizing the African. . . .

You will be told all that. But you will never be told that this Federation is a country where lips which mouth "partnership" are betrayed by hands which manipulate "apartheid".

This fact ought to be properly understood. First, because it is going to affect the trend of political events in Central Africa in the next decade. And secondly, because the slogan of "partnership" is so skilfully bandied that it has created a false halo around this so-called multi-racial State in the heart of

Africa. Both at home and abroad liberals have hailed its "partnership" policy as the only hope in white-settled Africa. So strong indeed is the myth that prominent men who have vociferously protested against "apartheid" in South Africa have come out on the side of the Federation, without even stopping to see whether "partnership" in theory tallies with "partnership" in practice, or to reflect on what constitutes "apartheid"—the word or the deed.

This misconception is dangerous. It is nevertheless understandable. The slogan of "partnership" arose in Central Africa at a time when the South African "apartheid" machine was thundering in full gear. It was a happy contrast to the shattering, undisguised fury of "apartheid". But it has distorted the true perspective of Central Africa.

There is no consistency between "partnership" in the abstract and "partnership" in the concrete. A cursory glance at the Federal Constitution would show that the term is of little significance even theoretically. First, it is not part of that section of the Constitution which is legally enforceable. Secondly, it is not even defined. It imposes no *definite* obligation, even morally, on those who wield the sceptre of power. And it has often been repudiated by European politicians, including Government spokesmen, who claim it is an imposition of the Colonial Office. Even where it has been found expedient to use the slogan, it has been subject to so many varying interpretations that it is utterly absurd to regard it as a political policy or theory at all.

The word "partnership" appears in the third clause of the Preamble to the Federal Constitution. This clause reads:

"And whereas the association of the Colony and territories aforesaid in a Federation under Her Majesty's sovereignty, enjoying responsible government in accordance with this Constitution, would conduce to the security, advancement and welfare of all their inhabitants, and in particular would foster *partnership* (my emphasis) and co-operation between their inhabitants and enable the Federation, when those inhabitants so desire, to go forward with confidence towards the attainment of full membership of the Commonwealth. . . ."

In any other context this "partnership and co-operation" would be a meaningless platitude without elucidation. And in this context it is just that. But even if this "partnership" were a little less nebulous than it is—if, for instance, it was half as definable as "apartheid"—it would still be difficult to reconcile it with the actual terms of the Federal Constitution, in which the supremacy of the white race is distinctly underlined.

The prevailing conception among all European political parties is that it must be a partnership that holds up whites as seniors and blacks as inferiors, at least for the foreseeable future (which is a popular Rhodesian euphemism). The former Prime Minister, Lord Malvern, put it graphically in his analogy of the partnership of the rider and his horse!

The terms of the Federal Constitution concede this. The Federal Parliament consists of 35 members. Twenty-nine of these are European, six Africans. Three of the Europeans are nominated by Governors (in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland) or elected (by the predominantly white electorate in Southern Rhodesia) to represent African interests. Except for the two nominated members from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, all Europeans are elected under an individual franchise. The two African members from Southern Rhodesia are elected by the Colony's whole electorate, consisting of about 70,000 Europeans and (now) about 560 Africans—which clearly indicates who calls their tune, and how they must dance to be successful politicians. The present African members for Southern Rhodesia are both members of the ruling (Federal) Party, and were returned with the party's support.

In Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, which are Protectorates, only British subjects (in practice Europeans) have the franchise. The four African members were elected by African bodies set up by the Government—the African Representative Council and the African Protectorate Council respectively.

The racial distribution of seats is therefore roughly 26 white and nine (including the three white representatives) black. The scale is in favour of white.

The territorial distribution is 17 for Southern Rhodesia, 11 for Northern Rhodesia and seven for Nyasaland. This is in favour of the country with the largest white population. (Note: Nyasaland, which has the largest population, has only seven seats and Northern Rhodesia, which contributes the bulk of federal revenue, has only 11.)

However, Africans are often enjoined to put faith in the spirit rather than the letter of the Constitution, and to believe that "partnership" is really guiding the Government's hand. But a spirit to be understood must be expressed in something tangible. And the spirit of the Federation can only be measured by what it has done since its inception. In terms of "partnership and co-operation" the record of the past three and a half years is

not particularly reassuring. Session after session in Parliament African members from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland have talked themselves hoarse pleading with the Government for an earnest of good faith, asking for no more than the abolition of racial discrimination in the federal sphere in a spirit of "partnership". With deepening disillusionment and frustration, the African people have seen their spokesmen rebuffed, rebuked and humiliated. The Government has invariably told them not to ask for the moon, because "partnership" does not mean the removal of racial restrictions or the adoption of a policy of racial equality.

The Federation's policy could be more appropriately defined as the benevolence of a benignant aristocracy. This can be more easily explained by reference to some of the things the Government has done and the way it has done them. It has opened post offices in "Native locations" and "Native reserves" in Southern Rhodesia, for the first time in the Colony employing Africans as postmasters "to serve their own people" in "their own areas", at less than a quarter of a European postmaster's salary. It has decided to admit Africans to the Federal Civil Service at inferior salary scales and conditions of service to those of Europeans (except for doctors). A black lawyer with the same training, qualifications and experience as a white one must get less than the white. A black schoolmaster with a degree must have a lower rating than a white schoolmaster, even if he is not a graduate. An African State registered nurse and State certified midwife must be graded below the white one, even if the white has lower qualifications.

But these are positive steps in the programme of "partnership". Legislation extending the franchise to Africans is being enacted, although it will ensure that power remains in "civilized" hands, that is, white hands. The franchise will be based on a two-tier roll, most adroitly conceived. The higher tier, the real repository of power as it will elect the majority of the members of Parliament, will demand very stiff qualifications (which only Europeans have the opportunity to attain). The lower one will allow lower qualifications, thus admitting more Africans as well as all the voters on the upper roll. This will elect a minority of the M.P.s. In effect, the scheme will give "civilized" persons two votes each, and Africans one emasculated vote each.

This is the substance of the partnership which a benevolent aristocracy is prepared to concede.

It would be puerile to single out the ruling party for criticism. In the Central African context this is as far as the most liberal of the liberals could go. And who are the liberals? Either they are the Capricorn Africa Society and the Inter-racial Association of Southern Rhodesia, or they do not exist. The Society, through its doughty Colonel David Stirling, advocates a more complicated multiple franchise which can give directors of large companies, high court judges or university professors as many as six votes, and an African primary schoolmaster with a standard six certificate, nothing. And while not standing for racial discrimination, it does not approve of mixed schooling for white and black children at the primary and secondary levels until the latter are more elevated culturally and socially. The Association is even less demanding. Except for a few minor modifications, like relaxing (not abolishing) the pass laws or improving African housing in the locations and broadening (not lowering) the franchise qualifications, it asks for nothing much. Its approach to the racial problem is essentially gradualist, as is that of all other liberal groups, including the governing group. On the whole, the liberals are satisfied with the Government's record, and like the ruling and opposition parties, they do not want the present political, economic and social set-up to be upset. Indeed the concensus of white opinion is that African political and social progress must not be a conscious process propelled by doctrinaire ideals, but a by-product of economic development within the compass of European control.

This is the perspective in which African dissatisfaction must be seen. Opposition to Federation is still strong. But it would be an exaggeration to claim that African reaction is uniform throughout the three territories. It is strongest in the North and weakest in the South. There are historical explanations for this, and it is worth while referring to them briefly.

Southern Rhodesia (area: 150,333 square miles) was occupied by Europeans by conquest at the turn of the century. It was annexed by Britain and granted self-government in 1923. Since then it has had an all-white Parliament, elected on a franchise which excludes effective numbers of Africans through high qualifications. At present these include a minimum income of £240 per annum or fixed property worth at least £500, and a high standard of education in English (ascertainable by test). So far just over 560 Africans have been placed on the voters' roll, as compared with about 70,000 Europeans.

As a corollary of conquest, African chieftainship was smashed and its power completely wiped out, being replaced by direct white rule. The administration had all the rigorous, in some cases ruthless, discipline of the conqueror. A rigid colour bar was instituted between white and black. The land was divided racially. Black workers in town were herded into locations. Post offices, banks, railway stations and other public buildings had separate entrances and counters for white and black. All social contact between the races was forbidden, that between white women and black men on pain of imprisonment and banishment. There was to be no association except on the basis of master and servant, superior and inferior. And the country's economic machine was geared to this set-up. With the coming of Asians, and the growth of the Coloured or Eurafrican population resulting partly from illicit intercourse between white men and black women, a buffer arose which widened the gulf between Europeans and Africans.

There are now about 178,000 Europeans in the Colony, 2,290,000 Africans and 13,200 Asians and Coloureds. As in South Africa, the Asians and Coloureds are exempt from the pass laws and liquor restrictions. But unlike South Africa, they use European entrances to post offices, banks, etc., and live in European areas, though in separate suburbs. Their schools are under the European Education Department. For all practical purposes they are an appendix of the European community, and they generally share the Europeans' prejudices and arrogance towards Africans.

The net result of this policy has been to break (though only temporarily) the morale of the Africans and strip them of their self-confidence, so that they are less cohesive politically and more amenable to liberal European leadership than are their contemporaries in the northern territories. Both the Capricorn Society and the Inter-racial Association (indeed the Federation itself) have more African support south than north of the Zambezi. There are African members in both the Federal and United Rhodesia Parties in Southern Rhodesia. Limited as their objectives are, these organizations offer the Southern Rhodesian African something that he has not got, and generally something that his counterpart in the north has, like the right to obtain European liquor, or freedom from the pass laws.

Northern Rhodesia (area: 287,640 square miles) is a Protectorate. It came under the British through treaties voluntarily



signed by African Chiefs. The wealth of its copper mining industry has attracted large numbers of whites into the territory in recent years, and its present European population is about 66,000 (Africans: 2,110,000; Asians and Coloureds: 7,100).

Although officially it is still administered through the Colonial Office, its local white political ties are very strong, and the racial climate is just a little more temperate than it is in Southern Rhodesia. However, through years of imperial control (keyed to indirect rule), the Africans have developed a more cohesive and confident political consciousness, which has been greatly accelerated by the growth of militant trade unionism on the copper mines. Nevertheless, white nationalism is on top. The country's Legislative Council has 12 elected European members, four Africans nominated by the Governor from a panel recommended by the African Representative Council, and two Europeans nominated to represent African interests. Four of the elected Europeans also sit on the Governor's Executive Council (on which there is no African), three of them holding portfolios. One nominated European holds the portfolio of African Education and Social Services.

Few Europeans regard Northern Rhodesia as their permanent home, and the Government and political parties are making determined efforts to induce miners to settle in the country after they have made their money.

Socially, Northern Rhodesia is a replica of Southern Rhodesia. Africans are excluded from practically all European hotels (except the Ridgeway in Lusaka, perhaps the most expensive in the country). There is the same segregation in residential areas, entrances to public buildings, etc., and separation of black from white, Indian and Coloured. Through a series of boycotts and defiance campaigns the African National Congress has made a few breaches in the racial barricades. It has succeeded in breaking down racial partitions in post offices, and in forcing some business firms to stop serving Africans through hatches. And the Congress here is perhaps the most significant political factor in the Federation. The bulk of the 35,000 Africans running the £116-million a year copper mining industry, which accounts for more than half of the Federation's revenue, are Congressites. But the Federal and territorial Governments are well aware of this fact, hence the sharp and violent reactions to the pressure which forced the Northern Rhodesian Government to invoke emergency measures. There is not the slightest

doubt that the Colonial Office is handing over to the settlers in Northern Rhodesia. But it is not certain that the *nunc dimittis* will be sung in serenity. African freedom forces are growing stronger every day, and the white settlers (and the British Government) must look forward to a long spell of stresses and strains.

This is equally true of Nyasaland. Formerly the most peaceful of the three territories, this Protectorate is now a hotbed of an exclusive African nationalism. Lack of large scale industries like mining has enabled it to maintain its African character by keeping its white population low—there are now only about 6,800 Europeans and 9,800 Asians and Coloureds, as against 2,580,000 Africans. But the imposition of Federation by the British Government and the consequent domination of European settler influence in Nyasaland's affairs have so embittered Nyasaland Africans that the possibility of their being reconciled to the Federation in its present form must be ruled out.

Nyasaland is the smallest (37,000 square miles, excluding 12,000 square miles of water), the least industrialized and the poorest of the three territories. But its African population is at present the most nationalist-minded in Central Africa.

The country came under British protection in 1891 "with the consent and desire of the Chiefs and people", according to the Imperial Proclamation. This has been the focal point of Nyasa nationalism, which has also been encouraged by the fact that Europeans in Nyasaland have never regarded the country as their permanent home. Indeed the majority of them have been planters (estate managers), civil servants and employees of commercial firms (all expatriates). The Asian traders have also been similarly disposed. Thus Britain's imposition of Federation against their concerted opposition has left the Africans deeply shocked. So childlike was the Africans' faith in Imperial pronouncements that they had hoped Britain would protect them even from the territorial and political ambitions of Rhodesian white settlers. Now they stand aghast. And they are wondering whether the treaties signed by their forefathers are worth the paper they are written on. The feeling of betrayal is deep. It is doubtful whether even a Socialist Government in Britain would succeed in recapturing the lost confidence. For it was a Labour Government in fact that engineered Federation. And from all indications it is unlikely that the Socialists will indefinitely refuse to grant dominion status to the Federation,

as a penance for their original mistake, if the Tories go out of office before performing that task. Already too much power has been transferred from London to Salisbury.

As in Northern Rhodesia, settler opinion is on top in Nyasaland, though to a lesser extent. Last year the European settlers and other non-Africans were granted the vote. Africans have as yet no franchise. The Lennox-Boyd Constitution last year also gave British subjects six seats (all filled by Europeans) on the Legislative Council, Africans only five. Two of the European members also sit on the Governor's Executive Council. There is no African. Nyasaland settlers are also represented in the Federal Cabinet.

But the most terrifying thing to Nyasas is the fact that Rhodesian settlers, with their inflexible attitude to colour, have now begun running Nyasaland's affairs. Nyasaland's health services, postal services, railway services and others are now controlled from Salisbury. Appointments of Africans to jobs in these departments are now subject to the racial ideologies of those at the top. And there is a great deal of talk among Rhodesian settlers about the need for unifying the native policies in the three territories, in other words, adopting the Rhodesian one. Such unification of policy would obviously lead to the introduction of segregation in Nyasaland's post offices, banks and cinemas, where members of different races use the same entrances and stand in mixed queues. Only in Nyasaland can an African be served in a railway dining saloon together with whites, or sit beside a European on a bus. And only in Nyasaland could a pub open its doors to Africans, Europeans and Asians at the same time. All that will be a thing of the past. Much of it already is.

But Britain's surrender to the settlers in Central Africa will mark the real beginning of the African freedom struggle in these territories. West African independence (Ghana and others to follow) and the freedom marches of Africans in other parts of the Continent are bound to influence the Africans in the Federation. There is no doubt about that. There is a danger, however, that in their frustration the Africans will turn to an extreme racial nationalism and start a hate-back and hit-back campaign, which might intensify the racial conflict. It is a tragedy that Britain has completely ignored this possibility.

# WHITE ENGLISHMEN AND BROWN

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WE in Britain have been told by several South African politicians that if our coloured immigrant population goes on growing at its present rate we shall soon come to see the necessity of segregation. Perhaps it is time now to examine this view in the light of the available evidence. In recent years the ordinary Englishman has experienced what it is like to have an appreciable number of coloured men living and working in his home town. The question has been discussed at length in the newspapers, on the radio, on television; what has been the result?

To interpret the present state of public opinion, one needs to see it in historical perspective. There have been coloured residents in Britain for four hundred years. Up to the end of the seventeenth century, they were generally regarded as sharing the same human nature as Europeans. With the growth in the slave trade, however, grew a readiness to believe that Negroes were an inferior species of humankind, and informed opinion divided into sharply opposed schools of thought. The pro-slavery outlook was strengthened in later years by developments in biological thought; the theory of evolution and the social Darwinist view of the races as competing with one another in the struggle for survival, both lent intellectual support to the belief that Europeans were biologically superior to Negroes. The great imperialist expansion of the century's closing years created a class of people who needed just such a justification for their politics, while the stories fed to the public at home, by administrators and missionaries alike, built up an image of the benighted heathens as lacking any culture whatsoever.

One of the minor consequences of the 1914-18 war was the recruitment of coloured colonials for manning merchant ships and for service in labour battalions. Several hundreds settled in Britain after the cessation of hostilities and coloured communities grew up in the dockland areas of several seaports. In the troubled inter-war years British shipping suffered severely. White seamen and coloured competed for a limited number of jobs. At first there was a series of minor riots; later, port authorities and shipping agents combined in discriminating against coloured seamen. The association of these men with

the local women was disliked and there was talk of segregation.

The Second World War brought greater numbers of Negro American and colonial troops to the country. Public awareness of the importance of racial relations on the international stage increased considerably. Some coloured servicemen settled in Britain. Then, in 1949, the first small but rising waves of West Indian immigration began. Men from Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad, and the West Indian colonies fled their homelands, where the population was increasing far more rapidly than the capacity of local industry to offer them employment. Previously, West Indians had migrated to the United States, Panama and South America in search of work. Now these avenues were closed to them, so they came to Britain. At first there were about 2,000 immigrants per year; now the volume of traffic has swollen to an annual flow of nearly 30,000. Today there are, all told, about 80,000 West Indians and Africans resident in Britain, and a like number of Indians and Pakistanis. The great majority are males, but in recent years there has been an increasing tendency for West Indian women to migrate and for the menfolk to bring their families over.

Many of the immigrants have settled in the industrial midlands, and the numbers in Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds and Sheffield together are comparable with London's widespread coloured population. The immigrants have gone to the places where work has been most plentiful and where housing accommodation has consequently been most difficult to come by. Many of them live in overcrowded conditions, exploited by landlords both white and coloured. The local sanitary authorities have in a number of cases been concerned about the resulting dangers to public health, though it is appreciated that the fault is not the immigrants'. Wherever coloured workers have settled, voluntary organizations and official bodies have taken steps to aid their adaptation to life in strange surroundings.

To find out what people think about this new influx and about coloured people as individuals, I organized last year a survey of racial attitudes. Three hundred people, whose names were chosen at random from the electoral registers of six centres, rural as well as urban, in England and in Scotland, were interviewed by skilled investigators. Thirty-seven per cent. of those interviewed had some connection, perhaps through friends or relatives, with one or more of the colonies or dominions. People's knowledge, however, about the structure

of the Commonwealth was not particularly impressive: after they had been told or reminded of the difference between a colony and a dominion, no more than 43 per cent. were able to name correctly two or more colonies. Eleven per cent. of those interviewed said that they had a personal friend who was coloured or had known some coloured person very well. When asked "Provided, of course, that there is plenty of work about, do you think that coloured colonials should be allowed to go on coming to this country?" 63 per cent. replied in the affirmative; the fact that the immigrants were British subjects like themselves weighed far more heavily with them than the difference in the colour of their skins.

Other questions were asked covering a variety of topics, but perhaps the most interesting of them came at the end. Three cards had been prepared, each bearing ten statements about immigration, coloured people, and relations between the two groups. The interviewer handed these cards, one by one, to the subject, saying that these were the sorts of things that had been said about these topics and inviting him or her to indicate which statements, if any, represented the respondent's own views on the matter. There was to be no persuading a person to express an opinion about a question he had never considered and about which he held no views. Some cautious subjects assented to very few statements, and in the circumstances it was impressive that one statement received the approval of 76 per cent., and two of nearly 70 per cent., of the persons interviewed. The four most favoured statements were:

"Coloured people are just as good as us when they have the same training and opportunities" (76 %).

"A lot of the coloured people here are very clever" (68 %).

"If we all behaved in a more Christian way there would not be any colour problem" (67 %).

"It would be a good thing if people of different races mixed with one another more" (64 %).

Four of the statements least favoured read as follows:

"Coloured people will always be inferior to white people" (10 %).

"All mixing between races should be avoided" (9 %).

"Most of the coloured people here are very ignorant" (9 %).

"The coloured people who come here are uncivilized" (4 %).

Other responses indicated that a substantial proportion of the population felt that "people who treat others badly because of their colour ought to be punished"; that "things will be all right when people get used to coloured people". Rather less than half of the sample said that they did not like the idea of the immigrants marrying English or Scottish girls.

One of the most striking results of the survey was the demonstration of how open-minded people were on most issues. Only about four people in every hundred held strong pre-conceived ideas about the inferiority of coloured peoples. Time and again respondents mentioned their limited acquaintance with coloured people, emphasizing that they could generalize only from that experience and that they realized it was limited. The racist view that some races are superior to others is, of course, a highly theoretical one, depending, if one believes in rational discussion, upon theoretical assumptions and proofs. The people interviewed would have none of this, and took a more practical line. They still regarded the immigrants with the suspicion shown towards nearly all strangers, but from their limited experience most people had been favourably impressed rather than the reverse. "There's good and bad in every race", they kept reiterating. The more experience of the immigrants they had had, the more favourably disposed they were.

Answers given to an interviewer do not always provide a good indication of how people will behave. Individual attitudes have to be seen against the background of the sorts of situation in which members of the two groups meet one another. In Britain it is generally accepted that there ought to be no racial discrimination in public places or services. No one questions the coloured man's right to a seat in the bus beside him, or to a place in the queue at the Post Office. They pay the same taxes and receive in return the same benefits as anyone else. However, in matters of private behaviour there is a great deal of genuine confusion as to the most appropriate course to take, and this is often reflected, for example, in the attitudes of employers and trade unions towards coloured workers. In the most intimate and private of all relationships, that of marriage, this confusion is also often apparent. Many people say they dislike seeing an English or Scottish girl walking out with a coloured man, but during the war the same people disapproved of American and Polish troops' success with the girls. The

attitude seems to be a straightforward one of sexual jealousy that is intensified though not changed by the extra complication of a racial difference. Mixed marriages are by no means uncommon and have been much in the public eye in connection with the Seretse Khama affair and the marriage between Miss Peggy Cripps and Mr. Joseph Appiah of Ghana. Many coloured seamen have married local women: their wives are often unfortunates who were rejected by their own society before they entered into their association with a coloured man. In such cases the wife is often able to help her husband, for people are more likely to assist him on her account than to try and punish her for marrying an outsider. Not everyone disapproves of mixed marriages. Many people say that it is a girl's own affair whom she marries, while an M.P. recently remarked in the House of Commons that he would not object to his daughter's marrying a coloured man, provided that he were kind to his father-in-law! Discussion of this question is usually confined to instances of a white girl marrying a coloured man. When it is a white man who takes a coloured wife, reactions are very different; the men, at least, are more likely to be slightly jealous of their fellow, as if he were enjoying a special experience denied to themselves, than to be disapproving.

To the ordinary Englishmen, the coloured workers often appear strange and exotic creatures. He tends to avoid contact with them, because he fears that if he enters into a relationship with a coloured man the other may not know the correct way to behave and may land him in difficulties. To the employer, a coloured workman appears as a risk, for he is unlikely to have the background of experience that a white worker has and he may need extra supervision. Perhaps, of course, the immigrant may be a particularly ambitious and hard working man, but the risk is not always worth taking. An incident that was described to me in London (*The Coloured Quarter*, Jonathan Cape, 1955, p. 149) illustrates this most aptly. A coloured man applied for a job only to be told that it had been filled. He did not believe this and got his English wife to telephone the firm. She said that she had a coloured lodger who was a good worker and asked if they would consider him. The man put on a different suit of clothes, went round, and got the job! I know from my own experience that this story is not unrepresentative.

Trade unions are often placed in a similar quandary and they have been at sixes and sevens over the development of a policy



to meet the problems arising from the new influx. Their attitude has been the same as that of Ben Tillet who told the Jewish immigrants in the East End of London at the beginning of the century, "Yes, you are our brothers and we will do our duty by you. But we wish you had not come to this country". In many cases the unions have done their duty by immigrant coloured workers, but they have never faced up to the conflict between their duty to the immigrants and their duty to their "own" people. The recession in employment in the Birmingham region early this year caught the unions without any effective policy on this question, though it had been urged upon them in the palmy days of over-full employment that they should commit their members to a policy of "last in, first out". The ordinary British worker has assumed that it must always be the coloured man who is discharged first and the white man who gets the first choice of a vacancy. This has happened often enough, but not always, and has given rise to much bitterness. Provided that the level of employment falls no further and the flow of immigrants does not rise too steeply, there is reasonable prospect of the West Indian workers being integrated into the existing labour force.

The general picture, then, is one showing very little colour prejudice on the part of individuals, but a general tendency to avoid coloured people. This has been attributed to the association between a dark skin colour and an inferior social class position. A man who wants to rise in the world takes care to be seen in the company of the "best" people and does not want to be seen associating with a coloured man any more than with a road-sweeper. A man whose social position is firmly established, or has an occupation giving him a certain license, like that of clergyman or social worker, can entertain coloured people without any doubt arising as to his true social standing. A landlady may not be so fortunately placed. If she starts taking coloured students her neighbours may ask, "Can't Mrs. Smith get white students? Are her lodgings as bad as all that?"

The view that people avoid coloured immigrants because of these social class associations helps us explain some aspects of British behaviour towards the newcomers, but it is not a complete answer. Part of the Englishman's insularity is due to a mild suspicion of all foreigners, and the coloured man is only a few degrees more strange than the central European. Because the presence of coloured residents in significant numbers is a

relatively new development, conventional patterns of behaviour regulating relations between members of the two groups have not yet emerged. In countries like South Africa and the southern states of the U.S.A. it is customary for whites to behave towards coloureds in particular ways according to the situation. The coloured people know what to expect and know what sort of behaviour is expected of them in return. This is not the case in Britain, where the man in the street has not yet decided whether the coloured man, besides being a fellow taxpayer, is also to be a friend at the work bench and a potential brother-in-law at home. Consequently his behaviour towards the immigrants is inclined to be inconsistent, and the coloured man quite naturally resents it. He complains that he does not know where he stands and that life is easier in the United States, where even if his presence is not desired, at least he knows what to expect and there are definite opportunities open to him.

The very fluidity of the British situation, however, can also be seen as a ground for hope. The longer the situation remains fluid, the greater the chance there is for people to become acquainted with the immigrants in an open-minded fashion. The longer it takes before customary patterns of race relations become crystallized, the greater the chance that they will be liberal ones. Indeed, there is no reason at all why any such patterns should arise. The British people have now been fairly well informed of the position in South Africa, and what they have heard they do not like. More and more of them realize that race is to be one of the major factors in the international affairs of the immediate future, and they keep our consciences awake. A growing body of opinion holds that acceptance of certain elementary ideals like justice and democracy makes a stronger demand upon our allegiance than the tie of a common racial heritage. If our way of life is to survive in a divided world, we must choose our friends from among those who share our principles, not from among those who deny the unity of mankind. Yet the last thing the Englishman wants is for foreigners to try and become English. Differences in cultural tradition are a source of richness and are not to be melted down, but they provide no cause for segregation. Britain is perhaps the only country in the world to have acquired a domestic race question in the last ten years, but if present tendencies continue she may be nearer a solution than countries which have been crippled by racial divisions for a century and more.



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# TOWARDS AN AFRICAN LITERATURE

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IN case the reader should be led to expect a survey of the literature of the entire continent of Africa, let it be explained at once that for purposes of this and subsequent articles under this heading, we focus our attention on literature as expressed through the media of the indigenous African languages spoken in the Union of South Africa and the neighbouring territories.

There are two major language-groups in this area—Nguni and Sotho. The linguistic forms in each group are mutually intelligible. The Nguni group includes *Xhosa*, (spoken mainly in the Cape Province), *Zulu* (spoken mainly in Natal) and *Rhodesian Ndebele* as literary dialects. One of the major non-literary dialects in this group is *Swazi* (spoken in Swaziland and in the Eastern Transvaal). In the Sotho group there are three literary dialects. These are *Southern Sotho* (mainly in Basutoland and in some parts of the Free State, the Northern Cape and the Transvaal), *Northern Sotho* (in the Transvaal) and *Tswana* (mainly in Bechuanaland, in some parts of the Transvaal and the North-Western Cape). In the Union of South Africa and the High Commission Territories alone there are approximately 5,000,000 Nguni- and 3,000,000 Sotho-speaking people, approximately 8,000,000 in all. Besides these, there are 133,000 Venda-speaking people in the Zoutpansberg district of the Transvaal, and approximately 370,000 Tsonga-speaking, 350,000 of whom live in the Transvaal. There are therefore in this area 8,500,000 people whose mother-tongue is a linguistic form belonging to one or other of these four language-groups. These languages belong to that family of languages which, for purposes of linguistic classification, is known as the *Bantu* family. This family covers approximately the whole of the southern half of the continent of Africa, and consists of well over two hundred languages. While we deal mainly with the southern area, we wish to point out that many of the characteristics we are going to touch upon apply to the whole of the Bantu family.

As the title of this article implies, African literature is, by modern-world standards, only in its infancy. The purpose of the present series of articles is to give the reader an idea as to what promise there is of a grown-up literature. This we shall do by first of all showing what the African genius was able to achieve through the

ages, independently of any outside influence. Then we shall go on to show what is being done, and possibly to suggest what could further be done under the influence of modern civilization.

### TRADITIONAL LITERATURE

The history of the literature of the Southern Africans begins long before these people knew anything about writing and long before the advent of the European. Like other peoples of the world, the Africans gave artistic utterance to their deepest thoughts and feelings about those abstract and concrete things that came within their experience: to their speculations about the origin of things, including Man himself; to their crude ideas as to the relationship between Man and the universe: to their interpretation of the struggle between Man and the mysterious forces that surrounded him, and to their admiration for those individuals of the human race to whom legend gave credit for the triumph of Man over such forces: to their interest in the lives and doings of ordinary folk: to their interest in the ways and habits of animals: to their traditional wisdom concerning conduct. Lastly, they gave "concrete and artistic expression . . . in emotional and rhythmical language" to their admiration for collective and individual courage and achievement in the mighty contests between clan and clan, between tribe and tribe.

Among other genres in these traditional possessions there are myths and legends, tales about ordinary folk, animal stories, proverbs, songs and lyrics, and, lastly, praise-poems. In the present article we can only deal with a few aspects of *narrative prose*, and we propose to leave out the myths and animal stories and deal with the tales about men and women: first, because in the experience of the writer, the English-speaking world knows far less about the latter, a great deal more attention having been paid to myths and animal stories by English translators, and secondly, because in the tales about people there is a much greater variety of character and incident than in the other two.

### MAN VERSUS MONSTER

The world of African traditional literature is inhabited not only by Man and animal, but also by ogres and other monsters—grotesque figures, so stupid that in spite of their superior physical powers Man triumphs over them. Some live on land and others in the deep black pools of the largest rivers. Those that live on land

are usually half-man and half-beast. The best known of these is the *Zimu* (Nguni) or *Dimo* (Sotho). This is an ogre of enormous size. He swallows some animals alive, so that when he is asleep you can sometimes hear live lambs bleating and calves blaring in his vast stomach. At birth, this ogre has two legs, one sweet, the other bitter. His parents cut off the sweet leg and eat it up immediately after the birth of baby-ogre. But on the remaining leg the grown-up ogre runs faster than the wind. The female *Zimu* is even more grotesque than the male. She has great breasts reaching as low as the knees. She has a tooth so long that "it reaches the other side of a river". These ogres are man-eating, but their social system is in many ways similar to the social system of Man. They have their own kings.

In one of the best known *Zimu* stories, a human princess is chased and caught by a band of ogres. But they find her so beautiful that they decide not to kill and eat her, but carry her to their land and give her over to their king as wife. Although this young woman remains in the land of the ogres long enough to have a beautiful human daughter, she never accepts the disgusting ways of the ogres and never accepts her position as the wife of their king, and she sees to it that her daughter does not accept them either. Every day she sings the praises of her brother, *Mbhengu-sonyangashe*, "Leader of Raiders, Prince of Embho- and Nguniland, Who hits one buck with his weighty club, But fells the whole herd before his feet." So the ogres are always on the lookout for *Mbhengu-sonyangashe*.

After many, many years, *Mbhengu-sonyangashe* reaches the land of the ogres all alone. He hides himself among the tall reeds on the bank of the river, very near the place where the girls come to draw water. A group of *Zimu* "girls" come to draw water. With them is a beautiful little human girl whom he recognizes immediately as his sister's daughter. While the young ogresses play about, this little girl breaks away from them and plays "human games" by herself. So *Mbhengu-sonyangashe* finds an opportunity to draw her attention. The little girl takes to him at once, because "you do not look like these ugly things, the *Zimus*. You look like mama and myself." He cuts her beautiful reeds and carves them. These she must carry home with her. When she reaches her mother's hut with the water-pot on her head, she is to place the reeds across the doorway and insist that no one but her mother must come and help take the clay-pot off her head. Then, as her mother is sure to tramp on some of the reeds and break them while in the act of helping her, she must cry that her mother must go in

person to cut her fresh reeds from the exact spot where these were found. The plan works out successfully, and *Mbhengu-sonyangashe* comes face to face with his long-lost sister. They decide that he must go with her to the "Royal Place". He covers his whole body with mud and is so well disguised, so sorry-looking when he comes before the king of the ogres, that everybody believes it when the Queen says that she has brought him home as her *vavunge* (menial), in which case no one may do him any harm.

One day, the ogres go hunting. Only an old crone is left behind. As soon as they have gone, *Mbhengu-sonyangashe* reveals himself as the great hunter, takes his sister and her daughter away, together with all the herds of cattle belonging to the ogres. The old ogress tries to raise the alarm, but her voice is too weak, and by the time the ogres realize what is happening, the Leader of Raiders has swum across a flooded river with his sister and niece on his back. And he has managed to get all the cattle across, too. When the ogres come, they implore him to help them cross. They assure him that they will not kill him. Pretending to be taken in by these assurances, the great hunter plaits a long thick rope, ties a big stone to one end, and swings that end to the other side of the river, while he holds the other end in his hands. The ogres immediately seize their end of the rope (as men do in a tug-of-war) and ask the hunter to tow them across. He tows them. But just when they are in the middle of the river, "the rope slips out of his hands", and all the ogres are swept away by the current and drowned.

In these tales you find not only heroes but heroines too—many of them princesses. These are vigorous, resourceful, spirited girls of the Medea type.

A hunter prince named *Tshalu-Tshalu wase Mbho* (the Fleet-footed One of Embholand) is transformed into an eland by an enchantress, a princess whose love he has rejected. He loves another princess who is "as beautiful as the rising sun". When she gets to know this, she immediately takes command of her lover's followers. She leads them to a pool where all the herds of eland go to drink at a certain time of the day. There she collects bundles and bundles of firewood and makes a big fire. When the elands come, she commands the youths to call out aloud with one voice, "*Tshalu-Tshalu wase Mbho!*" As soon as they do so, the leader of the herd looks round sharply.

"Seize him and throw him into the fire at once!" the princess commands. The young men obey. When the eland has been burnt out completely, the princess collects the ashes very carefully

and mixes them with some enchanted grease contained in an earthen bowl that she has brought with her. *Tshalu-Tshalu wase Mbho* comes to life again.

There are some tales about the "Kings of the Waters"—snake-like monsters that could make the rivers flow or dry at will. These monsters travel from one place to another in a cyclone. They are very much attracted to human girls and very often "call" them into the water by their powers and make them their wives.

On his return from a great hunt that has lasted many moons, a prince named *Tfulako* is dying of thirst. He and his comrades come to a big river. Some of the hunters immediately stoop to drink. But as soon as *Tfulako* stoops, the river dries up completely. This goes on the whole day while the hunters rest on the bank of the river and roast meat. At last, in sheer desperation, *Tfulako* calls out: "King of the Waters! I die of thirst. Allow me to drink, and I will give you my beautiful sister to be your wife." At once the river flows, and *Tfulako* drinks and quenches his thirst. When the hunters reach home, they report what has happened. Nobody has any idea what the King of the Waters looks like, but everybody, including the beautiful sister, feels that this is the only offer that *Tfulako* could have made in the circumstances. So they await the coming of the King of the Waters.

One afternoon, after some moons have died, a terrible cyclone approaches. It makes straight for the hut of the maidens where the princess and the other girls are, and there it disappears, and calm is restored. When the dust clears, the girls discover that they are in the company of a long, long snake whose girth is greater than the thigh of a very big man. Then they realize that this must be the King of the Waters, come to claim his bride. One by one the girls leave the hut, until the princess is left alone with the bridegroom. When she turns to go, the King of the Waters quickly unfolds himself, coils himself round her body, rests his head on her breasts, and gazes longingly into her eyes.

The princess runs out of the hut with her burden round her body and, without consulting anybody, sets out on a long, long journey to her mother's people. As she goes she sings in a high, thin voice:

*Shall I, the child of the people of Tfulako,  
Shall I, the child of the people of Tfulako,  
Sleep with that which is called a snake, a snake?*

In reply, the King of the Waters sings in a deep voice:



*Long and graceful though I am, so long, so graceful,  
 Long and graceful though I am, so long, so graceful,  
 May I not sleep with that which is called a woman, a woman?*

And so they travel through forest and ravine, the whole night and the following day, singing pride at each other.

At nightfall they reach the home of her mother's people. But the princess waits in the shadows until she is sure that there is no one in the hut of the maidens. Then she enters there unnoticed. She asks the King of the Waters to undo himself and rest while she goes to make herself beautiful. She goes to the Great Hut and explains everything to her mother's brother and his wife, and then asks them to give her some grease. She greases her whole body very freely, and then covers herself with a beautiful kaross and returns to the hut of the maidens alone. Once inside, she throws off the kaross and invites the King of the Waters to embrace her. He accepts eagerly, but the princess's body is so slippery that for all his scales he cannot hold her. She then offers to go and remove the grease. Again he accepts eagerly. The princess picks up her kaross, walks out of the hut, closes and fastens the door very securely from outside. Then she sets the hut on fire, and the King of the Waters is burnt to death.

#### MAN AND ANIMAL

In these tales there is seldom, if ever, any conflict between Man and the ordinary animal. (The hunting of the animals by Man, which is very often incidental to the encounters with the monsters, would seem to belong to a different "universe".) Far from being hostile to Man, the animal—especially the small one—often comes to his help in the contests with monsters.

A group of young men, on approaching the house of a dangerous sorcerer named *Ngangezulu* (As-great-as-the-heavens), meet a mouse who persuades them to flay him and take his "talking skin" with them, so that it may give the alarm when danger is near.

Birds, especially doves in pairs, figure a good deal in stories about ordinary folk and babies.

In one story, two doves find a young married woman weeping because she cannot beget children. The doves advise her to make two little loaves of bread, equal in size, and leave them covered in a clay-pot for five days. She carries out their advice, and when she looks into the pot after five days, she finds not loaves of bread but beautiful twin babies.

Then there is the story of the beautiful *Sikhambha-nge-nyanga*

(She-who-walks-by-moonlight). This was a beautiful girl, so beautiful that if she stepped into the light of day, the men would not go hunting, the women would not go to hoe the fields, the girls would not go and draw water from the river, the herd-boys would not drive the cattle to the pastures, and the animals, too, would not go to the pastures. All living things would flock where she was and gaze at her, feasting their eyes on her beauty. She was therefore not to come out during the daytime. She came out by moonlight and went to draw the water from the river by moonlight, when all the people had finished their day's work and could gaze and gaze at her.

When She-who-walks-by-moonlight got married, her people-in-law were warned to observe this custom. They did so, and everything went well until a baby was born. Then one day, all the people of the house went out to work in the fields, leaving the young mother with her baby and the *mpelesi* (nurse girl sent specially by her mother's people). Besides them there was an old, old woman who was too weak to help herself in any way. In the middle of the day, the old woman felt very thirsty. *Sikhambha-nge-nyanga* gave her some water, but it was not fresh, and the old woman would not drink it. So *Sikhambha-nge-nyanga* was forced to pick up the water-pot and the ladle, step into the light of day and go to draw water from the river.

She tried to draw water with the ladle, but it slipped out of her hand and disappeared. She tried to draw with the water-pot itself, but it slipped out of her hands and disappeared. She took off her head-cover to immerse in the water and carry home quickly so that the thirsty woman could suck the water from it. But this, too, slipped out of her hands and disappeared. She cupped her hands and tried to draw some water with them. Then *she* disappeared under the water.

Her people-in-law did all they could to recover her. In vain. Meanwhile the baby was hungry and crying for its mother.

At moonrise the *mpelesi*, without telling any of the in-laws, carried the baby to the edge of the pool where the mother had disappeared and sang a sad song, calling on the mother to come out and suckle the baby. *Sikhambha-nge-nyanga* came out, suckled and fondled her baby and, without saying a word, handed it back to the *mpelesi* and disappeared. This went on for a number of days until the in-laws discovered it. Then the men decided to go and waylay the mother. They hid themselves in the reeds near the pool and heard the *mpelesi* sing her sad song, saw the mother come

out of the water, saw her suckle and fondle her baby. And just when she was handing it back, they sprang upon her, seized her and would carry her home. But the river followed them, followed them beyond the reeds, followed them through the woods, beyond the woods, up the slope, right up to the village. Then the people were seized with fear and they put her down, and the river received her and receded to its place.

When the people were at a loss what to do, two doves appeared and offered to fly swiftly to *Sikhambha-nge-nyanga's* own people, report what had happened and seek advice. On reaching the place, the doves perched on the gate-posts of the cattlefold. When the herdboys saw them they wanted to throw sticks at them and kill them in order to roast and eat them. But the doves sang:

*We are not doves that may be killed,  
We come to tell of her that walks by moonlight;  
She dipped the ladle, and it went down,  
She dipped the pot, and it went down,  
She dipped her head-cover, and it went down,  
She dipped her hands, and then she went down.*

The people gave the doves some corn to eat, and then asked them to fly back swiftly and tell *Sikhambha-nge-nyanga's* in-laws to slaughter and flay a dun-coloured ox and throw its carcass into the pool after nightfall. The doves flew back swiftly and delivered their message. The order was carried out.

At moonrise that night, when the *mpelesi* carried the baby to the water's edge, all the people of the village followed her. They heard her sing her sad song, and they saw *Sikhambha-nge-nyanga* come out of the pool and suckle and fondle her baby. But this time, after the baby had been fed, the mother did not hand it back to the *mpelesi*. Instead, she carried it lovingly in her own arms. And as she walked quietly back to the village, the people gazed and gazed and gazed at her beauty in the moonlight.

It will have been noted that most of the factors that constitute the subject-matter of the great human literature are to be found in rudimentary form in these tales — courage and resourcefulness : love and readiness to sacrifice for one's loved ones : the vindictiveness of despised love : the power and influence of beauty : conflict of duties (*Sikhambha-nge-nyanga's* duty to the community conflicting with her duty to the old woman who is dying of thirst) : retribution for upsetting the moral or social order : the triumph of brain over brawn : the triumph of good over evil. If these and

many other tales of this kind have survived through the ages, it is because of their artistic value, each one of them symbolizing something of permanent meaning to Man as Man. Evidence of this permanence is to be found not only in the hyperbolic language of the traditional praise-poems, in which mighty men are very often likened to fabulous monsters, but also in the living language of every day, in the numerous idiomatic expressions, proverbs and aphorisms, many of which are based on the characters and incidents of the traditional tale.

The few specimens that have been given here will have shown that African soil is by no means barren. When overseas critics complain that South African art, in any form, lacks local character, is it not probably because the cultural world is looking for just these and other traditional artistic possessions, of which South Africa itself has not become aware? Would not some of these tales and songs provide great themes for symphonic poems, opera, ballet? Would not a great South African poet or painter, whether black or white, find as inspiring a theme in *She-who-walks-by-moonlight* as English poets and painters found in *The Lady of Shalott*? One can only hope that by the time South Africa develops a correct attitude to human culture, at least some of these treasures will still be there for genius to utilize and leave as a legacy to humanity.

## ORLANDO, A WINTERTIME

You come upon the location quickly.  
There is no melting in of soft fields.  
At once this is no village green.  
Barbed fences choke off and in  
The keen decay.  
The foot-rule or rod of reckoning  
Is used sad in abuse of this separation.  
The sick hurt of cramp and dark and damp  
Scratched random in the dirt,  
Has no effect  
On the disinclined lap luxury  
Of the impenitent elect.

Here in the ebb of the human heart  
In the scrimp Lent of reason,  
Here in the bitter winter season,  
The rites of death are given  
To the living  
In this sepulchre of dust and rust  
And flim-flam juggling.

Day breaks real.  
The tacky wind wheezes  
Its bare breath  
Into the location shacks,  
Condenses on the window panes,  
Gives sickly chests  
Their shroud-shrift hacks  
And rheumatic backs their twinges.  
It stops the dripping taps  
Along the rutted lanes,  
Swings a broken gate off its hinges  
And with lover-like clinging  
Wraps all  
In the dreary wail of its early singing.

Winter is the hardest time of the year,  
The chap-checked runny-nosed season  
Muggy and grey with hardship.  
A plain-termed standing order for misery.

Luke porridge puffs a little warmth  
And filling,  
Lack of blankets gets compassionate billing  
In the press  
And some will be the warmer.

Days begin early and end late.  
The bus queues curve and turn  
In patient migration  
To the city and back,  
And the day between holds its breath.  
For in Orlando it is not,  
What is,  
But the great vacant lack.

The light of day rubs up the place in silence.  
Here where half a million sleep  
Remain only the sick  
The very old and the children.  
Deep Empty.  
No people, no cattle, no cats, no plenty,  
No space, no light,  
No time, no gentry,  
No honours, no glories beneath the bush,  
No acquittals, no side tracks for pain,  
No ballot-box gain,  
No plucking out before the final trussing.

The power station looms loud  
Above the hard fortune  
Of penny-pinched ways,  
Dead-letter hours,  
And snuff-sick Sundays.  
It stands clear against the sky  
This source of city lights,  
High above  
The sob sacking shanty plights,  
Shells littered with life and mendings  
Choke fully in the tetter of their endings.

The Power Station  
Is not for their glory.

Ever or ever in the unswitchable night  
That has no honest trespass,  
The midwife will not go thru' its tough grope  
And birth, hard or easy  
Must entangle its own natal rope.  
Those who expire in the night  
Likewise cling lonely  
Without a blessing or a light.

But one comfort hugs its sharedness here,  
In the premise of neighbours  
Scaled even  
In the backstair of their labours,  
In the grey smoked tinned fires  
That veil the sunset  
In substantial shadow,  
In the common word of palaver  
And of stress,  
In the ballast of complexion,  
And the firm rivet of numbers,  
In the blessed galore on this hill  
That never slumbers sound and safe,  
A bespoken hope  
Measures the mean hour flaw  
In the fastening rope.

JEAN LIPKIN

# THE AMAZEMENT OF NAMAHASHA

HILDA KUPER

MORE witches live in Namahasha than anywhere else in the world. The young witches send dreadful sleep-destroying dreams, and the older and more experienced steal and torment and kill, enslave a man's soul, leaving the vacant husk behind. Sometimes they stalk in animal form and sometimes they fly invisible through space, outstripping the most powerful good magicians who try to overcome them.

Among the leading witches was Xaya, a shrivelled man with uneven eyes and seductive voice. Everybody feared him. Under their breath, in the shelter of their huts, people recounted how as a child he would talk to unseen things, and when the hair was only beginning to appear on his chin he could play with lightning. It seemed that even the chief was afraid to banish him, the chief before whom all men trembled.

"I grew with medicines," Xaya would say softly when people expressed astonishment at his knowledge. "From my father, Makanye—a medicine man of big repute—I learnt to keep birds from the corn, to make barren women bear, to change the sex of a child in the womb and to bring power and love; and to this knowledge I have added with the years." But it was from his mother that he believed he inherited the other side, the secret, evil, powerful side, of which a man dare not speak. Thinking it over, he decided she had injected it into his blood when he was still at her breast. He remembered how she had been murdered by her co-wives for attracting excessively the affection of their joint husband. Xaya had been saved by the miraculous intervention of an ancestral spirit and had grown up lonely and unloved. Weak in physical strength, cunning and skill became his chief weapons. He learnt never to speak his anger aloud, nor show his fears; instead he turned to potions and spells that came to him mysteriously in the wakefulness of long nights. He realized that he was not like other men and he gloated in secret over his difference.

His harem was filled with lovely women, sure evidence that he possessed strange powers, or how could he have overcome their repulsion to his ugly and misshapen form? And his wives included, for a while, Tandile, favourite daughter of the chief, Tandile, the Loved One, who shone in the dance and whose



arms were strong on the grindstone and whose voice rang sweet as the herder's flute.

When Xaya first desired her, she was in love with a handsome youth in the neighbouring valley and was returning from a visit to his home. Xaya appeared before her unexpectedly and greeted her. "We see you, child of the chief." She stopped startled, her eyes soft with dreams, then as she saw who it was she averted her glance with a slight, unconscious shudder, yet replied courteously, "We see you, headman." He stared at her before continuing gently, "My, you have grown up now . . . no longer a child, but a maiden, beautiful, ready to become a woman. Don't waste yourself on a nobody." She laughed, and her teeth were white as the king's corn, and she replied tartly: "Don't you worry, father, about my wasting myself." "I see, child of the chief, but even the little bird that flies the highest must come to earth to feed." She was about to make a quick retort, but his eyes catching hers again disturbed her strangely, drying up her words of impudence. He gazed a few seconds longer, taking in each feature before he said, "Go well, girl. We will see each other." Trembling slightly she returned his farewell. He watched her walk past.

After that she avoided the little leering man, and he, noticing this, became determined to win her, to pit his deep powers against her natural resistance. He vowed to himself, "She will be my Great Wife, mother of my main heir." With this in mind, he sent a messenger to the chief. After listening carefully, the father called the girl and informed her of Xaya's offer. "Never. Never," she declared passionately. "Better to die." "Be quiet, child," the chief interrupted nervously. "What evil are you bringing on yourself with such dangerous words." He sent back the messenger with a polite refusal to which Xaya listened with a melancholy smile, commenting quietly at the end, "I will still try."

He worked on her *lipupo*, the powerful dream medicine, so that her sleep was interrupted by his appearance, but her loved one comforted her and for weeks she stood out against those night calls. Then Xaya grew weary of working *lipupo* and in anger added *lihabea*. Squatting in the secrecy of his hut he prayed humbly: "Makanye, my father, help me. This that I am doing is not for myself alone, but for you and all my ancestors. And you, my mother, listen to your orphan. Let me have that girl to bear my great son, he who will carry our name to those

who come after." With sensitive fingers he selected the different ingredients, muttering as he mixed them together: "Here is the calling dove and the plant that resists destruction, the bark of the toughest trees, the persistent life of the monkey, the reed that bends without breaking in the storm. Go. Go. Go to Tandile, daughter of the Chief. Fetch her with my name on her lips." So he summoned her, and she woke before dawn of the next day, singing like a dove, and with mad unclosing eyes she danced from out her hut. Like a straight wind she danced from her father's home to Xaya's, calling his name with the call of the dove, and no one could stop her till at his hut she dropped exhausted. And Xaya was waiting for her. "Rest, my wild bird, be still." He soothed her. "You have been sick. Rest. Now you will recover." He treated her with medicines and for two days she slept. When she awoke she begged, though her eyes were like those of a hunted buck, "Take me to bear for you." "As you wish, child of the chief."

Before the marriage-cattle were sent to her home she was shaped with Xaya's child. No one knew how much he thought of the son he would have by her, how tall and strong he wanted him to be, a dancer and a warrior. He only announced: "It will be a man child." For two long days and three long nights Tandile writhed in labour and when at length the babe was born, it was almost lifeless. The ancient midwives smoked it over a blazing fire in the fetid hut and the father, gloating at the birth of his son, sent skins of many powerful animals to increase the potency of the pungent burning herbs. And while they doctored the baby with the medicines, the mother died silently in a huge pool of blood.

The people shuddered when they heard the midwives sound her death cry. They understood why her pains had been so hard. They knew well that a wizard won promotion among his evil fellows by murdering someone near and dear. They looked askance at Xaya's show of emotion, and some condemned Tandile's broken-hearted father for his weakness in not taking drastic revenge. Night after night Xaya woke from sleep bathed in sweat with the name "Tandile" on his lips. He too was convinced that he had killed her through his mysterious powers, and though in his waking hours he grieved over his loss, he felt at the same time a strong elation.

He turned his attention to the child, whom he placed in the care of an aged and trusted relative. He urged her: "Care well

for my son, for it is hard to be without a mother." The ancient suckled the infant at her withered breasts and fed him fine gruel from crushed corn. Miraculously he spluttered to life, earning the name of Umhlolo, The Amazement.

But something was wrong with the child. It had a huge head and spindly body, and its face was empty of expression. When the chief, his grandfather, first beheld him he turned away exclaiming with horror: "Oh, Great Father! She died for this deformity!" For a time Xaya would not admit even to himself that there was anything seriously wrong with the child, saying only: "True, he is slow and awkward too, but that will pass when his big teeth come. He missed his mother's milk."

As the infant grew into a youth his imbecility became more marked. Xaya could no longer blind himself to it, and though he still kept up the pretence in public, he vented his fears and bitterness on the ancestors. Never had he offered them so many libations and sacrifices. Almost every moon he had his wives brew special beer which he carried at sunset into the shrine hut, and before the dawn, before the rest of the homestead was awake, he crouched at the hearth to speak to the dead. "Makanye, my father, and all you others. Hear me. Why are you killing me. Do I not give you food? Why have you turned against me? I asked you for a son by the daughter of the chief to carry on our name and instead you sent a nameless creature, an animal, a thing that cannot speak, that mutters like the antbear, that cannot herd the calves or milk the cows, that cannot stamp his feet in the dance or throw a spear in the hunt. His hands are useless and his body twitches like a headless snake. Though I give him clothes more often than the others, he is always filthy with jigger fleas nesting in his toes, so that when he gets up from a place the owner must cleanse it with ash. No child will share his blanket and he sleeps alone in his little hut. Sometimes he lies all night in the fields and I find him in the morning covered with dew or mud. Oh, my fathers, is this my son? Yet he harms no one, and I cannot hate him—as you seem to hate me. I watch him and feel my strength drop from me. What makes him stay out in storm and lightning, returning drenched and exhausted and yet alive? Why when the flying ants come out does he grow excited and chase them, his big mouth open and his arms flapping? Somehow he catches them quickly and brings them to one of the women to dry. That is the only time he seems alive, the only food he seems

to enjoy. Then he will curl up like a baby and sleep with his mouth in an empty smile. My fathers. Take this food. I do not grudge it you. It is yours as are the cattle in the byre. Only help me. You are cruel. I wonder what you want. You fill my nights with confusion and my days are soured. How often have I treated him with medicine to give him sense and personality, but he does not understand what I tell him. I watch him weep with fear when I heat the herbs or kill the goat with which to make him well. And he screams and struggles when I cut his body to rub in the powders. I try to hold his hands but they are wet and slip through my fingers, and my own hands are shaking. What have you done to me, my fathers? My mother, have you abandoned me? Have you no heart? Must I kill myself for an idiot?"

Yes, Xaya did his best to cure his son, but without avail, and because of his failure his spirits sank and his reputation dwindled. People whispered to each other, "Why doesn't he steal the soul from his idiot son to raise himself further in the power of evil?" and his enemies mocked: "He murdered his wife to become a leader of wizards and behold how he is defeated by his own abortion."

One day the air was stiff as a warrior's shield and lightning ran over the sky with the crackle of corded whips. People hastened home from their fields and sat in silence on the floor of their huts. Xaya sat surrounded by his wives soothing their whimpering babies in their arms. As the lightning stabbed the place and monstrous thunder shook the earth, Xaya rushed outside brandishing his sacred wand to protect his homestead and his kin. No one asked where The Amazement was, for had he not shown what powers of life were in him? The lightning darted through the thatch of the hut and the great Xaya threw it back, and when the storm was over, his village was still safe.

On coming from his hut to look for his son, he saw a henchman of the chief running towards him, his usually dark brown face a dirty grey. In a strained scarcely audible voice he panted: "A strange creature was dancing in the storm . . . on the mountain . . . lightning struck it bursting the skin . . . the wings burnt red . . . it fell . . ." Like one demented, and without uttering a word, Xaya tore stumbling along the muddy footpath, and the villagers cowered as he passed.

High on the Lubombo lay The Amazement. Xaya flung himself beside him, calling wildly, "My son. My son. Awake."

He touched the boy's hands with his and felt charred flesh. "Makanye, my father, help me," he groaned. "I have lost my child." He tore off his shirt and wiped the mud and rain from the big face seared by a jagged burn. Very gently, while the unrestrained tears fell in heavy drops, he closed the boy's blinded eyes. He stroked the clothes into position on the unshapely body, and flexed the legs, not yet stiff, into bends required by the ancestors. When all was done, he sobbed, "Farewell my child, my son. Forgive me. I did not want you to die. I did not want to kill you. I loved you. Yes, I know now how much I loved you."

All night Xaya sat beside the body and no one dared draw near. "How frightful he is," a woman murmured on his return. "See how his eyelids are swollen round his hideous little eyes."

He had The Amazement buried with full mourning for a main heir, in the presence of the entire village. No one dared be absent. The effrontery of his evil overwhelmed them. As though they did not know that the boy had been struck by his father's lightning! Xaya's reputation as the great witch of Namahasha was re-established.

# ALONG THE LINE

*The final canto of a South African Fantasy.*

by

ANTHONY DELIUS

## I

“Its the Communists!” vociferated Brandman,  
“They’ve blown us through the roof, the sky . . .”  
“But I distinctly had a sinking feeling!”  
Sidonia interjected.

Brandman thundered,

“I tell you we are sitting on the moon,  
This dead grey plain and dead grey mountain rising  
Here like an old and sky-high baobab—  
There’s nowhere like it to be found on earth,  
Sahara, Kalahari or Karroo,  
Nor Gobi, nor the sands of Mexico—”

## II

“My friend,” Colijn said, smiling at his fury,  
“No doubt you wish to push your prestige higher,  
And not admit that you have sunk the country. . . .”  
“Up! Up!” yelled all the Neths. “They’ve blown us up!”  
And all the Opposition bawled out, “Down!”

## III

But suddenly, all craniums blow their tops,  
And gusher out their smoke of djinns and dreams  
Ballooning figments of their imitation  
By which most hide their own poor show as men,  
Great puffed-up claims to equal Boers or Trekkers  
Or swollen parodies of Old Cape lawyers,  
And from the wrathful Brandman’s gauge goes up  
A totem pole of stiff ancestral faces,  
While from its top the long May-ribbons whirl  
Of tape-worms from the brains of Neth backbenchers;  
See flapping high on Frank Sidonia’s knoll  
A million-pound reserve-bank note is hung  
With happy golliwogs like banner-tassels. . . .

## IV

Then swiftly each wide-open skull sucks in  
 Its phantasy, and all the hanging lids  
 Clap to. And bowing by the Speaker's chair  
 A tall distinguished figure stands as if  
 Great wings were folding that had placed him there.  
 He looks like some lean-faced ambassador,  
 A nose, high bridged and slightly hooked,  
 A thinker's face, criss-crossed with good intentions,  
 With glowing dark-blue oceans in his eyes.

## V

The members' minds unclench their fists and open  
 Accepting the improbable. A current  
 Of soft words flows around and through their thoughts.

## VI

"Forgive me this intrusion," said the words,  
 "But extraordinary measures are required  
 As your arrival wasn't on the schedule—  
 They hold three tinkering amateurs to blame.  
 You must forgive my ignorance about . . .  
 Your major powers keep me all so busy,  
 I hardly know the smaller ones by name  
 But I look forward now to making friends. . . ."  
 "And who may you be?" asked a wondering voice.  
 "Harriman's my name, Doctor Harriman,  
 Chief Psychiatrist, you know, head of the —  
 Rehabilitation Centre, I suppose  
 You'd call it. I must warn you that the place  
 Has been misrepresented to the world.  
 Biased reports by poets, politicians,  
 Sensation-mongers and tendentious priests. . . ."  
 "By Gar!" cried Vlenter, "We are nowhere else  
 But back in our own country!"

## VII

"Oh, it is!"

Cried Harriman. "It is indeed your country,  
 For all men own it and all men are free

To enter it by my back-door to Liberty.  
 All that's required is to sign the form  
 Requesting to be voluntary patients.  
 A few weeks in my Gateway Institute—  
 It's round the corner of the Tree of Life,  
 The Gate goes up a mile, arched by a rainbow,  
 A sign to combat previous propaganda—  
 Will set you up as citizens of Hell. . . .”  
 “Hell!” quivered in a whisper round the chamber.  
 “Hell,” smiled Harriman, “roots the Tree of Heaven.  
 When men come broken by their strange distractions  
 With good and bad sides manacled together,  
 And their rich spectrum of refracted light  
 Drowned in bleak opposites of black and white,  
 This stark dichotomy's replaced with living light,  
 Colours that make whole and therefore free,  
 The shadings of celestial integration. . . .”  
 “Integration!”

“There, it's out!”

Cries and bellows,  
 Like waves, rocked, flicked and flung among the Neths.  
 The Opposition rose to cheer, then sank  
 Confused at this embarrassing supporter.

### VIII

Out of the chaos sprang Beleerd accusing,  
 “Now we know that this is hell! And He's  
 The Great Arch-Fiend! The Integrator!  
 The Prince Mau Mau of all Miscegenation  
 Who'll marry off our daughters to the Natives. . . .”  
 A hum of horror rose among the Neths,  
 Black buzzing, starting from Beleerd, then all;  
 Thin-rooted in their mouths a long black tongue  
 Swarmed out across the chamber, swung  
 Round Harriman, swirled in a dark dust-devil  
 Clustering bees of dirt into a monstrous figure,  
 Until he stood a huge black hobo dripping  
 Jet flies like a colossus of molasses.  
 And in the triumph of their fury all  
 The Neths glowed with a phosphorescent whiteness.



## IX

The fly-bushed figure turned its crawling face,  
Bowed to Colijn:

“Sir, a single gesture  
From yourself could slough this filthy pupa.  
Take man-to-man this foetid hand in yours . . .”  
“The Devil knows his friends!” cried Staak, and laughed,  
“Hoo! Hoo!” The Neptune from the sewers kept  
Its oceanic eyes upon the Opposition,  
Appealing and appalling hand outstretched.

## X

The Opposition stared at it, their disc-like  
Pupils closed on risk-revolving minds.  
A liberal half rose. Then Colijn spoke:  
“I much deplore this denigration of you,  
But please don't misinterpret what we mean  
By Integration—as we understand it,  
It means full unity in separation,  
Whites form the top and blacks the bottom of the nation  
With mutual benefits in different places . . .”  
A scream, cut by a billion fly-wings, jetted  
Harriman like a geyser through the roof.

## XI

Sighing down upon the silent members fell  
A drizzle of dead flies. A paper sidled  
Demurely from the ceiling to the Clerk.  
“This message from the Chief Psychiatrist  
Apologizes for his sudden going  
But says he'll come again at our convenience.”  
The members pondered this a while.  
“I move,”  
Said Bobels, “that this House do now adjourn.”

## XII

The press rushed out to tell their startling story  
Over a ticker fed into the void.  
The row of ministerial wives brushed off

The flies and went to drink their morning tea.  
 The members dwindled from the chamber, wandered  
 Out to the bar or tea-room or to track  
 Embarrassing statistics from the past.  
 And one or two considered

Emptiness

That vacant waste of grey, so vague, so vast,  
 A blur of distance, a profound myopia,  
 That dull grey plateau planing from their gates,  
 The great curved wall, tall as a storm behind,  
 A trunk of rock that shored a speckled sky  
 And held the universe inside. . . .

Inside?

XIII

“Inside we’re lost! They’ll brainwash the back-bench!”  
 “And out here?” Edged about the conference table  
 The cabinet made nooses of deliberation  
 To hang or trip the Devil.

“And out here?”

“Well, at least our majority’s certain.”  
 “Play for time. We’re free—so he says. Consult  
 To go in on a basis of staying outside. Put  
 The onus on him of refusal.” “Yes, logic  
 Was always our strongest appeal.” “But here,  
 What do we make logic about?” “White’s white,  
 Black’s black, that lies at the base of all logic.”  
 “But there’s only one black down here with us—  
 That’s Ambrose, the boiler-attendant.” “Man,  
 That doesn’t alter the principle. See?”

XIV

“We shall never go inside!” said the Baas.  
 “But that needs a plan,” said Beleerd, “a plan.”  
 “And supplies?” Tommy Vlenter enquired.  
 The catering manager brought good news:  
 “Whether liquid or solid they never get less.  
 I’m not religious, but here its like having  
 The loaves and the fishes and liquor besides.”  
 “Its a sign!” said the pious Jan Bobels.  
 And Brandman rose in an ecstatic fury,  
 “Providence put us down here for a mission!”

## XV

And in the caucus all the Neths stood up  
And blazed into the anthem of Ethnasia:

*Here, still together, Lord, we stand  
To cause division in the land,  
And with the years' increasing skill  
Carry out Thy Great Principle.*

*Thank Thee again, O Separator,  
Who cleaved the world with an equator  
And then went further and imbued  
The globe with lat. and longitude,  
And on it placed in separate areas  
The Britain, Burmas and Bulgarias,*

*And man in all his tribes and nations,  
Classes and colours and relations,  
And stopping not at man and woman,  
Gave separate limbs to every human.*

*Lord, now we come to think of it,  
Even the atom can be split!  
So what's more modern than our mission  
In this, the age of nuclear fission?*

## XVI

"A mission!" groaned Beleerd. "A plan!" he sighed  
And cogitating paced the corridors,  
Attended in his intellectual labour  
By under-ministers and P.R.O.s.  
Poor Dimmermans, wan as a fading dream,  
Collided with him saying sadly, "Franz,  
That was a question we could never answer;  
Did our ethnosis operate in heaven?"  
"Why, you're a genius!" cried Beleerd. "That's it!"  
And all his midwives saw his time was come.

## XVII

In the House assembled by the urgent bells  
Brandman spoke in a voice like anger,  
"We declare our sovereign independence,  
And that of this House, our national home."

"This House," explained Jan Bobels to the members,  
 "Still stands upon our native soil, of which  
 Great quantities are stuck to the foundations,  
 Thus de jure, and de facto, and de spirituo sancto . . ."  
 "Anyone," said Staak, "who henceforth refuses  
 In any way to think like a white man  
 And consults, consorts, confers or concurs  
 With the Devil in future or the past  
 Shall be flogged, deported or gagged and bound  
 To preserve law, order and the White Race."  
 Beleerd rode up on thundering hooves of cheers:  
 "Here," he cried, "at the very gate of Hell  
 We will unroll the New Ethnasia.  
 We'll lay its latitudes and longitudes,  
 A cunning net to catch creation in,  
 And in the hollow of our mind's hand hold  
 A nest to nourish a new heaven."  
 Then armed with all these bills and resolutions  
 Three ministers went off to see the Devil.

## XVIII

"So—you want Lebensraum?" said Harriman.  
 Brandman, Beleerd and Vlenter stared into  
 The complicated candour of his face  
 Like three mongooses watching for a snake.  
 "You say that we are free?" enquired the Baas.  
 "Yes, you are free, as all men are, to make  
 The sort of hell that you prefer. Yet why . . ."  
 "But how can we be free if there's no land  
 Where we can exercise our liberty?"  
 "Oh, take it then, if that will make you happy."  
 "What, all of it, that land that lies out front?"  
 "Well, not the mineral rights. Mr. Sidonia  
 Took out an option soon after you came. . . ."

## XIX

"There!" cried Beleerd from the House's roof-top,  
 "There lies our hinterland!" The plane was dotted  
 With excited forms of Neths who'd got a wind  
 Of this new deal and rushed to peg out claims

Of real estate and lands. Even their wide  
 Diaspora across the promised land  
 Left it unlivened. The cabinet stared  
 Into that vacant grey mind of a world.  
 They remembered drought burning a blue flame  
 On the wide wick of a withered Karroo  
 And it was beautiful in afterthought.  
 All loveliness that drowsed upon the great plateau  
 Lulled in the long arm of the Drakensberg;  
 From where the bushveld gives the fauna shelter  
 To gatherings of mountains in the Cape  
 White clouds forked lightning through the memory;  
 Laconic birds that comment on the vlaktes  
 About the sun-down's empty ceremony  
 Sang out as loud as glades of nightingales,  
 Recalled beside this single note of colour,  
 This monotone immensity that lay  
 Desolate beneath a sky of spider-webs.

## XX

Beleerd alone drew pleasure from the sight.  
 His colleagues watched him levitate with longing,  
 High-viewing, visionary as a vulture,  
 Blue-printing blankness with the future's bones.  
 They fidgeted for something living: "Franz,  
 Are people not a part of every plan?"  
 "No," said Beleerd, "No, not initially.  
 First, pure on the perspective comes the plan  
 Between brain and the farthest boundary,  
 Heart to horizon, undefiled the whole  
 And not a man to mar its measurements."  
 "And then, when its there?" they asked, a thread  
 Of debate on the dumb edge of desolation.  
 "Faith, have faith in the frightful future!"  
 Cried Beleerd, kindling vision in his colleagues,  
 "When the wild-eyed one-worlders wake  
 And know the nightmare's whinny of their notion  
 Made real around them in the red of ruin,  
 When the West Indians rule once-white Westminster,  
 When coloured presidents carp from the Capitol,  
 When dark waves wash down all the Western dykes,

Then from a cracking cosmos see our countrymen  
 Crawl ant-like to our cantons of content,  
 Each hue with hallelujahs hymns its separate home—  
 Then, then revolt will run through Integration,  
 Commingling hell give way to God's group areas,  
 And our mysterious ministry to mend  
 The flaw in fate will be at last fulfilled."

## XXI

So the Great Ideal was born  
 Once again,  
 The blast is blown on the great ox-horn  
 Once again.  
 The Neth back-benchers stand to station  
 Each with a vote and an oration,  
 Once again.  
 The high white hope holds fast behind  
 The laager of a tight-shut mind.  
 A pamphlet gives the final suture  
 And asks, "Has Heaven got a Future?"

## XXII

And once again  
 The Opposition  
 Calls the press.  
 "We are agreed  
 Now's not the time  
 To stick our necks  
 Out. Wait and see.  
 Festina lente.  
 Softee walkee  
 Catchee monkey.  
 Now's not the time.  
 Later, perhaps.  
 Yes, later, later.  
 Chances are always  
 Greater  
 Later.

## XXIII

“To start out from  
Nothing at all,”  
Said Franz Beleerd,  
“We’ll build  
A wall.”

## XXIV

“A Great Wall of Ethnosis?” said Sidonia,  
“Beleerd’s last bulwark against common sense?  
A Drakensburg of diamondiferous sand?  
A curved spine studded with good stones  
That might have been exported?  
A glittering cripple of our resources  
To scare the sensitive foreign investor?  
A monument to economic schizophrenia?  
And who’ll build the wall? Will Ambrose Gondhlovu  
Immure himself in the desert—while we  
Go downstairs and stoke up the boiler?” Beleerd  
Smiled like a crack in paper.

## XXV

Sometime later the Special Commission  
On Possible Ethnical Great Walls released  
Its remarkable report:

“So as not  
To disturb exportable raw materials  
Yet make the project truly of our own,  
The Wall shall be built of legislative  
Materials created by the House,  
Bills, reports, white and order papers,  
Memoranda, estimates, blue books, hansards,  
To a height of twenty feet, one million  
Words to a brick of a cubic foot,  
Broad enough for five ministers abreast  
To survey the divisions they’ve created.  
The Wall is to run in an Ox-hoof shape—  
(See the report of the Traditional  
Modifications Commission correcting

The Tomlinson discovery which made  
 A horse-shoe shape the bounds of White South Africa)  
 The Wall is to run in an outward curve  
 Until sufficient soil seems likely to be closed  
 Off for the preservation of all possible Whites.  
 This will be their harbour of security,  
 The first spoor of our trek into eternity.  
 Certain sacrifices will be called for. . . ."

## XXVI

Joe Coetzee, Minister of Labour, announced  
 "The first thing we must sacrifice, alas,  
 Is the luxury of a large Opposition.  
 We'll cling to the ledge of our democracy  
 By keeping the Opposition front bench.  
 The rest of the members on the other side  
 Cast in a constructive role at last  
 Will build the Wall. . . ."  
 "My friends," Colijn said,  
 "This Act may mean the death of Liberty!"  
 Neths yelled, "Away with them! Away with them!"

## XXVII

"Colijn," said Jack, "don't shout too loud!  
 If they take the boys at the back,  
 We'll be rid of the liberal crowd  
 And more concerted in attack. . . ."

## XXVIII

When the wall-gang marched off to the front,  
 Brandman, he was always courteous, presented  
 Them with a Disselboom-and-Ox-horns, saying  
 It showed they served their House and country still.  
 Colijn cried out, "Don't let it get you down!"  
 The liberals shambled off in a sad column  
 Except three ladies with a sense of style  
 And Frank Sidonia walking upright to  
 Conceal the bulge that was his Geiger-counter.  
 And Jolly Staak went with as overseer,  
 Tapping a merry time upon his sten-gun drum.



## XXIX

Even as the gang passed into the Lobby,  
 The ravings of race and republic were rising  
 And bawlings of betrayal, sabotage,  
 Countered the shrieks of Liberty's demise.  
 Doors closed while Beleerd was shouting the odds,  
 "Four-to-one! Four-to-one! Look at the risk!  
 Blacks by the billion and whites by the million . . ."  
 The House shook like a great combustion engine  
 Or concrete-mixer of ethnic creation  
 To pour the mortar of the Neths' new heaven—  
 As paper plants pump forth the toilet packs  
 Or humming presses flip the Daily Mirrors out.

## XXX

Twenty feet from the sand Beleerd's Bulwark  
 Rose up, a cubist monster of paper,  
 Went shambling, report by report, and hansard  
 By hansard, on big feet of blue books, to nowhere.  
 Its builders worked in muttered commiseration  
 And the Wall, reeling drunkenly onward,  
 Unrolled like a wandering Tower of Pisa  
 And broken backed as Don Quixote's horse.  
 High on the neck of this long Rosinante  
 Sidonia glued amendments into place.  
 Below, Ambrose brought barrow-loads of bills  
 From the conveyor-belts and brewed them tea.  
 He also moved the Disselboom from time to time,  
 Set it up at a further observation point  
 For Staak to lean against in the old tradition.  
 There Staak would nurse his sten-gun, tell it stories  
 Or strum sometimes upon its bullet-drum,  
 Crooning and crowing with a curious laughter:

*Hush-a-bye baby,  
 On a tree-top  
 Look-outs there may be  
 That work doesn't stop.*

*Life, law and order  
 Are based on a cell,  
 And God, the Great Warder,  
 Has lock-ups as well.*

## XXXI

Further, more faint and fitful now behind  
 Faded the House— to a full-stop on a blank page.  
 Only a crazy margin-line went back  
 Growing feebler with the grumble of conveyor-belt  
 That brought the day's enactments etcetera  
 To the forward grumble of liberals and others.  
 And often Beleerd came on the flow,  
 A buzz in that vast ear of emptiness,  
 Growing louder, crying "Faster! Much faster!"  
 Then dwindling back on "Bills! More Bills!"  
 And jungles of nothing grew up from the seed of sound  
 While Staak, a fever-bird, beneath a tree  
 With ox-horn branches, crooned his song:  
*"For warders have orders  
 And babies as well."*

## XXXII

Often when Beleerd was waxing, the Liberals  
 Baited him, "When does the enclosure start . . . ?"  
 "Not yet!" his cry came back at first, "Not yet!  
 So many counters, so many answers, six million  
 Whites, blacks twenty million, converted to billions . . ."  
 But later he would stop and smooth the sand,  
 And say, "Abacus, computer, all have failed.  
 The answer's in the ancient ethnic wisdom. . . ."  
 From a bag hung round his neck he'd tumble  
 Some wishing-bones, a rabbit's femur, poker dice,  
 Lucky beans and withered testicles of goats.  
 Over these strange counters he would murmur:  
*"Abra  
 Capravda  
 Black spots and malaras,  
 Races  
 Have places  
 And groups have their areas."*

But still he would rush away shouting, "Bills! More bills!"

## XXXIII

In the press gallery one pale reporter  
 Gave up at last and wrote a homesick ballade,  
 A letter from an exile to his country  
 And whatever head of state it might possess:

Sir, though our souls conspire at odds  
 And in their own dark places grow  
 Furious or fearful for their gods,  
 Yet in our youth once, long ago,  
 We walked in the same homespun flesh  
 Under the single sun we know  
 And every summer brought afresh  
 The small red apples from Grabouw.

And though our souls can never mix  
 These may unite our bodies yet,  
 The lithe brown girls of District Six  
 And golden grapes of Graaff-Reinet,  
 And every colour's equal still  
 In love of meats and fruits we grow,  
 The excellent goat of Jansenville  
 And small red apples from Grabouw.

If I were back I'd ease our soul's  
 Division and our mutual scorn  
 Over a calabash and bowl  
 Of sour milk and kaffir-corn,  
 Or drown our spiritual snarl  
 In Windhoek beer or wines that grow  
 Upon the sandy slopes of Paarl—  
 Or suck sweet apples from Grabouw.

Envoi:  
 Chief, Premier or President  
 Please rest your soul before you go  
 And keep our mutual flesh content  
 With small red apples from Grabouw.

## XXXIV

Even when the token Opposition sat  
 Both gagged and bound—to stop their gestures—

Production went no faster, and the House  
 Continued in perpetual commotion.  
 The Neths now spoke against the silence:  
 For when a speaker paused to draw a breath  
 Silence made its irritating interjection.  
 They roared on end to drown its questions.  
 And at the row of dummies opposite  
 They catapulted cat-calls and derision  
 And sometimes eased themselves of outrage  
 By smashing in those deprecating faces  
 And shouted, "Parrots-pappagaai!" after  
 Wooden birds knocked down on folk occasions.

## XXXV

Another thing was that the Opposition faces,  
 Despite continual black eyes and bloody noses,  
 Stayed possible to recognize apart.  
 Among the Neths distinction faded daily,  
 Perceptibly they grew upon each other,  
 Establishing a facial common front  
 With long hairs hanging curtains from their brows.  
 And soon they gave up looking at themselves  
 Appraisingly in lavatory mirrors.  
 Sitting with his fellows in the House  
 Each Neth felt shut up in a hall of mirrors  
 Where every face reflected back his own,  
 And talking to his friends was talking to himself.  
 Though boasting of his individualism  
 Often a Neth grew terrified to feel  
 His self outside his self, or elsewhere.  
 Dissimilar faces seemed a mockery, an insult  
 Deserving to be battered out of countenance,  
 Yet giving contact through the knuckles  
 With a separate existence to his own.

## XXXVI

Time came—if time ever does or goes  
 Down there—when their last hope went out,  
 And their last reason for display was lost.  
 The wives, their feathers leaning right and left,

Who sat a patient pantheon of Aphrodites,  
 Above the brawling heroes on the floor,  
 Suddenly rose up, marched down the Lobby  
 And out in crocodile formation into space.  
 A pressman hurried after for a statement.  
 "We've seen some several million bills,  
 To bring about the perfect separation.  
 We women, too, can follow an ideal,  
 Or take a hint. . . ." They left him,  
 Marching proudly, hats held high,  
 Eyes fixed on prospects of immensity.  
 Successive curtains of the high, grey void  
 Closed on this tiny harem of the Great Ideal

## XXXVII

The ministers in uxorious consternation  
 Rode out on donkeys, a distraught commando  
 (Harriman couldn't do better in the time).  
 They straggled in a fractured column,  
 Some rode, some pushed, some dragged their charters  
 Out to the dim rim of the eye's reach.  
 They stood there calling, then halooing,  
 The donkeys, sensing their distress  
 Hee-hawed their fellow-feeling to the wilderness.  
 The braying and the calling slipped like ghosts  
 Into that tomb of waste and space. Morosely  
 They returned, and the sensitive beasts they rode  
 Kept kicking one another in the stomach.

## XXXVIII

Time was only ticked by change now, in itself  
 Simply a continued emphasis of sameness.  
 Landman stiffened slowly to a totem-pole,  
 His face set permanently in angry oration,  
 Was leaned in the corner near the senior officials,  
 And when a draught caught in his open mouth  
 A hollow murmur came resembling "Baas!"  
 Beleerd grew very fat, with a belly  
 Bigger than Dingaan's or Lobengula's,  
 And sat on a raft made of memoranda

Under a potted palm in the courtyard,  
 Three under-ministers attended him, and Ambrose,  
 Promoted to be his Mbongo, sang praises  
 In suitable rhodomontade. He received  
 A laureate's tot of brandy in the traditional  
 Tin mug. "One way," said Beleerd, "of promoting  
 Indigenous culture." Often Beleerd threw the bones  
 And sat beetling his thoughts among  
 The knuckles, dice, lucky beans and bits of skin.  
 At his feet the wondering back-benchers sat  
 Watching the long division take its shape.  
 And sometimes they could not help asking,  
 "Dokter, when will our people be coming?"  
 (They had put up some signs on the highway,  
 Not even a trickle came through the sluices.)  
 But Beleerd said, "The races are there. Have  
 You not seen the hoardings announcing  
 Here are the Bantu, and Here Afrikaners.  
 Why do you bother about individuals?"  
 And the stemvee returned to the Lobby,  
 And their thinning liquor,  
 And ever more fibrous meat  
 And bread apparently compounded of boll-weevils.  
 Sometimes they smoked, from sheer habit,  
 A tobacco of Brown Books, chopped up.  
 Like puzzled Orang-utang, they stared at each other  
 Through the veils of compulsory faces,  
 Pondered humanity's reluctance to be saved  
 And contemplated shoddiness in everything.

## XXXIX

A whisper scurried through the House  
 "One's come!" "A coloured!" "A Hotnot!"  
 "How?" "Fell out of the sky—so they say!"  
 Dropping bills, hopping benches, regardless they  
 Left the nine gagged muses of maybe-tomorrow  
 And the wind of their going stirred from a corner  
 A faint, hollow and querulous "Baas!"

## XL

He stood at the gates with a Spanish guitar,  
 Long sports-coat, that sagged with a bottle,

Lank olive face, where licence and caution  
 And humour lived rough-house together,  
 Under a prim black hat, one size too small.  
 And in each eye a cautious sentinel  
 Remembered all the freaks he'd fallen through  
 And stood there watching for the horrors still to come.

## XLI

They rushed upon him, crying out,  
 "Where have you come from, you villain!  
 You bloody old bastard, Blikskottel, Hotnot!"  
 They clouted and thumped their emotions,  
 Surrounded, sobbed, shouted and swore.  
 He answered while ducking and dodging  
 "Nay, such a fine welcome from Masters!  
 It's good to see Masters, my Masters,  
 It goes to the heart of Gatipie!"  
 "Gatipie!" they cried, hoarse, and caressing  
 The name, and touching the hem of the past.  
 Gatipie's eyes darted among their emotions:  
 "The Masters wouldn't have a small something . . ."  
 They brought him wine in an old cracked tea-cup.  
 "Masters," he cried, "those sky-high horries  
 Could swim like fruit-flies in this fine Vaaljapie  
 My tonsils would bow down to everyone  
 Like two head-waiters in the Cafe Royal."  
 He drank the doppie with a desert's ecstasy.

## XLII

Ambrose came from where the lone Beleerd  
 Sat by his bones beneath the potted palm  
 And marched Gatipie off like a policeman  
 Followed by a street-crowd of the Neth back benchers.  
 Gatipie muttered, "Don't they scare you, hey?"  
 And Ambrose mumbled, "Me? I never look at them."

## XLIII

And this is the song Gatipie sang  
 To Beleerd, while Ambrose and the back-bench listened:  
 "Master, I tell you in this new-fangle calypso

The Brown people called me Gatipie, the Dipso.  
In the Desert, where we went by the transport boat,  
I caught this most painful drought in the throat.  
And when the war was over and peace was made  
I came home, thirsty, to the building trade.  
Believe me, lime and cement is the worst  
Thing to swallow for a permanent thirst.  
And often me and some old pallies from the war  
Drank a few doppies to the old Cape Corps.  
And I was just coming from having a few  
When there's a helse gewolt in the Avenue  
And a Boere policeman up with his gun  
And knocks off a kaffir, and me the next one!  
Watse respectable! I jump for the gutter,  
And Masters, I'm down the Black Hole of Calcutta!  
Soon I know its the world I'm falling through  
Me and my guitar going China-toe  
Or one of those places where the men wear silk  
And girls without clothes bring you coconut-milk.  
But what I saw was a different sight,  
Girls who'd give the devil himself a fright.  
My brother, from drinking, once had the horries  
But he saw nothing beside my worries.  
It was like there'd been a donderse battle  
With Loch Ness Monsters and people and cattle  
And spooks and goggas and in-betweens  
And elephant cray-fish and skokiaan-queens.  
And when the whole damn jamboree is dead  
And there isn't a body left stuck to a head,  
Then their spirits come rushing hell-for-leather  
In a hurry to stick their parts together.  
Some grabs three heads and some two tails  
And ladies get bodies with wings and scales,  
And a whale flies past like an autogyro.  
Its like a one-day leave in Cairo  
Anything goes that you somar picks-up.  
Masters never saw such a blerry mix-up.  
It was like the annual Moffies' dance  
Where a zoo and a mad-house take their chance  
Stomping around up there on high  
Letting it go in a tickey draai.  
For, Masters, when affairs got tricky



I'd tingle-tangle on my ou ramkietjie,  
And, true as Gord, you know, those Things  
Would come and dance round me in rings.  
Hasn't Masters never looked up and seen  
Gatipie's heavenly shebeen?  
Their eyes would shine so much with zest,  
Thousands, more than at the Rugby Test,  
It was like the Milky Way went round  
Dancing to my ou ramkietjie's sound.  
Music made them so respectable  
I might have been up there playing still,  
But I sighed one day, 'My throat's on fire,  
And I want to get back to my old Maria!'  
And one of those Things came dancing near  
And bends and whispers in my ear,  
'Maria's alive but she walks with sticks  
And her age is one hundred and twenty-six.  
And drink—they went on with that ethnic bunk  
Till everyone was getting drunk,  
And one fine day with all their nerves on edge  
The whole damn nation joined to sign the pledge.  
Sorry, Gatipie, that is the position,  
They had a revolution and got Prohibition.'  
Haai, Masters, this news was a terrible shock,  
And my heart was heavy like a concrete block.  
And I got that falling feeling too,  
So I drops like a sinker here, to you."

## XLIV

Though members felt the telling of the time  
Toll great bells within their hearts  
They stuffed their ears with brown Gatipie's song  
And muffled a deep sound with memories.  
They kept Gatipie playing, playing  
Recalled brown hands upon long-gone ramkietjies  
And under other skies in which familiar stars  
Tinkled their light like silver tickeys,  
Remembered childhood where an outa might  
Twang strange wonders from a high-strung heart.  
They built a fire where the husky throats of flame  
Murmured the past through all of one day's bills,

And shouted choruses to drown the vast inane.  
 At last like children fell asleep  
 About the ash of Acts and other paper—  
 The desert watched, an old grey nurse outside.

## XLV

Gatipie rose, shook Ambrose, said,  
 "Let's get to Hell out of this frightening place.  
 Its better fun among the proper horrors."  
 They tip-toed through the consolatory dreams  
 And went—the Neths lay round as worn-out children  
 Do when they have cried themselves to sleep.  
 The last flame twitched among the ashen acts,  
 A little dog asleep beneath a bed.

## XLVI

But later, suddenly Beleerd cried out;  
 And all round shivered out of sleep  
 Into the twilight of intangible calamity,  
 And saw the empty place where Ambrose slept  
 And tracks that went to Life's colossal Tree or wall . . . .  
 It was too late to send a posse  
 And there were no police to call.

## XLVII

The members gnashed their teeth, and strange griefs  
 tore them. . . .

## XLVIII

The bells were ringing for a quorum.  
 "Go! Go!" cried Franz Beleerd,  
 "Work with your sweat and blood that pours  
 The mortar of enactments—see  
 The great achievement that is yours."  
 Following his outflung arm they saw  
 Their wall go wandering in the wilderness,  
 A quavering trace across grey sand to draw  
 By art what nothing could express,  
 Their fate, far-fetched and drawn out fine  
 Developing on its own line. . . .

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