

# Verwoerd's Plan for Great Mass Migration

## Tens of Thousands of Rand Natives To Be Shifted to New Townships

A Bill has been introduced into Parliament to remove all the Natives in the Johannesburg area and settle them elsewhere. In this article the President of the South African Race Relations Institute relates the history of this latest apartheid move.

JOHANNESBURG has flirted with the idea of removing all non-Europeans from its Western Areas since 1939, when Mr. S. J. Tighy, then a Ratepayers' Councillor, first made the proposal. In 1944, the Johannesburg City Council passed a resolution along similar lines. But one was inclined to regard the resolution, fantastic, impracticable, costly and morally wrong as it was, as a sop designed to placate European ratepayers in the nearby European suburbs.

But in 1949 the pattern changed. The Minister of Native Affairs, following renewed representations by Europeans, intervened. And from that time, when he inquired what steps the Council was taking to implement its 1944 resolution, to February, 1953, when the Government bought Meadowlands, the area to which the Natives of the Western Areas are to be removed, he did not relax his pressure.

### Weak Attitude

THE City Council played a peculiar and contradictory role throughout the negotiations over these years. Whatever its attitude may have been—and this was at no stage made clear—it neither espoused the scheme with the fervour the Minister has shown, nor did it resist the Minister's pressure with any firmness.

If the Council hoped to win the votes of the Europeans in other suburbs in the Western Areas for the United Party by not opposing the removal scheme, then it has failed: for the glory, if glory it be, of forcing the scheme through is the Minister's. The Council never attempted to win the respect of the decent, fair-minded citizen by taking a stand on principle, for it took no such stand. It earned the hostility of the Africans. "We find it... impossible to hold the City Council not responsible for our misery", says a memorandum of theirs.

The scheme is now the Government's Western Areas Removal Scheme. Four City Councillors have been appointed by the Minister on an advisory committee to implement the scheme. But these Councillors—three of whom served on an *ad hoc* Committee previously appointed by the Council—are apparently not responsible to the Council and serve in their individual capacities.

### Present Scheme

THE present Western Areas removal scheme proposes to remove all the Africans from Sophiatown, Martindale, Newclare and Pageview—some 57,000 people—to Meadowlands, an area adjoining Orlando, some six miles farther from the centre of the City than they are at present. It proposes to designate Sophiatown—the largest of the suburbs where 39,000 Africans now live—for European occupation and ownership. It proposes to strip Africans of the property rights which they have held since the establishment of the townships, Martindale and Sophiatown in 1905 and Newclare in 1912—rights which Africans hold nowhere else in Johannesburg—and to substitute 30 years' leasehold tenure for

those who wish to acquire their own homes in Meadowlands.

The proponents of the scheme justify it on the grounds that the Western Areas are appallingly overcrowded, that slum conditions have developed in large parts of the area, and claim that the scheme should be heartily welcomed. The Minister

by

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has stated that various types of housing will be erected in Meadowlands to meet the needs of different economic groups, that loans will be made available for those wishing to build their own homes, that amenities will be provided, that transport will be made available—in short, that Meadowlands will be a fine place and Africans should be glad to be removed.

### Africans Opposed

NEVERTHELESS, the Africans do not welcome the scheme. On the contrary, they oppose it bitterly. A monster conference called by the Transvaal African National Congress made this abundantly clear. And an entirely separate conference, convened by the Southern Transvaal Regional Committee of the S.A. Institute of Race Relations, attended by representatives of 51 organizations, mostly European, likewise opposed the scheme emphatically.

The two chief grounds for this opposition are, firstly, the injustice of the compulsory deprivation of freehold rights and, secondly, the speciousness of the allegation that total removal is necessary for slum clearance. The Minister has made it clear that he is determined to put a stop to ownership of land by Africans in what he calls "European areas", i.e. all towns. It is, he explained in Parliament, ownership of land which determines whether an area is a "black spot" or not. If Europeans own the land, even though Natives live on it, then it is not a "black spot".

This, incidentally, explains why the Western Native Township (also scheduled for removal under the original Council resolution) is to be allowed to remain, although it adjoins Martindale. Once Africans own land, they have certain rights which they cannot obtain in a location. Hence the Minister has decreed that the African's property rights are to be taken from him. Mr. F. E. Mentz, M.P., supporting the Minister, stated that the extinction of proprietary rights in towns was necessary to implement the policy of apartheid.

### Rights Taken Away

THE Africans, understandably enough, do not want to be deprived of their freehold rights. They cherish these rights, they value the homes they own. Many have laboured a lifetime to acquire them. They regard this threatened deprivation as yet another instance of the European's breach of faith.

The Minister has stated that only 350 stands are owned by Africans, and implied that the relative smallness of this number lessened the alleged deprivation. A survey, conducted by the municipality, while making it clear that the information on which accurate figures could be based is simply not available, gave an estimate of just on 600.

The African Anti-Expropriation Ratepayers' Association says that its members alone, and they do not include all African property owners, own over 600 stands. But numbers are, in fact, irrelevant. Were there only ten African stand-owners, it would be unjust to deprive them of their freehold rights and to deprive countless others of their potential rights.

Africans are, also understandably enough, sceptical about the assurances given them. They wonder why a new Meadowlands should emerge complete with all amenities, when an old Orlando lacks so many, why housing of different types should suddenly become available when for years they have clamoured unavailingly for houses, how it is that the transport problem which the authorities cannot solve for Orlando should prove more tractable in the case of an adjoining Meadowlands.

### Overcrowded

NO one denies that the Western Areas are overcrowded. They are overcrowded because the Johannesburg City Council has failed tragically to meet its obligations to house the Africans who work within its area. No one denies that there are structures which must be demolished. But in order to clear slums, it is not necessary to evacuate a whole area, to condemn the good with the bad, to abandon the schools and churches, the missions and shops, the cinemas and clinics which serve a settled and cohesive community.

It has been estimated that, to reduce the population density to a number consistent with good town planning principles, one half of the population would have to be drawn off, but that one half could remain. This would mean saving some £3 800,000—one half of the total costs which will amount to some £7,750,000. Johannesburg needs close on 30,000 housing units for families, as well as greatly extended accommodation for single Africans, to meet its present housing shortfall. Deliberately to increase this already immense backlog is an act of gross irresponsibility.

The Western Areas started as a local, Johannesburg problem. It is that no longer. Not only has the Minister intervened to make it a national matter, but he has stated that the possibility of dealing with other areas will depend on the success of this scheme. Africans realize this. These eyes are focused on the Eastern Areas and the bitterness that affects the Africans of the Western Areas is in them too. It would be well if Europeans, who alone wield political power, were to realize the depth of feeling the Government's scheme has aroused, its possible repercussions and the threat it presents—not alone to Johannesburg.



In reading this book one seems to hear the Baptist's fierce denunciations of his contemporaries amongst whom were included incidentally the "Established Church" and whom he regarded as "chaff that should be burnt up with unquenchable fire".

But, in conclusion, may we venture just one word of "comfort" which we feel sure the good Father will not deny us; it is the reflection that after all John the Baptist was wrong! Not wrong in the things he denounced which were all too terribly true, but wrong in his vision of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. If the Spotlight were shifted a little it would reveal that all these things and more are being done all over South Africa; and, indeed, not altogether without the encouragement and assistance from the Government.

There is hope in thine end, Saith the Lord.

Late Canon Thrupp—cont. from Page 61

for South Africa at once. He was then a young man of 26. He was ordained Priest in Zululand in 1907 and served 16 years in that diocese, only leaving because of repeated attacks of malaria. After a short incumbency in Natal from 1921, he became Rector of Groot Drakenstein in the Diocese of Cape Town in 1925, but five years later he returned to Natal as Vicar of New-castle.

Canon Thrupp was a sensitive man, but perhaps his very sensitiveness made him the more able to understand and sympathise with those in trouble or sickness. There have been over the past years several invalids in George whom he befriended and to whom, with the Rector's permission, he ministered occasionally. Another thing about him was his painstaking thoroughness and dependableness. Writing about him on hearing of his death a lady in a parish where he was once Rector said, "Canon Thrupp was a good friend; he was always so reliable." A good illustration of dependableness is the fact that all the various little jobs left to him to do as Secretary after the last meetings of the Boards of Education and Missions on March 6th, the writing of various letters, the sending of certain cheques and so on, were found to have all been faithfully done when he died a fortnight later, although he must have been feeling very ill. He was very lonely in his last years, as his wife whom he had married when he was at Vryheid in 1914, died some time after he came to George.

Many men who had reached the age Canon Thrupp had reached might well

## WORSE THAN SOPHIATOWN!

### Compulsory Removals and no Houses

GREAT hardships are being imposed upon the non-Europeans as the policy of apartheid goes on its cruel way. This can be seen, for example, in Cape Town at the present time in the matter of housing for Africans.

Langa is being developed with a view to becoming a large township for men only—a very inhuman and a very dangerous proposal. Family life is being shifted to distant Nyanga, ultimately to be banished altogether from the Western Cape. In all the houses at Nyanga, except those few built at the beginning some ten years ago, the conditions of living are niggardly and cramped, and quite inadequate for the decent living of a family of any size. No inside door is provided in the doorway between the two very small rooms; no floor is provided nor inside lighting (nor any outside either); no water is laid on, and the outside taps are few and far between, nor is there any drainage, or sanitation except an outside bucket system; and the rents in proportion are high.

And, while conditions are so bad in the built-up area of Nyanga—and there has been no building there for the past three years or so—conditions in the Emergency Camp, to which people will soon be compelled to go, will be far worse. There was considerable public indignation last year at the forcible removal of Africans from Sophiatown, in Johannesburg, to Meadowlands, where there were at least some houses provided in which the people might live. But here in Cape Town there is due to take place within the next few weeks (with the winter coming on), a large-scale compulsory removal from the slums of the Northern suburbs to the Nyanga camp where **no houses of any kind whatever will be provided.** Hidden away amongst the bushes and the sand-dunes each man will be assigned a small place, for which he will have to pay £1 per month, and there he must put up what he can as a dwelling place for himself and his family.

have excused themselves from taking an active part in the life of the community. Not so Canon Thrupp; until the end of his life he continued to take an interest in a number of good causes in George. It was probably his years in Zululand that gave him his deep interest in the welfare of the Natives who live in George, but there were other activities too which commanded his willing support, such as the Red Cross organisation.

It is said that this condition of things is only to be temporary, but even so as a compulsory living arrangement for human beings it will undoubtedly involve the people in very great difficulties and acute suffering, and it is well known that temporary arrangements of this kind, elsewhere in South Africa, have gone on for many years.

Great hardship also is resulting from the fact that both built-up Nyanga and "Nyanga-in-the-bush" (and many people are there already), are so very far away from the places where the people work. If a survey could be taken on such questions as: "How many hours at home per night?", "How many hours spent per day in travelling?", "What percentage of weekly earnings spent in travelling?"—it can safely be said that some startling and pathetic facts would come to light. It is well known, of course, that a railway is planned, but this must take a very long time; meanwhile much injury is being done to human life by compelling so many people to live so far from their work before the railway is provided; moreover, when the railway is laid down there is no certainty that the cost of travelling will be any less than it is now.

It may not unfairly be said that the present policy which compels any group of people to go and live, as the Africans are now having to live, at Nyanga, is a crime against humanity, and a great injury to human personality, and indeed a further disgrace to South Africa; and, incidentally it must inevitably lessen the peoples' effectiveness as workers.

It needs to be remembered that the local authorities did propose native townships near to the Northern and Southern suburbs, and that it was the local White voters who insisted on the natives being sent further away.

F.J.R.

In more ways than one Canon Thrupp will be difficult to replace, but apart from this we shall miss him for himself. In the Cathedral, at Synods and at various other gatherings he was wont to attend the loss of his kindly presence will leave a real gap. "Rest eternal grant unto him, O Lord, and may light perpetual shine upon him."

\*J.G.



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