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(E.H.)

WHERE THE DEVIL DRIVES

WITHOUT BLINKERS

**A SOUTH AFRICAN
CONGRESS OF
DEMOCRAT'S VIEW
OF THE
VERWOERD BILLS**

Price 3d.

"He must needs go that the devil drives."

All's Well That Ends Well. Shakespeare.

They tell a story of a man who owned a horse. Hard times came; the man found that feeding the horse cost more than he could afford. So day by day he reduced the horse's rations. Finally two days passed without need to feed the horse at all. Jubilantly the man told his friends of the great success he was having in the experiment. Unfortunately, the horse died.

THE great South African experiment to change the way of life of the African people is under way. Its name is apartheid.

There was a time when 'apartheid' was a catchword, tossed about by political office seekers at election time, and scoffed at by progressive thinkers. It is that no longer.

Nor is it any longer of concern only to black men and women. For the experiment has come to overshadow the whole social, economic and political life of the country, involving nearly every South African in its working out.

It has become an experiment to unravel the whole established fabric of South African life, and to make it over in the interest of profit-hungry farmers; an experiment to uproot three hundred years of progress and development, to fit the feudalistic notions of Stellenbosch professors.

No South African of any racial group stands outside the process, immune to the violent upheavals, dislocations, privations and suffering it is causing.

It is unlikely that the horse will die. But it is certain that if the experiment is carried through to its end, horse, rider and bystander will come down together in ruin.

WITHOUT BLINKERS

It is time to look at apartheid as it is; it is no longer good enough — time before disaster does not allow — to look only at what it is professed to be in apologies prepared by Cabinet ministers for solicitous friends abroad and at home.

"However heavy the burden, white South Africa is committed to a policy of Bantu development in keeping with the positive tenets of apartheid . . . There is no parallel for the South African racial record of non-extermiation, non-miscegenation, non-assimilation — but of preaching and practising Christianity with the retention of racial identity and of mutual respect."

Thus writes Dr. Malan, in a letter to the Rev. J. Piersma of Grand Rapids, U.S.A. (Rand Daily Mail).

This is not apartheid but distortion.

" . . . when Natives look for a home of their own, they will come to those who stand for apartheid, for constant widening of the living possibilities within the reserves, for it is part of our policy alone to grant them those separate tendencies and opportunities."

Thus speaks the Minister of Native Affairs, Dr. Verwoerd, in the House of Assembly. (Hansard: 24/2/54).

This is not apartheid, but bad conscience.

Apartheid is the Nationalist Government's legislative programme. At its most naked, it is the series of new Bills now before Parliament, appropriately called by the name of their deviser, the Minister of Native Affairs.

How bitterly does the reality of the Verwoerd Bills contrast with his own and Dr. Malan's airy propaganda statements! And nowhere is the reality more bitter than in Johannesburg's Western Areas.

BLACK SPOT

Here, in the suburbs of Sophiatown, Martindale and Newclare, live 58,000 people, black people, working in Johannesburg's factories, shops and houses. Sometimes their roofs leak; often damp comes through the walls; almost invariably their houses are desperately overcrowded with whole families eating, sleeping and living in a single room. But, as the Cabinet should be happy to note, they have roofs over their heads.

And they have a little more. They have schools where their children learn the wonders of modern science and ways of life. They have churches, built by their own contributions, which teach Christian codes of morals and behaviour. They have clinics, but not enough, showing new ways of hygiene, cleanliness and child care. It is not much, compared with what modern knowledge and skill could provide. In truth, much of the area is slum.

But yet it is a place in the sun. People do not live by bread alone. In the Western Areas they have some little freedoms other black men do not know. They have the right to buy and sell property, and to build for themselves as their resources permit them. They have the right to enter and leave, to entertain guests and take in lodgers without the petty tyranny of pass and permit officials over them. Small things, that help to make what men call 'happiness,' compensating in part for the neglected 'depressed area' conditions in which poor people everywhere live.

Only those who have seen and know the other places where black men live in Johannesburg can understand the fierce struggle amongst those outside the Western Areas to get in to the humblest subdivision of a sub-divided room. 55,000 of those outside live in hessian and cardboard shacks under Municipal supervision, in the 'temporary' squatting camps of Moroka and Jabavu; they have been there since 1947. 34,000 more live in breezeblock shacks, without doors or windows, neighbours of open sewerage trenches in municipally owned Orlando; they have been there since 1944. More live in halved corrugated iron rainwater tanks, in municipally controlled Pimville, hastily built as 'temporary' shelter in 1904, and condemned in 1913. If anywhere in South Africa there are intolerable, inhuman slums, they are here.

But apartheid decrees that here people may stay, in their hessian and their cardboard and their rain water tanks, until death by cold and epidemic remove them. But for the people in the sometimes very good, sometimes poor brick houses of the Western Areas, apartheid decrees forcible removal — forcible deportation of every man, woman child, and forcible destruction of their homes before others can occupy them.

Thus it is written in Dr. Verwoerd's "Native Resettlement Bill" now before Parliament.

Miles away, on a bare stretch of veld, houses are being built. Not for those without roofs, or with hessian and cardboard walls. But for those who will be moved from the brick walled, iron roofed houses of the Western Areas.

What of their schools? Ex educator Verwoerd cares little for schools; ground will be set aside on the planners maps. What of their churches? Ex Dominee Malan has no time to think of churches. What of their clinics? Ex doctor Van Rijn is not concerned about clinics. What of their transport? Ex railwayman Schoeman ignores transport. What of their small freedoms? The Government despises and fears freedoms. The welfare and the liberty of human beings must make way for the decrees of experimenters. There is neither time nor room for welfare and liberty in the Verwoerd legislation.

A PART — OR A WHOLE

But that, you will say, is only the Western Areas. And after all, the Western Areas are not Johannesburg or the cities of South Africa. Here, you will say, are only 58,000 people. And after all, 58,000 are not the ten million people of the Union.

All that is true.

But look again. Look at the "Natives Resettlement Bill." Specifically it provides for forcible deportation of 58,000 souls from the Western Areas. But generally it provides for the forcible deportation of all Africans living in any area in, or adjacent to, the magisterial district of Johannesburg, by simple proclamation of an appointed Board, without any prior consultation. By comparison with the people of these many, unspecified areas, the people of the Western Areas are fortunate. For the people of the Western Areas, houses are to be provided — at a rental which will repay to the authorities the entire cost of eviction, deportation, rebuilding and administration — and none can say what that rental will be. But for those from other areas, any piece of ground shall be "suitable" accommodation for them after their eviction, whether it be with or without houses, with or without water, sanitation, transport or amenities.

Every black man in Johannesburg, living in the humblest, most carefully segregated, most hygienic, healthy conditions shall henceforth be subject, without warning or consultation, to eviction and deportation to he knows not where.

There is the lying philanthropy, so necessary and so inevitably in every-thing apartheid does.

"This Bill . . . is undoubtedly in the best interests of Johannesburg as a city, and at the same time in the best interests of the natives living in those areas with which the Bill seeks to deal."

So speaks Dr. Verwoerd in the House of Assembly — (23/2/54, Hansard).

TOMORROW THE WORLD

And yet that, you will say, is still only Johannesburg's magisterial district, containing some 400,000 Africans.

True. But look further, to the next piece of Verwoerd Legislation. Look at the Urban Areas Amendment Bill of 1954. When this is law the Minister of Native Affairs will have the uncontested right to order the abolition, the removal or the curtailment of any village, location or hostel for Africans, anywhere in the whole land. He will be able to order any of the people living there to move to any other place he may decide, whether there is housing, water, sanitation and means of livelihood for them, or whether there is not. Thus, in the interests of a runaway doctrine of apartheid, only those black men who live on their white employer's property will be safe from imminent and threatening eviction, and deportation to the Minister cares not where.

And yet that, you will say, is still only the towns, and the rural villages. And towns and villages are, after all, not all South Africa.

True. But look further to find the whole truth. Look to the next piece of Verwoerd legislation, the Native Land and Trust Amendment Bill of 1954. ('Trust' it should be recorded, not in the sense that the dictionary defines it — "reliance on integrity.'). When this becomes law, a board of farmers and civil servants, hand picked by the Government, will be able to order the eviction from any European owned farm anywhere in the land of any or all those Africans who do not work for cash wages — of 'squatters' so-called, who receive land to plough or grazing for their cattle in exchange for their labour. Only imagination or guess work can tell how many such people there are.

"According to the latest census, there were 2,300,000 Natives employed by farmers, most of them in the capacity of labour tenants or squatters . . . He did not think that the figure of one million was an exaggeration."

(Senator Steenkamp in the Union Senate, as reported in the Star, 23/3/54.)

One million souls, perhaps. But all to be evicted and deported, if the board thinks they are "redundant". And all to be deprived of the livestock which represents a lifetime and several lifetimes of work and saving. For some — and it is only some — the Government shall make "such provisions as the Minister may consider necessary and adequate" for their resettlement in Native reserves. For the others, the many, all that is prescribed is that the Government shall "endeavour to make or assist in making other arrangements" for placing them in employment or on the land, as the high priests of apartheid see fit. One million people living from hence forward in the shadow of impoverishment, eviction and deportation to no one cares where.

"This Bill is a milestone on the road of racial relations in South Africa, and a new milestone on the way of labour distribution in our country."

So claims Mr. Abraham, Nationalist, in the House of Assembly. (22/1/54, Hansard).

These are the Verwoerd Bills. They are the real meaning of apartheid. They are milestones — one and all. But to where?

DESIGN FOR DICTATORSHIP

There is a pattern in all. There is the pattern of turning eight million Africans into temporary sojourners in the land of their birth and of their forefathers, into miserable, footloose, voiceless wanderers on the face of the earth, to be coerced, ordered and deposited as it suits the thousand-morgen farmers.

And there is the pattern of injustice, which runs like a chain through all the measures. A thousand crying injustices, whose list is too long to record in full; the injustice of destroying freehold property rights in exchange for live-long tenancy 'at will' of a local council and its legion of municipal superintendents and petty permit officials; of uprooting 58,000 black men from their age-established homes, because a few hundred white encroachers find the rubbing of shoulders intolerable; of removing people from shelter and dumping them on bare veld to suit a racial pattern-theory devised by a Westdene M.P.; of evicting farmers from the land without provision for the livestock which is their whole traditional wealth.

There is injustice upon injustice. For injustice is one of the foundations on which the Verwoerd Bills depend.

But there is also the pattern of despotism, which is the bedfellow of injustice; a thousand tyrannies, preparing a state where all power will reside with a handful of despots. There is the despotic power of a single man to proclaim the eviction of thousands, without rhyme, reason or consultation; of an appointed board to carry through schemes of mass deportation, at the expense of a City Council but without reference to it; of police, authorised to take any steps to carry out mass evictions, without being answerable for any loss, damage or hurt they may cause; of a Cabinet Minister to decree the razing to the ground of any town, village or hostel, without reason or compensation.

There is tyranny and despotic power, brushing aside the powers of Parliament, of Town Councils, of courts. For tyranny and the drive to absolute untrammelled Ministerial authority is the whole foundation on which the Verwoerd Bills depend.

THE SKY IS THE LIMIT

Yet the Verwoerd Bills of 1954 are only three — three pieces of legislation in a vast field of new laws, new regulations, new decrees which have marked the whole Nationalist term of government office. They are a part — a vicious and inhuman part — but none-the-less only a part of the whole system apartheid is creating in the country.

Perhaps you say that the picture is painted too dark; that the Government's powers, though sweeping, will not be widely used; that the millions of people covered by the terms of Verwoerd's Bills will be left largely unaffected, and only in a few particularly glaring cases will they be evicted, deported or left homeless.

It would be pleasant if it were so.

But experience points the other way. Look away from what the Nationalists are planning, to what they are doing and have already done.

PASSPORTS TO PURGATORY

Look first at the creeping growth of pass laws, new regulations which have crept upon us unnoticed, one by one, till today no-one — neither Pass Office Officials nor spokesmen for the Native Affairs Department — can catalogue the full story of the procedural chaos through which every Urban African has to pass, in order to meet the needs of the law, as Verwoerd has drafted it. For every reported case of men shanghaied from Pass Office to farms, there are a thousand that go unreported; for every reported case of men ordered back to the rural 'homes' left twenty years before, there are a thousand unreported. No one will ever know the total number of those arrested, gaoled, fined, or returned to rural starvation for failure to produce the right piece of paper with the right rubber stamp; no one will ever know the total millions of manhours lost by trade, industry and commerce, through the endless queues, to exchange the old tattered passes for new, handsome passes politely styled 'reference books.' No one will ever know the million bitternesses and hatreds roused by the endless official indifferences, hostilities.

"In the period 1st. March 1952, to 30 July 1953, one year and three months, there were removed from proscribed areas (main towns) Natives who could not find work there . . . who could have been usefully put to work in the rural areas, to the number of 21,823. That is an average of 1,364 per month. In the period 1 July 1953, to 31 December — the last six months, 16,895 were removed. That was an average of 2,816 per month."

Thus runs Dr. Verwoerd's proud boast, in the House of Assembly. (5/2/54, Hansard.)

But still the megalomaniac appetites of apartheid are unsatisfied. To the present endless misery, to the existing chaos, must be added new misery and new chaos. The edict has gone forth that from here forward, all the eighty thousand or more men who come here from Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland to work in shops, offices, factories and homes, are to be classed and treated as "foreigners." Bureaucracy is to be added to bureaucracy. Pass office staffs are to be multiplied and remultiplied, so that all the manifold passes, permits and restrictions formerly applied to workers from the Rhodesias, shall now be inflicted on these, new "foreigners" in our midst, who shall henceforth be prohibited from leaving their present employers for any reason save to return permanently to their homes, or to take up work on farms or mines.

DARKNESS ON THE LIGHT

Look next at the mediaeval Bantu Education Act, forced through Parliament's last session, and now coming into first operation. It has become a crime, punishable with severity, for anyone to establish or run a school anywhere for Africans, child or adult, without a permit from Dr. Verwoerd's Department. Education and the spread of modern ideas amongst black men, the most worthy contribution white South Africans have made to their fellow citizens, has itself been restricted by the Nationalist edict, and has become a crime save it be conducted along the lines ordained by Dr. Verwoerd.

What are the lines tolerated by this bearer of 'western culture' to the native people? They were clearly stated during the debate on the Act. They are the reverse of every enlightened idea of educationist and missionary.

"They (the Africans) want higher wages whether they deserve them or not. They want the white man's standard of living. They want the white man's beds, they want his clothes and they want to eat with a knife and fork like a white man . . . The results of this system (of education) are bad enough to prove that it is high time that the state should assume a more lively share in this matter."

Thus Dr. Albert Hertzog, Nationalist, in a bitter attack on the mission schools, during the House of Assembly debate on the 'Education' Act, (Hansard 23/9/53).

"We must train them for, and make them as productive as possible in work which can be made available to them in present circumstances."

Thus Mr. S. A. Eyssen, Nationalist, in the House of Assembly, during the same debate. (Hansard.)

Truly this is a return to the dark ages; but with a difference. It is no longer possible to deny the 'lower classes' all education, as once it was. But now education is to become a Nationalist instrument for undermining the spread of new ideas, for uprooting the liberalising and Christianizing effects of patient missionary work, and for conditioning an awakening people to 'productive work' in such work as Malan's government will make available to them in farms and mines.

Put together, it sounds like barbaric madness. Yet there is method in the madness, and purpose in the return to the dark ages. It is time to understand the purpose and the method, that the madness can be fought off and isolated.

THE ROAD BACK

For everything there is a beginning . . .

The beginnings of this story are in our history, in the days when gold and diamond mines were first opened up, when the first urgent need moved white South Africans to draw black men away from pastoral life to wage labour on the Rand and in Kimberly. For a tribal community, self-supporting from their crops and their cattle, cash was not sufficiently attractive. In 1889, the Transvaal Chamber of Mines reported that

"complaints from the various mines of the difficulty of securing a sufficient number of Kaffirs to carry on the work are constantly growing more numerous and urgent." (Annual Report).

Desperate needs find desperate remedies. Those who would not come voluntarily could be coerced.

"The want of Native Labour is becoming urgently felt," wrote the Secretary of the Chamber of Mines to a member of the Volksraad two years later. "I trust that the Volksraad will not allow this session to go by without making some legislative provision . . . whether by raising the hut tax to an appreciable amount and relieving working Kaffirs from its payment, or by some other means."

Over the years the means have been devised. Hut taxes and poll taxes, payable in cash were levied. The men came forth to work where the Randlords called them. Through their work, the mines grew; new shafts were sunk, new 'strikes' made; and new and greater demands arose for labour and yet more labour.

More desperate needs, and more desperate remedies. Tribal lands were expropriated; laws were passed to stop Africans buying land; overcrowded reserves of poverty were established, with small plots incapable of sustaining life. Driven by poverty, more and more Africans poured forth to work in the mines, and the first beginnings of factories to supply them. From a hundred to a thousand, to twenty thousand and a hundred thousand grew the numbers of the mine workers. But still not enough.

In 1936, the Africans were confined for ever to 13% of the country's surface. Cattle limitations and forced culling were imposed; the number of those working underground rose to three hundred thousand. A process had been started, and none could see its end.

There was war; and industry grew by leaps and bounds, taking 250,000 African workers from the fast shrinking pool of black labour. The Reef, which ran down into the bowels of Witwatersrand earth and had disappeared, tipped up like a saucer and was rediscovered in the Orange Free State. The demands for labour snowballed.

THE BITTER END

But every pool has its bottom. And to the new demands there was no answer, save to draw off from one's neighbour, one's competitor.

For a long time, the mines had drawn off labour from the European farmers, with an average wage rate of seventy seven shillings per month, in princely comparison to the thirty shillings cash average on the farms. Hitherto, there had always been more in the pool of human resources.

For a long time, the town industries had drawn off labour from both farms and mines, offering some possibilities of civilised amenities, education and family life to make more attractive a wage averaging one hundred and fifty-six shillings per month for even the unskilled. Hitherto, there had always been more in the pool, for farm owners and mine magnates to draw from.

But every pool has its bottom. The stark need for raising wages, and providing amenities which would draw men away from the towns faced a desperate group of profit-hungry men. It was a dread prospect. There are always the desperate alternatives.

There was the desperate device of channelling every offender against every petty pass law into convict labour on the farms, guarded by police lest he run away, housed in private goals which mushroomed through the land.

And still not enough.

There was the desperate compounding of new pass offences to fill new goals.

And still not enough.

There were the yet more desperate measures to uproot every possible able bodied worker from the towns, and from selfsupporting productivity in the countryside. If homes have to be pulled down, let them be pulled down

If those with shelters have to be made homeless, let them be homeless! If those striving for education have to be turned back to illiteracy, let them be illiterate! If those with self-dignity have to be degraded to the level of convict labourers, let them be persecuted beyond the bearing!

Desperate measures. But ideas of mercy and justice, concepts of humanity and civilisation fade to nothing before the need to keep wages low, workers docile and profits high.

There were the Verwoerd Bills. And there was the many-sided system of oppression called apartheid.

END OF THE ROAD

The process of bringing "white culture" and "western civilisation" to the black men had turned full circle. Riches, and greed for riches, have grown out of the labour of black men. And now the civilisation which brought education and medicine and modern comforts to South Africa, has no answer to its own needs save the destruction of what it has built, in a hopeless desperate return to mediaeval tyranny and piratic pillaging of its own achievement.

This is apartheid As it is!

If its only victims were black men, the good white citizens of this country could, perhaps, afford to turn aside, unconcerned. They are not. Relentlessly, each new attack on the lives and welfare of the Africans, flowers into an attack on the lives and welfare of all other South Africans. The 'reference books' are officially admitted to be part and parcel of the 'registration' of all our citizens of all races. The Bantu Education Act is flesh of the flesh of "Christian National Education," quietly being foisted on the white population. The Native Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act outlawing strikes and "bleeding the native trade unions to death" as Minister of Labour Schoeman aptly described it, is the 1953 forerunner of today's "Industrial Conciliation Amendment Bill" which will open up to the European, Indian and Coloured trade unions to splitting and impotence.

The Western Areas Removal scheme is the other side of the picture of the supplanting of the City Council and the ending of European ratepayers' elections. The dictatorial powers of decree in the Native Urban Areas Amendment, the Native Trust Amendment and the Native Laws Amendment Acts, are the precursors of the attack on the Courts and the threatened and thrice-attempted abrogation of the Constitution.

This is apartheid! As it is! Affecting every section of the people with injustice, rightlessness, poverty.

We are moving towards a Dark Age, filled with the threat of fearful racial strife and bloody clashes from which few South Africans of any colour can hope to emerge unscathed.

It is time to take up the fight against it, before the sands run out. It is time for active vigorous protest and opposition to every new encroachment of tyranny and injustice, to every new act of apartheid.

Every South African who hates and fears the dark future which the Nationalists are producing in our country, must seek now to find the means to fight for his survival before it is too late. He must seek out unity, organised unity with those who think, like him, that the good things that have been built in this land are worth preserving.

All battles, it is true, are not immediately victorious. But even lost battles in a good, inspiring cause, encourage others to turn and fight. The army which starts off in a good fight may be small. But in battle it will win supporters who will join in the next battle, and the next, and the next, growing in strength and in numbers, till certainly the war will be won.

If only men have the courage to strike out for the right!

If you have been interested in this pamphlet, write for more information about the South African Congress of Democrats.

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