Health - Crognan Comm. Cliric 31/3/43

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Dr. a. B. Xuna

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ART OF MAKING CRIMINALS

By DR. A. B. XUMA

(President-General, African National Congress)



IN democratic countries all mem-bers of the State expect to be, and, I believe, ought to be, governed by the same laws. Government is "by the people and for the people," meaning all the people irrespective of race, creed or colour. The function of any government, except under a dictatorship, is to guard and protect the interests as well as to provide for the welfare of all its members, especially the weaker and poorer sections who, for the time being and for one reason or another, are unable to provide the essential services for themselves. The powers of the democratic State should be used to promote the welfare of the community as a whole and not to show preferential treatment for one section at the expense of the interests of other sections.

However, here in sunny South Africa, we find a strong white minority holding the reins of government and, because they believe it to be necessary for the maintenance of their position, we find them legislating to the disadvantage of the other sections, especially the African section. For the latter section they have passed a series of restrictive and discriminating laws: they have framed strict and harassing regulations and, from time to time, as out of a blue sky, they have proclaimed in gazettes extraordinaires new restrictions and limitations under which the "Native" must live and which he must obey. The fundamental spirit and philosophy of this legislation is that the "Native" must not roam about seeking salvation and improvement of his lot through channels that are not approved by the Government specially for him. The Native must be controlled without regard to the way in which the measures of control affect his well-being and future. Controlled and kept in his place, he must be.

Under these acts, regulations and proclamations the "Native's" activities are prescribed and proscribed, and for him to do anything to the contrary, like other sections of the community, is to commit an offence punishable by a fine or imprisonment. Hence, the non-European has more crimes and offences to commit than Europeans. No wonder the finest, the most expensive and the largest government buildings where there are large "Native" populations are police stations, magistrates' courts and gaols. There is a harvest to be reaped, and the police need only

make a little effort to gather this harvest. With the fast pick-up vans they net their victims in haste and sort them out at police stations at leisure.

LAWS AND CRIME

It will, no doubt, interest my readers to know how these laws play an important rôle in the criminalisation of the Native. Here are some of the statistics extracted from the official year book of the Union of South Africa for 1939 and 1940 respectively. In 1938, the total number of offenders convicted was 114.870 Europeans and 588,329 non-Europeans respectively. Of the total convictions among non-Europeans, 328,638 were Africans convicted under special offences for Natives only. In 1939, under the same heading we find the convictions to have been 108,631 Europeans and 663,079 non-Europeans. Of the latter we find that 358,643 were Africans convicted for these special offences.

The following table gives an analysis of the offences committed and the number convicted during the years under review:—

	Convictions.		
	Year: 1938	Year: 1939	
Drunkenness	34,653	39,475	
Illegal possession of			
Native liquor		77,582	
Location Regulations	20,243	20,635	
Masters and Servants			
Act	18,370	18,356	
Native Pass Laws	87,566	101,309	
Native Labour Regula-			
tions	20,992	25,066	

Native Taxation Natives (Urban Areas)	55,059	48,668
Act Trespass	7,501 18,555	7,517 20,037
Total	328,638	358,643

It is desirable here to point out that:—

- (1) We have included the number of convictions for drunkenness in this table not only because the restrictions imposed upon the African under the Liquor Act encourage the brewing of vile concoctions in spite of beer halls, but because the administration of the provisions of the Act seems calculated to exploit the African financially and spiritually.
- (2) Through these discriminating laws our legislators share the responsibility for the conviction of 687,281 or over half-a-million people in two years. It should be conceded, therefore, by all fairminded and intelligent people that these laws are possibly the finest factories of crime ever built by any Christian and democratic nation.

RESTRICTIONS

These laws restrict the movement of the African, limit his bargaining powers, doom him as a racial group to unskilled employment and to the lowest wage levels. He may not show individuality, personality and initiative according to his ability beyond the limited sphere outlined for him by our Native legislation. He must

remain a "Native," act like a "Native" and think like a "Native," at least outwardly, to satisfy the rulers.

These laws also influence race attitudes unfavourably and strain race relations between White and Black. They lay bare the policy of racial and colour exploitation, causing Africans to look upon most European fellow-countrymen as their oppressors and eternal enemies. They make him, the African, lose confidence in the justice of his White rulers in South Africa. Further, these laws tend to fan racial prejudices in their enforcement and they lead to miscarriages of justice in their administration. They disregard, too, the human aspect in dealing with "Native" suspects and accused and even "Native" prisoners.

The police come into frequent and unfortunate contact with Africans in the enforcement of these laws. The police have a hundred-and-one opportunities under these regulations to harass and embarrass any African. Magistrates and prosecutors sometimes deal with hundreds of cases a day as a result. No wonder that some have lost their tempers and air their prejudices. Rushed for time, they have no opportunity to study all the aspects of each case in order to find mitigating circumstances. Mass trials tend to become a temptation with a consequent miscarriage of justice, especially in some of our lower courts.

In the words of Dr. F. E. T. Krause, "The African is all the time a prisoner in the land of his birth, although he might not be confined within prison walls."

Finally, we have here laws that are both humiliating and demoralising to all Africans, laws which leave them with a sense of despair and frustration. They tend to breed and develop a callous, contemptuous and inhuman attitude in some of their administrators towards Africans, and as I have stated elsewhere, they are "politically undemocratic, morally un-Christian, administratively unjust and unfair," disregarding human decency in other human beings.

For the sake of goodwill, which is the source of strength for the advancement of South Africa as a whole, all restrictive and discriminating legislation such as I have referred to in this article must be scrapped so that South Africa might be honest to her ideals of "Christianity, Democracy and human decency" without criminalising other human beings.



ABX. 430331f

PATHWAYS TO ILL-WILL.

BY

und at le

DR. A. B. XUMA,

PRESIDENT-GENERAL.

AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

In democratic countries all members of the State expect to be and ought to be governed under and by the same laws. Government is "by the people and for the people" meaning all the people irrespective of race, creed or colour. The function of any Government except under a dictatorship or fascism is to guard and protect the interests as well as to provide for the welfare of all its members especially the weaker and poorer sections who for the time being and for one reason or another are unable to provide the essential services for themselves. The powers of the democratic state should be used to promote the welfare of the community as a whole and not to show preferential treatment for one section at the expense of the interests of other sections.

However, here in sunny South Africa we find a strong white minority holding the reins of government, and, because they fancy it to be necessary for the maintenance of their dominant position legislating to the disadvantage of the other sections, especially the African section. For the latter section they have passed a series of restrictive and discriminating laws, framed strict and harassing regulations under them and from time to time, as out of a blue sky, proclaim in gazettes extraordinaire new restrictions and limitation under which the "native"must live and which he must obey. The fundamental spirit and philosophy of this legislation is that the "native must not roam about seeking salvation and improvement of his lot through channels that are not approved by the government specially for him. The native must be controlled without regard to how the measures of control affect his well-being and future. Controlled and kept in his place, he must be.

Under these Acts, regulations, and proclamations the "Mative's" activities are prescribed and proscribed and for him to do anything to the contrary like other sections of the community is to commit an offence punishable by a fine or imprisonment. Hence the African has more crimes and offences to commit than Europeans, Indians and Coloureds. No wonder the finest, the most expensive and the largest government buildings where there are large native populations are police stations, Magistrates Courts, and gaols. There is a harvest to be reaped and the police need only make little effort to gather this harvest. With the fast pick-up vans he nets his victims in haste and sorts them out at police stations at leisure.

It will, no doubt, interest my readers to know how actually these laws play an important role in the criminalization of the Native.

Here are some of the statistics extracted from the "Official Year Book of the Union of South Africa 1939 and 1940" respectively. In 1938 the predominant offences based on the total number of Europeans and Non-Europeans convicted in that year were 114,870 Europeans and 588,329 Non-Europeans respectively. Of the total convictions among Non-Europeans 328,638 were Africans convicted under special offences for natives only. In 1939, under the same heading we find the convictions to have been 108,631 Europeans and 663,079 Non-Europeans. Of the latter we find that 358,643 were Africans convicted for these special offences not crimes as the following table gives an analysis of the offences committed and the number convicted during the years under review as follows:-

CONVICTIONS

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	101,309
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	48,668
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	20,037
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It is desirable here to point out that

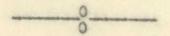
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These laws restrict the movement of the African, limit his bargaining powers, doom him as a racial group to unskilled employment and lowest levels of wages. He may not show individuality, personality and initiative according to his ability beyond the limited sphere outlined for him by our native legislation. He must remain a 'native' act like a 'native' and think like a 'native' at least outwardly to satisfy the rulers. In short, he must obey authority and bow to force.

Before ending this short article, let me mention the effects of these laws in other directions. They influence race attitudes unfavour ably and strain race relations between white and black. They lay bare the policy of racial and colour exploitation causing Africans to look upon most European fellow-countrymen as their oppressors and eternal enemies. They make him, the African, lose confidence in the justice of his white rulers in South Africa. Further, these laws tend to fan racial prejudices in their enforcement and lead to miscarriage of justice in their administration and disregard of the human aspect in dealing with 'native' suspects and accused and even 'native' prisoners. The police come into frequent and unfortunate contacts with Africans in their enforcement. The police have a hundred and one excuses under these regulations to harass and embarrass any African. Magistrates and Presecutors sometimes deal with hundreds of cases a day as a result. No wonder that some have lost their tempers and air their prejudices. Rushed for time, they have no time to study all aspects of each case to find mitigating circumstances. Mass trials tend to be the temptation with consequent miscarriage of justice, especially in some of our lower courts. In the words of Dr. F.E.T.Krause "The African is all the time a prisoner in the land of his birth, although he might not be confined within prison walls."

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Pathways to ill-will In democratic Countries all members of the State expect to be and ought to be governed under and fourment is by the people wearing all the people wearing of race, creed or colour I be Junction of any government except under a dictatorship or foscism is to grand and protect the interests as well as to movide for the welfare of all its members especially The meaker and prover sections who for the line being and Jon one reason or another are unable to provide the essential services for themselves

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Note 2.2 P. (2) three quarters of a million mould be 750,000 Persons with a mathematical mind will consider this a nather mide discrepancy from 358,000 and it mee be regarded as exaggeration The next to last paragraph muld in my opinion be strengthened in its effect if the girst sentence companing the africano Josita to Slavery me omitted and the quotation from Judge Krause joined directly to the previous Joseph. 6, he refrence to slaving tendo to direct the white readers mind to Julie controversy over the comparison while the quotation from So great an authority and using a more obvious figure of speech has vesistable

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