





## The Nats want to take it away from her

(By Tennyson Makiwane)

**B**BROAD smiles beamed from the children as they walked away clinging tightly to their purchases—a pint of milk in a container, held closely against the body and balanced on the head by the girls. The slices of bread and peanut butter seemed even thicker in their little hands.

Every morning they stand squeezed against one another in the queues of the African children's feeding schemes. One or two of the younger kids look shy, but expectation glitters from their eyes. For the majority, though, this is routine. As they come forward they hand over their pennies and receive their rations.

Last year the Feeding Scheme fed 5,000 children; this year it is trying to feed 12,000.

### Contrast

In European, Coloured and Indian schools children receive a subsidy of 4d. a day in the Transvaal and 2½d. a day in the Cape and the Free State for school feeding. But African children, the poorest and worst nourished get only 1 1/5d. a day, and this State grant is fast vanishing. Dr. Verwoerd by his "Books or Bread" choice placed before the Bantu School Boards seeks to kill the feeding scheme in the African schools and to grab the bread from the mouths of the children.

Faced with this devil's choice of money on school feeding or expanded schools to take in more children, many of the School Boards have had to plump for more education. Parents haven't really been consulted, but the Boards have been quick to feel

the pressure from the authorities who had put this evil set of alternatives before them and made it clear what decision they want!

Among the School Boards not forced to abandon their school feeding schemes are those in the Western Areas of Johannesburg, for in this area, doomed by the giant removal schemes, no new school buildings can be planned.

South Africa's African population is spoon-fed, complained a Pretoria Professor of Commerce, Money and Banking, Professor H. W. J. Wijnholds. "They expect houses, food, medical attention and education without having to make any sacrifices to attain these things," he said.

A spoon or two of food from the Government for the most neglected children in our country would not be a bad thing at all, Professor! Why justify the feeding of the children of the well-to-do (for ALL European schools receive school feeding grants) at the expense of the poor?

### A Libel

And the libel that Africans do nothing for themselves is contradicted by the evidence all around us, not least by the effort put in by parents to pay for their children's rations from the voluntary feeding scheme and the monthly contributions they make to keep many little schools going.

Malnutrition and deficiency diseases are a serious problem among the African children but Prof. Wijnholds is not one to worry about that. The State should stop large-scale expenditure on African children, he said. Only in that way would Africans be forced to reduce the size of their families.

Is there a word polite enough for print to describe such callousness?

# THE DEAD-END KIDS OF HANOVER STREET

(By Alex la Guma)

**F**ROM Castle Bridge to Sheppard Street, Hanover Street runs through the heart of District Six, and along it one can feel the pulse-beats of society. It is the main artery of the local world of haves and have-nots, the prosperous and the poor, the struggling and the idle, the weak and the strong. Its colour is in the bright enamel signs, the neon lights, the shop-fronts, the littered gutters and draped washing. Pepsi Cola. Commando Cigarettes. Sale Now On. Its life blood is the hawkers bawling their wares above the blare of jazz from the music shops: "Aaatappels, ja. Uiwe, ja"; ragged youngsters leaping on and off the speeding trackless-trams with the agility of monkeys; harassed mothers getting in the groceries; shop assistants; The Durango Kids of 1956; and the knots of loungers under the balconies and in the doorways leading up to dim and mysterious rooms above the rows of shops and cafes.

People have come to regard these loungers with suspicion, and many make a detour when coming within sight of them. The brass-buttoned caps, the studded belts and the dangling shirt-tails are often identified with battle, murder and sudden death.

But often they have been judged without being tried.

### WE WANT TO WORK

In the shadow of a veranda a group of young men kicked their heels and watched life pass by. "People will see our picture in the paper and say, 'There are some more skollies'," one of them told me. "They say we don't want to work. Everybody wants to work. Everybody wants to earn a living. We want to work, too."

Gasant Fredricks, 22, said: "I've got a wife and child.

They've got to eat, and I've been unemployed for nine months already. I'm tired of hanging around the Labour Department. I might as well hang around here."

On another part of the street a bunch of hard-faced youths, dressed in new sweat-shirts and wide-brimmed hats, broke up as I approached. "O's is camera shy, pal," one of them grinned as they drifted into a nearby "Social Club."

Up and down the street there are little knots of them, chatting idly, chaffing the girls walking by. "Ek sê, bokkie, hoe is't dan?" They play cards on the pavement or debate the merits of a popular movie star, usually one of the screen toughs. Humphrey Bogart, Burt Lancaster.

In the opinion of a doctor who practises in Hanover Street: "The parents, in order to try to live at a decent level, inevitably get into debt. As a result the mother has got to go out to work. The child is left with another woman who probably has problems of her own, or a number of other children to care for, so that she is unable to handle all of them properly. They get no proper care. There is no control. The first words the children learn are curses. They are allowed to wander about in surroundings of vice, squalor, and crime. Parental affection and care is virtually non-existent. The children drift into a world that holds no future except degradation."

### A STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE

Most of these boys have had little or no education. From childhood they must augment the family income as newsboys and hawkers. The whole of life becomes a struggle to survive by any means whatsoever. But they are nevertheless aware of some

of the causes of their plight.

The police are Number One Enemies to them. Many of them have undergone the beatings in the cells. They have a bitter disregard for anybody with a white skin, the badge of privilege and good jobs, lots of money and leisure. They dislike the "stiffies" among their own people who condemn them and look upon them as the dregs of society.

Many of them have talent. On the balcony of a tenement a group of boys went through an impromptu jam-session with guitar, bass and maracas that would make any jazz expert wonder. Lady Be Good. The Sheik of Araby. But the only outlet for their talent is through the coon carnival at the beginning of each year, or at contests held at local cinemas.

### WAITING

They hang around all day, waiting for something to turn up. Hanging around and waiting. Perhaps the police will pick up some of them for gambling on the pavements or for vagrancy, and they will go to jail. After that comes the swift ride down the dark tunnel to the underworld, the gangs, the sharpened kitchen knives, the bicycle chains. Perhaps some of them will get work, but it will be just another dead-end job. The swift ride may be delayed.

Hanging around and waiting. Slums, disease, unemployment, lack of education, the terrible weight of the colour-bar which withholds the finer things of life—all help to grind them down until many of them become beasts of prey roaming an unfriendly jungle.

As one of them put it to me: "Die country het white supremacy, maar hulle het nie jobs nie."

## Love and marriage in today's Hungary

**T**HE marriage rate—usually a good sign of settled conditions—is so high in Hungary that the proportion of single people in the 10-million population is the lowest since 1900.



Mrs. Geza Ziffer, one of the registrars at Budapest Central Register Office.

Even romantic Frenchmen are left behind by their Hungarian counterparts. With 70 per cent of the men in Hungary married, this is claimed by the Central Statistics Office to be 10 per cent higher than in France. And the rate is also bigger than in Sweden, Switzerland and Austria, who each have 60 per cent of their male population married.

Since the 1949 population census the number of marriages has steadily increased. In recent years an average of 100,000 marriages have been taking place, but last year the record number of 103,020 weddings were celebrated. This is a 38 per cent leap over the 1938 figure.

As the marriage rate has gone up, down has come the average marrying age of both men and women. While in 1938 only 60 per cent of men between 25-29 were married, the 1955 figure rose to 71 per cent.

And the proportion of girls between 20-24 saying "I do" each year has climbed in the same period from 48 in every 100 to 63.

But the number of men and women over the age of 40 get-

ting married has also gone up and doubled the 1938 figure. Remarriages after divorce or widows and widowers marrying again account for most of the increase.

Today more than 71 out of each 100 women married have jobs. The pre-war figure was 31 in every 100.

But alongside the increase in marriages, the divorce rate has increased more than one and a half times since 1938—with the citizens of the capital of Budapest leading the way. The 1955 rate was 6 divorces per thousand marriages, with the number in Budapest three times as many as elsewhere in the country.

Says Mr. Egon Szabady of the Central Statistics Office: "The rising divorce figures are mainly due to young divorces: 50 per cent more divorces than the average happen to men and women between the ages of 20-24."

It is not easy to obtain a divorce in Hungary, as every attempt is made by experienced social workers to get couples to agree to iron out their difficulties and start married life again.

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