

"I TASTED A NEW WORLD AND WON CONFIDENCE FOR OUR FUTURE"

Says Dora Tamana, African Woman Leader on her return home from overseas

FROM the hot, sandy, unhealthy and poverty-stricken pondokkie land of Blouvillei (one of Cape Town's worst shack areas) by air to London, Berlin, Peking, Moscow and back to Blouvillei now in winter time an even more pitiful conglomeration of corrugated iron shanties perched precariously on the edge of swamps, the residue of the rains.

This, in brief, has over the last seven months been the adventure of a South African mother and grandmother, 54-year-old Mrs. Dora Tamana, African National Congress women's leader of Blouvillei and acting general secretary of the Federation of S.A. Women.

From a world outside, where a woman is a person and respected for what she is, no matter the colour of her skin, to a country where a black skin automatically means oppression to the very people who are born in it.

CONFIDENCE IN FUTURE

"I tasted a new world and a new heaven, but I'm glad to be back—this is my home, and I have seen many things to give me added confidence in the future of our country and our people," Mrs. Tamana told me when I found her resting in her home in Blouvillei a few days after her return.

It was in London that Dora Tamana and Lilian Ngoyi (who travelled with her) first experienced the thrill of international friendship.

"A few days after our arrival, we met the committee of the National Assembly of Women in London. They greeted us and kissed us, made tea for us and asked us to tell them about South Africa and our women's organisations there. We afterwards had meetings with other women's organisations, and always people were very friendly, very interested and offered to help."

Early in March, Dora and Lilian left for Berlin, where they were the guests of the Women's International Democratic Federation. "There we saw factories, creches, kindergartens, clinics, homes for the aged, orphanages, workers' homes."

ONE OF SPEAKERS

At the celebrations of International Women's Day in Berlin, Dora was one of the speakers. From

Berlin straight to China—a four-day trip by air—with a group of British delegates.

Dora and Lilian stayed at the Peking Hotel for Peace Guests—"where they gave us wonderful attention"—and from Peking travelled to the four provinces of China.

In London and Berlin Dora had not been feeling too well. In Peking she was given a thorough examination, and throughout her trip, special treatment because of her health.

"Wherever we went, a doctor was there to meet us. Our hosts always notified the next place of call that one of the guests was not well. They could not have looked after me better. In Tientsen, the doctor forbade me to go further, and I was left behind with an interpreter to help attend to my needs. After seven days in Tientsen hospital, back to Peking."

In spite of ill-health, Dora managed to see quite a lot of China—hospitals, clinics, villages, co-operatives, prisons, palaces, primary schools, magistrate courts.

"A prison in China is not like the prison I know here. In China a prison is a place to educate the people. The prisoners sleep on beds between clean sheets."

Dora also found the treatment of her health an education in itself. "It was preventative treatment. They stopped me from getting more ill."

"The aims of our Women's Federation is to get creches for our children, hospitals and clinics for our people. My experience of hospitals and doctors overseas gave me a clearer picture of what we are working for. I saw for myself how it should be—that there should be doctors to look after you before you get so ill that you can't do anything more about it."

About the people of China? "The Chinese are a wonderful people. It was as though they were all one, all united."

"Wherever I went, in the clinic, in the hospitals, in court, I saw women taking part. They are doctors, nurses, workers, the same as men. There was no such thing before Liberation. I saw women drive enormous tractors, harvesting and ploughing machines. I also saw women making these machines."

CHINESE ARE NON-EUROPEANS

"I know that the Chinese are a Non-European people. That gave me more confidence that we Non-Europeans here in South Africa can fight for our rights and get them."

One of the centres that left a very strong impression was a maternity home where Mrs. Tamana for the first time saw and heard about painless childbirth. "This home is not a special place reserved for a few lucky people. It is available to all. It is too wonderful. One woman told us she felt no pain at all. In no time her baby was born. Another had labour pains for about half an hour—and that was considered a lot. We women usually suffer for a day, a day and a half."

Mrs. Tamana knows all about the pains of childbirth and child-rearing. A mother of 12 children, she saw six die in infancy. "My children died of starvation in the Transkei," she told me. "Starvation, tuberculosis and meningitis. I had to leave my baby of a month old with my ten-year-old sister and go out and work for 1/6 a day. So in 1930 we came to

Charged With Teaching

JOHANNESBURG.

The case in which Mrs. Margaret Ntambo of Moroka is being charged under the Bantu Education Act of running an unregistered school has been postponed in the Fordsburg Native Commissioner's Court to September 8.

Last week when the case opened, an inspector of the Bantu Education Division of the N.A.D. gave evidence that Mrs. Ntambo had not applied to the Department for the registration of the groups of children she was organising.

Asked what he considered a school was, the inspector, Mr. MacDonald said that he did not consider that a creche or nursery school or any group of small children under the age of seven years would fall within the definition of a school.

The case is proceeding. The case in which Mr. Bennet Molewa is being charged under the Bantu Education Act will also be heard in September.

African Mothers Defend Their Children

JOHANNESBURG.

It is not the Minister of Native Affairs but we, the mothers, who should decide what type of education our children should have, says a call by the African National Congress Women's League of the Transvaal for a special conference of all women in the Congress.

The conference will be held on September 11 at 9.30 a.m. at 139 Anderson Street.

African mothers are prepared to fight to the last in defence of their children's education, says the statement issued by Miss Elizabeth Motingoe, the acting secretary of the women's league. The women of the A.N.C. are prepared to march shoulder to shoulder with their sisters of all races in this country in order to stop South Africa from becoming a police State.

Suppression Act Charges Withdrawn

JOHANNESBURG.

CHARGES under the Suppression of Communism Act against Messrs. A. Kathrada, Paul Joseph and M. Thandray have finally lapsed.

The three were arrested on January 13 this year after a police raid on the offices of the Indian Congress. Kathrada and Thandray were charged with participation in the work of an organisation from which they were banned and attending a gathering, and Joseph on the second count alone.

Exception was taken by the defence to the charge of attending a gathering, but this objection was disallowed in the Regional Court. In May Kathrada made application in the Supreme Court for the charge to be set aside on the grounds that it disclosed no offence. Before the matter came to court the Attorney-General withdrew the gathering charge.

NO PROSPECT OF SUCCESS

In the Regional Court when Kathrada appeared on the charge of participating in the work of an or-

ganisation from which he was banned the crown led evidence by Special Branch detectives that Kathrada was found in the Congress office, seated at a desk with certain publications before him. After cross-examination of the crown witnesses by Mr. V. C. Berrange for the defence, and at the close of the crown case, the prosecutor said he saw no reasonable prospect of success in this case and was therefore abandoning it.

Agreeing with his decision, the Magistrate said in summing up, "I don't know what your religious teachings say. But Christ in the Bible said one must not only not do evil, but one must abstain from all appearance of doing evil." He offered this advice to Kathrada.

At the abandonment of the case against Kathrada, the charge against Thandray was withdrawn.



Cape Town, because our children were dying in the Transkei. . . ."

But soon she was talking of China again: "The people of China were very friendly. Wherever we went they greeted us with flowers and embraced us. One day an old peasant came up to talk to us. He was so happy, he could not sit still. 'Because of Mao Tse-tung we are free today,' he told us. 'I am old, but I feel young.'"

STOP AT MONGOLIA

Leaving China, there was a short stop at Mongolia. Before the liberation of Mongolia, about 13 years ago, there was not a single woman who could read or write there. Today they are doctors, nurses, factory workers.

From Mongolia to Moscow, a beautiful city with wide streets. Here Dora was 15 days in hospital. "I was very sorry to be laid

CHESS NEEDS BLACK AND WHITE MEN

JOHANNESBURG.

DURING the contest in which the visiting chess master Dr. Euwe, took part in Johannesburg last week, seven young Non-European chess enthusiasts, members of the Transvaal Indian Youth Congress and the S.A. Coloured People's Organisation, interviewed Dr. Euwe and handed him an open letter.

The interview took place in the foyer of the Johannesburg Public Library. The seven youths, being Non-Europeans, were debarred from watching the contest.

The letter handed to Dr. Euwe expressed deep disappointment "at not being able to watch you play, owing to the colour of our skins."

The letter went on to say that the game of chess originated in North West India in the fifth century, and has throughout history been played by people of all nationalities, colours and creeds. "We are sure, that in your wide experience you have played and enjoyed games with persons of all colours."

The letter concluded by wishing Dr. Euwe success in his career and expressing the hope that in the event of another visit by him to South Africa he would be able to play with all people, regardless of colour.

up and the Soviet people were also very sorry that their guest could not see much of their country. But we did visit the Kremlin and joined the long queue and saw the leaders Lenin and Stalin lying so peacefully."

Then to Berlin, where Dora spent another 21 days in hospital, back to London, and home. Her greatest sorrow was that because of ill-health she missed the Mothers' Congress in Lausanne.

Mrs. Tamana has a number of messages for the people of South Africa:

"The first and most important message is that the people of South Africa must come together. Only if we unite and join our organisations, can we fight for our rights and win."

SO MANY THINGS

"We have so many things to fight for! Our old people must not just die in poverty and misery. In the countries I visited there was no more sorrow of the old people."

"Then I have a special message for our youth: In other countries the youth are no longer like our young people. In South Africa a young man has to sacrifice and work hard to pay for a wife. In the countries I visited they don't pay for their wives any more. People can't sell their children any more. They don't need to do so either. The Government looks after the father, the mother, and after the children. Girls don't have to wait until a man has money to "buy" them. If they love, they marry and have a good life too."

"AND FINALLY, FROM ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD I VISITED I BRING THIS MESSAGE TO MY PEOPLE: 'WE HAVE MILLIONS OF FRIENDS OVERSEAS WHO ARE WITH US, WHO UNDERSTAND OUR STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM AND WHO ARE ON OUR SIDE.'"

NAOMI SHAPIRO.

LABOUR BUREAU TRICKS AFRICANS

(Continued from page 1)

Township Labour Bureau officer over.

Why were we dressing these people in sacks, he asked us? We made an explanation, but he insisted that he didn't consider it "cricket" to take pictures of men wearing sacks!

Later, before the Native Commissioner, the Labour Officer explained that his Bureau handled at least 100 Africans from the township a day, offering them work. Only the day before 16 had been sent to work on farms, but three had already returned to the Township. The trouble was, he said, that these men did not really want to work!

As for Mr. X of Devon, he was a very big farmer in that district, and got a great deal of his labour from the Bureau in the Township, said the Labour officer.

The people in the Township well know that more farmers than one get regular supplies of labour from the Township's bureau. The hunt for Africans under the pass laws goes on apace, and twice a week lorries from the platteland draw up outside the offices of the Labour Bureau and groups of Africans are ushered aboard.

Then they disappear into the countryside, some to return after only a short period when they desert, others after some months.

In its issue of June 23, New Age told the story of Mr. M—who was shipped off to work on a farm in the Springs district although he had in his possession a legal permit to seek work. He told of how during his detention by the police he was presented with an ultimatum to accept work on a farm or be sent to the Leeuwkop Farm Colony.

TO HOW MANY PEOPLE IN THE TOWNSHIP IS THIS SAME ULTIMATUM PUT?

Collection Number: AG2887

Collection Name: Publications, New Age, 1954-1962

PUBLISHER:

Publisher: Historical Papers Research Archive, University of the Witwatersrand

Location: Johannesburg

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