

Race Studies, Guidance and Religious Instruction

A. Race Studies (mainly) and Guidance (brief reference)

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The syllabus for Race Studies (which is an unfortunate translation of "Volkekunde") states that this subject aims at making the pupil aware of, and interested in, people of other races both in his environment and in the country as a whole. Over the three years during which it is taught (Standards 6 to 8), it covers general topics such as the appearance and distribution of races in the world, in Africa and in the Union, the history of contact between races in South Africa and the present-day administration and control of non-whites; and it includes more specific studies of the racial groups constituting the Union's population. The first two years are devoted almost entirely to the past, and it is not until Standard 8 that present-day problems are handled.

As a means of making pupils aware of non-white South Africans as people and of giving them an appreciation of the value of cultural diversity and a corresponding tolerance of foreign ways of life, the syllabus has much to commend it. On the other hand, it has some serious defects, e.g. its emphasis on differences between groups, its neglect of the biological unity and common origin of all mankind and its playing down of the possibility of cultural change. And though its preamble insists on an objective presentation, some of its contents, e.g. the section on "The Traditional Standpoint with Respect to the Control and Administration of Non-Europeans (Historical)", imply that contentious issues are best avoided by the vigorous presentation of one side, i.e., the official one.

Here the Race Studies syllabus has much in common with the Guidance one, which has a recurring reference to "the legal and traditional South African point of view" on race relations, which is apparently one of the environmental conditions to which the pupil is to be adjusted. This has led some of the text-book writers to identify such a viewpoint with the one expressed in recent contentious legislation, such as the Suppression of Communism Act and the Industrial Conciliation Act.

How easy it is for these two syllabuses—Race Studies and Guidance—to be used for propagating a particular viewpoint, and thus betraying some of the fundamental values of Western civilization in regard to fairness and objectivity, is best illustrated by a few citations from some of the officially approved text-books (many more than these could be given) :-

1. "The Bantu Authorities Act of 1951, now accepted by many tribes, has honourably re-established the power of the chiefs".
2. In five pages, thirty-five references are made to the richness of Indians and only five to their poverty.
3. "One of the most important advantages that the Industrial Conciliation Act holds for the white worker is job reservation. Particularly during the Second World War the non-whites gradually forced the whites out of certain forms of employment".
4. One of the Guidance books advocates insuring with companies whose head offices are in South Africa rather than overseas, and reproduces, as an illustration, a cheque drawn on a local commercial bank.

In general/.....

In general, the existence and handling of these subjects give cause for alarm. It's all very well arguing that home influences can compensate for the bad foundations provided by syllabuses and the distorted superstructures created by school text-books. But both the tests given in the text-books and the general examination system, with their absurd emphasis on the uncritical, unimaginative disgorging of crammed material, put a premium on learning answers and "facts" that, in terms of the text-books, are "right".

What can be done? The defects in the syllabus and, in some measure, the text-books can be remedied by changes in emphasis introduced by a properly trained, conscientious teacher. Children can be told more about the common origin and basic uniformity of all men, of the value of variety, and of how civilization has always developed best at the crossroads of human migrations and represents the pooled contributions of all races, especially the brown men of the Near East and the yellow men of the Far East.

Our only hope lies with the teacher. As parents and citizens we must insist that teachers be properly trained for the subjects they teach; and we must support them when their integrity and personal morale are threatened by the soulless uniformity of departmental syllabuses or the facile generalizations and sinister distortions of approved text-books.

#### B. Religious Instruction (mainly in relation to the above)

by Winsome Munro, Organizing Secretary of the Christian Education Movement

There have been calls for completely secular education, but that they have not been sustained seems to indicate that the Judeo-Christian tradition is accepted as part of the child's heritage, without which his education would not be complete.

The issue at present is not whether, but what kind of, Religious Instruction should be provided, and what its implications are. The basic principle maintained here is that full freedom of religion and conscience is essential.

The 1948 C.N.E. statement advocated conformity with D.R.C. doctrines for the Afrikaans and that a teacher must be a person "of Christian life and world view without which he is to us nothing less than the most deadly danger." Compare this with the present primary school Religious Instruction syllabus (dated 1948) which states: "If he [the teacher] is indifferent or unbelieving he will not be able to exert any good influence. On the contrary his influence will be harmful." (Afrikaans version). This hardly assists the subject, for it makes it more difficult for the teacher who dissents to withdraw, as provided for in the Transvaal Education Ordinance. There is no clear statement safeguarding the teacher against religious or political discrimination, nor providing for minority groups to claim alternate instruction if they wish (except in the case of Christian minorities in mainly non-Christian schools), though there is the right of withdrawal.

Though Christianity is in a majority and privileged position, there are respects in which Christian conscience along with Jewish and humanist conscience is being overlooked. I refer to the provisions in the compulsory subjects of Race Studies and Guidance for the teaching of the "traditional" standpoint on race relations. Prominent Christian bodies have asked with little result for this to be remedied in Guidance.

The position is therefore that, while a Christian basis for education is written into the Ordinance, aspects of the

curriculum/.....

curriculum conflict with it. Those who maintain that God has ordained separate races and cultures and so separation in all spheres "are fighting in the last ditches and will have to capitulate soon" according to Professor B.B. Keet in Delayed Action. Yet this view has recently gained a strong foothold in Transvaal education. It was expounded at a departmental course for Guidance teachers in 1958 and appears in text-books, e.g. an Afrikaans one reads that, while whites have inter-married with non-whites in other countries, "in South Africa this did not happen.....Our forefathers believed and we still believe today that God Himself created the distinction between races". Contact therefore does not occur and apartheid measures are justified.

Race Studies for Std. VIII (Voortrekkerpers) presents the history of race clashes as religious in origin. "Their [i.e., the whites'] way of life or culture was different from those of the non-white groups.....Their Christian view of life, a barrier to any mixing with heathen races, preserved their existence as a white race....." "In course of time these differences in way of life, religion and concepts were to lead to clashes."

Race Studies can promote racial understanding, but it can also instill non-acceptance, contempt and actual hate, e.g. Race Studies for Std. VIII (Nasionale Pers) contains pictures of racial clashes and a highly coloured account of mass slaughter (with a picture of skeleton remains) by African tribes, before the European arrived on the scene as "the banisher of the night".

In the name of consistency a plea is made here that education should respect not merely the literal words of Scripture (so unnecessarily excluding all reference to evolution) but that it should be in accord with its spirit, so for instance penetrating beneath the externals of the early chapters of Genesis to the insight that human beings have a common origin and nature which is more fundamental than any differences.

#### Text-books to consult

Voorligting vir Std VI	}	(Voortrekkerpers)
Voorligting vir Std VII		
Race Studies for Std VI	}	(In two series, Voortrekkerpers and Nasionale Pers)
Race Studies for Std VII		
Race Studies for Std VIII		

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SECTION 3 - MATHEMATICS & SCIENCE

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Chairman: Professor N. Gourlay

Speaker:  
Professor A.E.H. Bleksley

The problem of science teaching in our time arises from the overwhelming surge of scientific and technical advance in the last fifty years. In Britain it has been authoritatively stated that the present rate of production of qualified scientists must be doubled within the next ten years if the growing demands of industry and teaching are to be met. In the United States it is claimed that the position is even more urgent, and all the authorities appear to agree that if the development of industry in South Africa is not to be seriously handicapped by shortage of trained personnel, we too must greatly increase our rate of production of scientists and engineers.

The key figure in this entire process is the teacher of science and mathematics in the high school. If we are to maintain our standing as the leading industrial and scientific nation on the continent of Africa, and if we are to bridge the growing gap between what Sir Charles Snow has called the "two cultures" of science and the humanities, the process must begin in the high schools. It is there that the foundations are laid on which the future scientist will be built, and it is there that the non-scientist will receive that understanding of the aims, the methods and the potential of science without which he will remain uneducated in the modern world.

Among the problems which society will have to solve are these: the encouragement of at least an adequate proportion of our best scientific minds to go into teaching, particularly by financial inducements; the reduction of the numbers of pupils in a class, especially in mathematics, the foundation of all science; the provision of adequate laboratory facilities in schools; the training, by way of refresher courses, of teachers already engaged in teaching science and mathematics, in order to revitalise their own interest in their subject; the study of new techniques of science teaching and of methods of identifying scientific talent wherever it occurs. These are matters which deserve the attention, not only of departments of education, but also of industry and commerce and indeed of the entire community.

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#### SECTION 4 - LANGUAGE AS A TOOL

Chairman: Dr Knowles-Williams

Speaker: Brian Rose

Despite all men having a mother-tongue, all men have some command of a second language which is their professional jargon. The more highly trained a man is, the more likely is it that his jargon will be unintelligible to men in other professions.

The tool of language has two uses - to inform and to persuade. Its second function is used not only by the Churchman, but also by the politician, the publicist and the advertiser. Is it not a good thing for young people to have training in separating the emotional and referential components of language, and learning to analyse (and so to resist) emotional hoaxes in words when they encounter them?

Emotional language is not dangerous, but the emotional misuse of language is, because it so often seems able to capture the mind when a rational use would fail. An objective analysis of advertisements gives countless examples of this danger.

Much of human behaviour is influenced by verbal behaviour; more especially by how a thing is said. The manipulation of these vague abstract emotional words is probably the most important matter in world mental health in our times. Its effects range from an altercation between husband and wife to a breaking of a Summit talk by international leaders.

The task of any educational system in a civilised community is to equip the young so that they are sensitive and receptive to communications from others. But civilization rests almost entirely on the advance of the written word. It is in this field that there is a major breakdown in our schools (1st year university failure rates: 34% fail History; 33% fail Latin; 33% fail geography; 60% fail English).

The main reason is the burden on a teacher of English at a school; a typical teaching load is 6 different classes, with a total of say 30 periods a week. This means that the teacher will be responsible for over 200 children. To mark properly an essay a week from each child will occupy him for 42 hours alone. But each essay should be followed by a period of private discussion with each pupil, or the writing of essays becomes useless and barren ritual. To teach English properly, therefore, is a mechanical impossibility. As a result our children are already in danger of suffering from a sort of pernicious anaemia of our "know-how" in the humanities, the sciences and the technologies.

The price that parents pay for the staffing situation in schools is that their children are deprived of the use of their innate possibilities in reaching their fullest stature.

In our bilingual country, misunderstandings frequently occur because language is often regarded as an end rather than as a means to teach a second language, the teacher and children must have a strong desire to share in the thought and culture of the speakers of that language. The English speaking community must therefore not only protect its own heritage but use this language to extend the influence of a generous and integrative way of life.

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SECTION 4 - LANGUAGE AS A TOOL

Chairman: Dr Knowles-Williams

Speaker: Peter Becker

1. In the course of the history of peoples, man has invented tools (fashioned from materials available in the environment) for reaching goals, satisfying ambitions and assuring security. Of all the tools used by mankind, Language must undoubtedly rank as one of the most useful.
2. Language is a tool which fits the machinery of all societies. It is the one tool that never wears out, never breaks, never succumbs to the 'wear and tear' of human relationships.
3. Because of my long devotion to the study of the non-White peoples of Southern Africa, I shall slant most of what I have to say in the direction of Black-White relationships, and the rôle language should play in achieving race-harmony in multi-racial South African society.
4. I believe fervently that one of the foremost functions of language, this many-sided tool, is the development, maintenance and, if necessary, the repair of social relationships. I look upon this tool as a Key, a special instrument for unlocking the doors which separate people of different cultures.
5. Have we, White South Africans, made most effective use of this key?
6. Three centuries have passed since the White man first settled in South Africa, and, during this time we have neglected to learn the Black man's languages or even to probe the "mysteries" of his culture.
7. It is true that Bantu languages are complicated and 'foreign' to the White man's ear. But, provided they are studied by way of a 'direct approach', they are not as formidable as may be thought. (This I proved when, as a headmaster of a Johannesburg school, I conducted research in the teaching of the vernacular through the medium of what I called "Zulu without Tears".)
8. Language, a Key opening the way to race harmony has, in recent years, not been used to any considerable advantage in our European schools. I refer especially to the abolition of the Parallel-Medium School system - the nurse providing the soil for the cultivation of sound English-Afrikaans relationships.

RACE STUDIES FOR STD. VIII (TRANSVAAL)

Hudson, van Tonder, etc.

The whole tone of this book suggests a pious attempt to present the "traditional" - i.e. Nationalist point of view about racial relationships.

The very headings of the Chapters show this.

Ch. IV - The Administration of the Bantu and provisions made for them.

Ch. V - Ditto.

Ch. VI - Ditto

Chs. VII - Ditto  
& VIII

At all points the separateness of the various races is stressed, their separate traditions, separate cultures, separate residential areas, separate functions.

The basic thing about race is the common humanity of all humans. Little mention is made of this. The main aim of "Race Studies" is to show the differences between the various races, and, implicitly, the wisdom of the present Government's policy of keeping them quite separate.

The whole tone of the book, while disguised under a cloak of apparent objectivity, represents a bland acceptance of every form of racial discrimination. The "objectivity" is achieved chiefly by omission of any fact or comment which might arouse disapproval of present policy, or the mildest thought about its possible injustices.

One or two indications of typical defects follow.

C. T. GORDON.



RACE STUDIES FOR STD. VIII

Hudson, van Tonder, etc.

- p.5 ) Fish River "agreed upon" as boundary between v. Plettenberg and "the  
p.25 ) chiefs". The old, old story taken straight from textbooks of the  
Fowler and Smit level. Walker points out (p.116) that the arrangement  
was made with some petty chieftains. Even Theal (Vol.III, p.173 and 176)  
says they were petty chieftains. Marais, "Maynier and the 1st Boer  
Republic" doubts whether it affected the Fish River at all, and shows  
that v. Plettenberg arranged with a petty Xosa chieftain to regard the  
Bushman's River as the dividing line. At no stage was any binding  
agreement made with the major chiefs of the Xosa.
- p.6 "No lasting understanding was possible with the Bushmen, so the farmers  
fought them. By the end of the C.18th, the Bushmen resistance and  
danger had passed" .... i.e. they had been largely exterminated. Nothing  
is said of the deliberate extermination raids against the Bushmen. What  
proof is there of the first statement?
- p.7-8 "On behalf of his fellow-Trekkers, Piet Retief purchased from Dingaan  
the uninhabited territory as far as the Umzinkulu River" - a novel use  
of the word "purchased". "Uninhabited" is somewhat of an exaggerated  
statement. With a concealed population of about 100,000 would be more  
accurate.
- p.9 Trichardt's settlement in Zoutpansberg. Nothing said of fact that land  
was seized from the natives.
- p.9-12 Peace brought by the whites to the interior. Only the credit side is  
mentioned - the ending of inter-tribal warfare. Nothing is said of the  
process so feelingly described in De Kiewiet, the gradual extrusion of  
the native peoples from their ancestral lands and their inevitable  
reduction to the status of semi-feudal labourers. (De Kiewiet: "Economic  
and Social History of S.A.")
- p.18 "In many cases their (the Bantus) economic life differs little from that  
of the Europeans, except that, as a rule, they earn less -- One of those  
classic understatements in which our country specialises, e.g. a black  
miner earning £4 p.m. and a white one earning £80+ for much the same  
work.
- p.21 Survival of Bantu belief in witchcraft, etc. Nothing said of the  
Europeans who consult witchdoctors, or the survival until recent times  
of beliefs in witchcraft in Europe. (By no means completely dead yet).
- p.25ff Xosa cattle-thieving - No mention of white activities. (See Marais:  
Maynier, etc.)
- p.29 "The Voortrekkers ..... took no land from the Bantu, but acquired it by  
exchange, purchase, or by rendering certain services". Well! Well!  
(e.g. Natal by conquest, the Transvaal by conquest, half the arable land  
of Basutoland by conquest. This leaves little over for the processes  
outlined above.)
- p.30 Note definition of Voortrekker policy of "segregation" as "aimed at  
establishing exclusive European areas, in which only those Bantu might  
live who were needed as labourers; and, on the other hand, at establish-  
ing exclusive Bantu areas". Nothing is said (p.31) of the complete  
failure of the Natal Republic's attempt at segregation. (See Walker  
p.229). Instead, the blame is put on the British.
- p.31 Shepstone - "who was to govern the Natal Bantu in a masterly manner".  
See De Kiewiet on Shepstone's complete failure to bring any significant  
degree of advancement to the Zulu. Grey's highly successful policy of  
civilising the Bantu by contact is nowhere referred to as "masterly".  
Indeed, it is contrasted unfavourably with Shepstone's (p.33).

- p.43 "The Department must promote Bantu welfare and protect the Bantu from exploiters and agitators" - a fine-sounding sentence. What it means in practice is well enough known.
- p.46 "In 1956 the Bunga. at the request of the Bantu, was dissolved and replaced by the new system of Bantu authorities" - Nothing said of reasons for ending "Bunga", or of complete absence of true elective principle in Bantu Authorities Act, or of power of Minister to veto and cancel all appointments. (See Survey of Race Relations in S.A. 1955-56, Muriel Horrell, p.59 ff). The act is highly praised (p.49) as "the best piece of legislation that has ever been provided for the Bantu", and as a revival of "Bantu democracy" - whereas, in actual fact, it is highly undemocratic. Muriel Horrell says (Survey p.64) - "It is clear that commoners will have no hope whatsoever of electing representatives of their own to the territorial authorities". We appear to be up against two different views of democracy!
- Nothing at all is said of the strong opposition to the Act, which has been the cause of so many disturbances in tribal areas during the last few years.
- p.52 A very rosy picture is presented of Bantu life on white farms. Too long to quote; but well worth reading.
- p.56 "The Bantu (mine workers) are housed in mine compounds. These consist of various rooms built in the shape of a square or rectangle, with a large open space or quadrangle inside. For better control of the occupants, all doors open on to the quadrangle. Each room has a number of beds". - No comment. Deals also on p.57 with various methods of "safeguarding the Bantu from 'gadding about aimlessly'".
- p.64 "The control of the movement of Bantu labourers and other Bantu" - very favourably outlined. No reference anywhere to the possibility of another view on the matter, e.g. Dr. John Philip's answer to Huskisson when asked what he wanted for the Hottentot - "I want for him the right to sell his labour in the market of his own choosing".
- p.66 Low standard of productivity of Bantu labourers unfavourably compared with that of white labourers in Canada and U.S.A. Nothing said of differences in wages, standards of nutrition, possibilities of self-improvement and advancement, etc., etc., in those countries.
- p.72 Rosy picture painted of life in the Bantu townships p.72 - 4.
- p.88 Much said about crime and delinquency - but nothing about the conditions of frustration, hopelessness and poverty which produce them.
- p.98-105 Very rosy picture of the glories of the Bantu Education Act. Not a breath of criticism. Nothing about the closing of mission schools, nor of wholesale dismissals of "unsuitable" teachers, nor of the conditions of service for teachers, nor of the criticism of compulsory mother-tongue instruction, nor of the abolition of school feeding, nor of the objection to the whole principle of forcing the poorest section of the community to lift itself up by its own bootstraps. Instead - "In this way the Bantu is guided and helped to help himself" p.104.
- p.156 "The Mohammedan God, Allah" talked of as if he is a different deity altogether.
- p.154 Languages spoken by Indians. 2% given as speaking English or Afrikaans at home. No reference to fact that vast majority of Indian children are increasingly abandoning the vernacular and speaking English as the language of their choice.

p.167 Defence of the policy of separate development ... "Accordingly, it became clear that they should be allowed to develop within the framework of their own culture. Such development would be securely rooted and grow soundly, because it would be an outgrowth of their own culture". - This presumably is why the West is so bad at mathematics as both Algebra and the Arabic system of numerals are not "sound outgrowths of our own culture".

The general theme-song of the book might be - "God's in his heaven, and all's right with the world".

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Mr. H.A. Rust, Nationalist member for Piketberg, had this to say in the debate on the introduction of the Bill to provide for the establishment of a Union Advisory Council in Education:

"The struggle for the control of the world will be fought out on the school benches of the world and nowhere else". (25 April, 1960).

Let's see what is already being done in South Africa to win the ideological struggle here.

- 1) New Race Studies Book for Standards 6, 7 and 8 (Authors: J.P. Bruwer, H.J. v. Zyl, J.C. Grobbelaar, R.F. Weaver)  
Criticism of Race Studies for Standard 8 now in use in Transvaal Schools.
- (1) Standard of English poor. The translator does not "think in English". Two examples: p.11 --- 'became the beginnings of the indigenous White people'. p.29 --- 'a new group, the Coloureds arose...'
- (2) Party political indoctrination. Quotation from preface by authors: "The authors do not conceal the fact that they have chosen to trace the growth of present-day State policy. To have done otherwise would have thrust them into a SPHERE OF CONTROVERSY. Now that the pupils have studied our non-White population groups over a period of three years, they should be in a better position to understand and TAKE A LIVELY INTEREST IN THE APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY".

Page 58. In a list of important Acts passed to deal with the "Native Problem", the Hofmeyr Education Act, which made African education a charge on the common purse, has been left out. The reader is left with the impression that all the Acts listed were not bitterly opposed, and there is no suggestion that a large body of Europeans as well as the Bantu themselves were totally opposed to their introduction.

Page 59 - e.g. "(xi) THE BANTU EDUCATION ACT, 1953: This Act placed Bantu Education under the Department of Native Affairs, created a sub-division of Bantu education, and made provision for greater control of their education by the Bantu themselves."

Not a word, you notice, of the change over from missionary control, the loss of experienced, devoted and unpaid European teachers, the introduction of a syllabus much inferior to the old one, nor of the heart burning and bitterness that this one Act has engendered!

Not a word, you notice, about the Hofmeyr Education Act which had the effect of speeding up African education to an extraordinary extent during the time it was in operation.

Page 121 - "It has already been set out that the Bantu IN THEIR AREAS will not always be able to live merely by agriculture and stock farming".

(Comment - They have NEVER been able to live in the Reserves by agriculture and stock farming, and the position becomes worse every year).

"Townships and large towns will be needed for them --- There the Bantu would be able to acquire their own sites and stands".

(Comment - What areas? Whose money? When?)

Page 153 - "This is why a policy of separate development is being practised. It is a policy designed to give the non-Whites the opportunity to develop into independent peoples. At the same time it will enable the Whites to continue their existence as a people worthy of the Name".

Ethnography is defined as "the scientific description of the Races on Earth". The authors of Race Studies for Standard 8 have therefore badly misnamed their work. It should be renamed: "A Simple Treatise on the Nationalist Doctrine of Apartheid between the Black and White Races that at present Inhabit South Africa".

It could be included in a school library as a text book on Territorial Separation, alongside other works on political organisation.

It should be withdrawn from all schools, and another text book, giving unbiased and factual statements about the diverse races that inhabit our land, both White and Black, should be introduced. An objective and informed text book on these lines would benefit every school child.

HISTORY for Standard 6 - (Authors: F.A. van Jaarsveld, J.J. v.d. Walt, D. Behr)

Criticism:

- 1) The English is mediocre, e.g. p.15 - Then, too, the floods themselves endangered the lives of the people, and at times the people living in the valley had to be protected from invading marauders. --- These problems led to the establishment of a state and a government.
- 2) The great civilisations of Egypt, Chaldea, Assyria, Phoenicia, Persia, Greece, Rome, are dismissed in 50 pages. Another 40 pages cover the whole history of Europe from the fall of Rome to the Seventeenth Century. South African history, a whole 177 years of it, occupies the rest of this text book.
- 3) A History Book, written for the descendants of both Dutch and English settlers, should have BOTH points of view expressed, or none, e.g. p.155. England and France were jealous of the Netherlands because of her prosperous trade and wealth. --- The English continued to be jealous of Dutch trade.

(Compare this with Arnold-Foster's History of England, p.501. The kings and princes of Europe looked with fear and dislike upon the new Republic of England, and the execution of King Charles had shocked and alarmed the friends of Royalty throughout Europe. The Prince of Orange was related by marriage to Charles I. --- It is not hard to understand the causes which made the Dutch enemies to the new Republic ---)

Suggest that The Ancient World, by Albert Malet, should be translated into Afrikaans, and that the history lesson in Standard 6 should be introduced by that excellent book.

There are many excellent European histories, and a committee should be appointed to examine and choose one for Standards 7 and 8, using Walker's South African History at the same time.

General criticism of all the new books which have been examined:

- (1) They insult the child by 'talking down' to him.
- (2) There seems to be a lack of scholarship and 'vision'.
- (3) The general layout is dull and uninspired.

History for Standard 6.

- (1) Compare: p.21. Hammurabi was a just ruler. He was famous for his excellent laws. Here are a few of his laws:

No.195 - If a boy strikes his father his fingers will be cut off.

No.196 - If someone puts out the eye of another, his eye will also be put out.

No.218 - If a doctor operates on a patient and the patient dies, then the doctor's fingers will be cut off.

With: (The Ancient World, by Albert Malet). Its kings, the most famous of whom was Hammurabi, the author of the oldest known code of laws, undertook the construction of canals, and the plain between the two rivers became a veritable granary. He was able to say, "I have changed the desert plains to watered lands; I have given them fertility and abundance; I have made them a fair place of habitation".

- (2) In Arnold-Foster's History of England, every chapter is headed by a list of Famous Persons who lived in the WORLD at the time discussed, and a second list of PRINCIPAL EVENTS in that world, is added. e.g. Reign of Edward I of England:

Famous persons: Dante, the Italian Poet, b. 1265.  
Marco Polo of Venice, visits Japan and China.  
William Tell, Swiss hero, revolts against Gesler.  
Switzerland declares its independence.  
Normans massacred in Sicily.

It would be excellent for our 'isolationist' children to have some such linking up with the great world outside South Africa. Too many of them leave school convinced that the Great Trek was an event of world shattering importance, and that only our three hundred years of history have any significance.

## EDUCATION AT THE CROSS ROADS - FREEDOM OR FETTERS?

(Sylvia D. Nell)

### Observations on Centralised Control of Education.

#### Prime Minister's Policy Statement.

The retention of control of education by the four Provinces was part of the Act of Union in 1910. Yet in August 1959 at Innesdal, Pretoria, the Prime Minister announced far-reaching changes in education. "There would be uniformity in the sphere of education", he said. "It could not be otherwise, because the nation could maintain only one ideal in this sphere. The Government would lay down in legislation that which could be expected from education in South Africa. National institutions and Provincial authorities would have to adjust themselves to that new educational ideal". In Parliament, Mr. D.J.J. Mostert, M.P., said that the Union Education Advisory Council would "bring about unity in our education not merely of advice but of active and effective control".

#### Control of Education:

Control of education affects its content. The more centralised control is, the more education may be patterned, and the more uniform it becomes. The Prime Minister has stated that there would be one ideal. Mr. de Wet Nel, when he was Minister of Education, acknowledged that his Government's educational policy was Christian National Education. Mr. Vorster, Deputy Minister of Education, endorsed this. So did the National Congresses of the Cape and Transvaal of October and November, 1948. Is this, then, the one ideal envisaged by the Prime Minister? Whatever it be, let no government legislate for a nation's ideals! Ideals are a matter of private conscience!

#### World Trends:

Germany, after the 1st World War, had a highly centralised education system. With one stroke of the pen Hitler was able to subvert that system to his own ends. Western Germany, in 1949, decentralised education, which is now controlled by each separate state.

France's legacy from Napoleon was a highly centralised system of public education. Although it has built-in political safeguards in the tradition of the French Revolution, it is today being decentralised because of its inability to meet the new demands of a rapidly changing society.

In Great Britain, under the 1944 Education Act, 146 Local Education Authorities-completely autonomous and free to make their own policies - control education. In England, school principals are free to draw up their own syllabuses and choose their own text books.

Scotland has 37 Local Education Authorities. Canada, Australia, New Zealand, have independent provincial education departments.

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#### Uniformity.

In certain State services such as Justice, Internal Security, Transport, uniformity is highly desirable. In Art, Literature, Religion, Scientific Research, Press and Education, diversity is a condition of progress. Society must encourage the utmost scope for individual initiative.

Uniformity in education may have administrative advantages for the bureaucrat; these are offset by the tremendous handicaps they impose on creativity and new ideas.

#### The Union Education Advisory Council Bill.

The Bill, although apparently innocuous, represents a threat to the freedom and efficiency of South African education. It must pattern and inhibit organic growth. It could impose on the minds of our children a political and social philosophy unacceptable to a large section of our people. Our children must be trained in the ways of free enquiring, to think for themselves, and to seek the truth.

#### Lost Freedoms.

In Transvaal education there have already been serious encroachments by the State on the liberties and responsibilities of individuals - an encroachment of Caesar in that domain which is God's - the exercise of private judgment.

- 1) Parents' freedom and right to choose for their children has been denied.
- 2) The powers of School Boards have been limited to purely advisory ones.
- 3) In the sphere of religion, significant encroachments have been experienced.
  - i) The Conscience Clause is slowly being scrapped;
  - ii) There are no legal safeguards against victimisation and discrimination on religious grounds for teachers or pupils, e.g. the case of the Head Girl of a Parys school, who was ousted because she was a Catholic;
  - iii) In our highly centralised Transvaal Education system, the principles of Christian National Education are being introduced through History, Social Studies, Race Studies, Guidance, in all schools - English as well as Afrikaans - although many parents find this teaching in conflict with their religious views.

#### Conclusion:

The enactment of the Bill can only have the effect of extending these encroachments to the other provinces.

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## EDUCATION AT THE CROSS ROADS - FREEDOM OR FETTERS?

(Sylvia D. Nell)

### Observations on Centralised Control of Education.

#### Prime Minister's Policy Statement.

The retention of control of education by the four Provinces was part of the Act of Union in 1910. Yet in August 1959 at Innesdal, Pretoria, the Prime Minister announced far-reaching changes in education. "There would be uniformity in the sphere of education", he said. "It could not be otherwise, because the nation could maintain only one ideal in this sphere. The Government would lay down in legislation that which could be expected from education in South Africa. National institutions and Provincial authorities would have to adjust themselves to that new educational ideal". In Parliament, Mr. D.J.J. Mostert, M.P., said that the Union Education Advisory Council would "bring about unity in our education not merely of advice but of active and effective control".

#### Control of Education:

Control of education affects its content. The more centralised control is, the more education may be patterned, and the more uniform it becomes. The Prime Minister has stated that there would be one ideal. Mr. de Wet Nel, when he was Minister of Education, acknowledged that his Government's educational policy was Christian National Education. Mr. Vorster, Deputy Minister of Education, endorsed this. So did the National Congresses of the Cape and Transvaal of October and November, 1948. Is this, then, the one ideal envisaged by the Prime Minister? Whatever it be, let no government legislate for a nation's ideals! Ideals are a matter of private conscience!

#### World Trends:

Germany, after the 1st World War, had a highly centralised education system. With one stroke of the pen Hitler was able to subvert that system to his own ends. Western Germany, in 1949, decentralised education, which is now controlled by each separate state.

France's legacy from Napoleon was a highly centralised system of public education. Although it has built-in political safeguards in the tradition of the French Revolution, it is today being decentralised because of its inability to meet the new demands of a rapidly changing society.

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YOU ----- AND THE NEW EDUCATION ADVISORY BILL

Probably a friend has shown it to you and mentioned that it had its first reading rushed through Parliament at the end of the Session. You know, of course, that it will become law in the next Session because the Nationalist Government has a majority in Parliament, and what they want put through gets through.

You read it --- and it means nothing to you.

You wonder a little what the rush was about, and what the purpose of this Bill can be --- why create an Advisory Council when we already have dozens of Councils, Boards, Committees and Associations which already check and counter-check and advise and control in every possible way?

What's this extra Council for?

You read it through again --- and it still means nothing to you.

You could not be more mistaken!

Legal language must always convey a PRECISE meaning. A word must be incapable of being changed in meaning.

So when you look at the Bill's definition of "School" with all extra phrases and clauses left out, it reads: "School" means any establishment at which education is provided, and which IS UNDER THE CONTROL OF A PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION.

YOUR school, which is registered and which has to conform to certain standards and requirements laid down by the Department is obviously under the control of the Transvaal Provincial Administration, whether it receives a government grant or not.

So this Bill is talking about your school.

And what this Bill means in simple words is that a special Council of seven men, only four of whom are expected to be education experts, who alone apparently will have the ear of the Minister of Education, can come to your school, investigate any and every matter that pleases them, possibly enforce any recommendations that they choose to make --- and all this in the name of "Matters affecting the basic principles of Education".

They don't state what those "basic principles" are.

Would you like to learn?

The story goes back to 1939 --- when most of us were fighting or working in a world war, and too busy to worry about other matters.

The Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniging established the Institute of Christian National Education to work out a policy of Education ACCEPTABLE TO AFRIKANERDOM --- not to South Africans mark you, but to one section of our population.

When the Nationalist Party came into power in 1948 this resolution was put forward at their Party Congress: "The Congress urges the Government to bring about systematic changes in our system of education (primary, higher and middle education) to CONFORM WITH CHRISTIAN NATIONAL EDUCATION".

Let's see how far they have come along the road which has as its goal an Afrikaans-speaking Calvinist, Nationalist people. I repeat PEOPLE --- which means that your child and mine must be moulded into the new shape if the Christian Nationalist Republic is to have any security.

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