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AN AFRICAN'S VISION OF A POST-WAR
SOUTH AFRICA.

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One cannot correctly visualise the future without sufficient knowledge of the recent past and clear understanding of the present or war-period. This knowledge is essential in helping us to decide ^{AND} to see through our minds' eye the shape of things that ought to come ^{IF} to a new world order, a better world for all with racial-goodwill and permanent peace is to be established.

Both pre-war and war-time South Africa have not given cause for enthusiasm about the future so far as the Africans are concerned and it is the position of the African we are concerned most with in this article.

In pre-war South Africa one found a country in which all the essential economic resources, political power, unlimited facilities for education, social welfare and rehabilitation services and defence were the special and almost exclusive preserve of the whiteman or European either to the exclusion of the non-European or with his participation only to limits set for him by the European or to serve the interests of the European.

Politically, the African is segregated from the political stream of the country. He has no direct representation in any of the legislative bodies of the country. He has no way of influencing the parliament of the country. Only in the Cape Province may he exercise a "loaded" franchise requiring an educational, property and income qualification as against a universal franchise for Europeans with a colour and a minimum age of 21 years as a qualification to vote. Under the Representation of Natives Act, in the Cape Province the Africans elect three special members in the House of Assembly and two Senators who must be Europeans and for the Transvaal-Orange Free State and Natal 2 Senators. These representatives represent about 7 million Africans in a Parliament of 150 members and an Upper Chamber of 40 Senators respectively representing 2 million Europeans and some Coloureds and Indians in the Cape Province.

Province.

Besides this under the Representation of Natives Act, there is a so-called Natives Representatives Council ^{WITH ADVISORY POWER ONLY} composed of the ^{AAAA} Secretary for Native Affairs (Chairman), 5 Chief Native Commissioners, 16 African members four of whom are Government nominees and the other 12 elected, ^{REPRESENTING SEVEN MILLION AFRICANS.}

Surely this so-called Native Representation is in fact African Misrepresentation.

Economically, the African is restricted by custom and ^{starvation} legislation to unskilled work, low/wages, indifferent working conditions. Under the Pass Laws, the Masters and Servants Act and the Service Contract Act, the African suffers limitation of freedom of movement and lack of bargaining power. He has no chance of selling his labour to the highest bidder. For him to strike and a breach of contract are criminal offences punishable by a fine or imprisonment. He is excluded from the benefits of the Industrial Conciliation Act and his Trade Unions are not recognised.

European workers on the other hand enjoy high wages, freedom of movement, free bargaining powers, the strike weapon and recognised Trade Unions with full benefits under the Industrial Conciliation Act.

Further, Africans, through limited land and landless migrate from rural areas into urban areas to earn wages on which they may solely ^{or partially} depend for the support of their families. Even where there are small plots of land only women and children are ^{KEPT AND} expected to till them with consequent repeated crop failures, loss of soil fertility, and soil erosion. The separation of families leads to broken homes, infidelity, lack of discipline, for children, delinquency and destitution. The long absence of men from home, in short, ^{LEADS} ~~leads~~ to disorganisation of the whole social fabric in the community.

The powers that be appear to wonder why.

Those who support ^{AND} ~~this~~ maintain the system of migratory labour under whatever pretext must realise that whatever claims they make for it the system brings ruin, degradation, destitution, delinquency, loss of hope

loss of hope for the future ^{FOR} hundreds of thousands of young lives among the Africans.

Educationally, the majority of the African children are denied the right to education. The State has not fully recognised the ~~the~~ right of the African child to be educated. As a consequence, only about one-third of African children of school going age may be accommodated in schools under the most unsatisfactory conditions of overcrowding, under-staffing, with, in some cases, poorly qualified teachers in buildings most unsuitable for teaching.

During the war there was a spate of promises of good things to come to all. For ^{INSTANCE} in September, 1941, the Hon. J. H. Hofmeyr, Minister of Finance and Education said

"The Government desires a better life for the people and when we say 'the people' we mean all, the whole people, not just the European section but all sections of the people. It is of course, much easier to put forward attractive plans for the post-war world if you think only in terms of the Europeans. but there can be no social justice in South Africa when the aim is merely to hold a just balance between Europeans."

AT ANOTHER TIME
General Smuts said

"There would be no forgotten men after the war"

This inspired tens of thousands of Africans to volunteer. However, the pay of the African soldier, the allotment to his dependants, his denial of rank, refusal to arm him, certain conditions of service, and now his so-called benefits on demobilisation made him a forgotten man before the echo of the Prime Minister's voice had died.

Nothing shocked our Non-European world more than the declaration of the Prime Minister that he would arm the Non-Europeans only in the event of the Japanese invading South Africa. This made the war not one of ideologies but a colour war.

The support by the Prime Minister of an increase of 3d only on the African soldier's pay by the Sturrock ^{Pay} Select Committee on Soldiers and his modification of the recommendations of the Mine Natives Wages Commission against the interest of the Mine Native Workers and those of the V. F. P. have left a smouldering volcano

of resentment and dissatisfaction in the minds of the African people.

All these conditions from the African point of view are a mockery of South African ideals - democracy, Christianity and human decency.

In the last few years the African has made ^{ONE} ~~some~~ significant progressive step. He realises that the whole South African Native Policy is for his exploitation, oppression and retardation of his progress. He has, therefore, pitched his tents ^{TO WORK} ~~and~~ strive for a South Africa in which every member of the State is recognised as a human being with rights, privileges and immunities. A South Africa in which the full development of every man, according to his ability, irrespective of race, creed or colour is accepted as the basic principle of policy and practice. A South Africa in which all workers are given full opportunity to earn a wage sufficient to keep their families in "health, happiness and decency." A South Africa in which the workers' standards of living is so raised as to enable them to buy, build and own homes of their own instead of being ^{PERPETUAL} tenants of public authorities. A South Africa where all workers are provided with homes so that they may live with their families near their places of employment with the attendant benefits to society of such an arrangement. A South Africa where the State will recognise the identities of the members of the State and emphasise them as well as to endeavour to harmonise their differences. A South Africa in which all members of the State enjoy the full protection of Parliament and the State. A South Africa in which all the people will be prepared for full and useful citizenship through a sound system of compulsory ^{STATE} education. A South Africa in which there will be no discriminatory legislation based on race, creed or colour. A South Africa which through its Parliament and Government will endeavour to promote the wealth, the health, the well-being and happiness of all the people of South Africa Europeans and Non-Europeans. Above all a South Africa in which, to paraphrase the words of Abraham Lincoln, "there will be a Government of all the people by all the people" instead of as at present a "government by some of the people for some of the people."

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