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CRIME WAVE AGITATION

DEAR MEMBER,

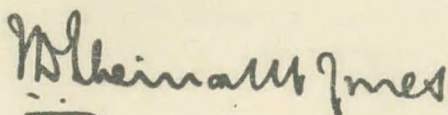
During the past several weeks the Witwatersrand has experienced one of its periodical "crime wave" agitations, and public feeling has run high over the many cases of burglary, assault, and murder reported in the press. It would be wrong to dismiss the press accounts as mere newspaper stunts, for the incidents themselves are grave enough to cause anxiety over the signs they give of the growth of violence and crime. Unfortunately it has not been possible to secure any comparative figures, and, as in previous agitations which have arisen, police and other officials have made conflicting statements which reflect more their personal attitudes than actual facts. Even an objective study of the number of arrests and convictions—for which the Institute is trying to make arrangements—may not yield reliable results. Unfortunately there is available little information about the criminals themselves, and no attempt to deal with crime can be effective without a close study of those who commit it.

The Government has responded to the public agitations by setting up special tribunals with drastic powers, to deal with crimes of violence, the minimum sentence to be five years' hard labour. It is the easiest response, but not necessarily the most intelligent. Remarks made by certain judges recently have revealed that judges are human and may react emotionally to public agitations, applying violent speech to reinforce somewhat violent sentences.

There is danger in the situation. The manner in which certain newspapers have reported the cases of crime has the effect of arousing racial feeling against Africans. Certain papers and speakers are making political capital out of the agitation and advocating drastic action against the African people as a whole, who are themselves victims of crimes committed by both Africans and Europeans. The number of cases of serious assault by Europeans on Africans and vice versa seems to be growing. One political journal, *Die Nuwe Orde*, on 6 December 1945, said, "The public must declare war on the criminal. No prisoners must be made in this war. . . . If prisoners remain in the hands of the public then their treatment must be such that when they arrive at the police station they have already received the bigger portion of their punishment." There has been talk of lynching.

An appeal must not only be made to the rule of law—which is itself in danger—but also to such intelligence in the treatment and causes of crime and of the offender as will reduce the tendency to violence and lawlessness. Let the Government and the Judiciary join in constructive measures for the prevention of crime. Most important of all, the Government must defend the rule of law by dealing firmly with incitement to violent action by the public against the most helpless section of the community.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "W. H. M. Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Overseas Members of Council.—Dr. A. Richards, Dr. M. Read, and Professor E. Walker have been elected as representatives of Ordinary Members in the Overseas Constituency.

EDUCATION FOR CAPE COLOURED CHILDREN

The second Annual Report of the Cape Coloured Advisory Council gives a summary of the situation with regard to education for Cape Coloured children in the various provinces. In the Transvaal compulsory education for Coloured and Indian children was suggested by the Provincial Education Commission in 1939, but no steps were taken to implement this recommendation. In the Orange Free State, until recently, Coloured schools came under the jurisdiction of the section of the Administration dealing with Native education. Coloured schools are, however, in future to come under the same jurisdiction as European schools, but the Provincial Administration asserts that it lacks sufficient funds to make education compulsory for Coloured children. In Natal education for Coloured children has been compulsory since 1942, and steps are being taken to introduce this measure in the Cape Province.

The Coloured Advisory Council has also made representations on the subject of increased secondary school accommodation for Coloured children, and has pointed out the severe disadvantages from which the Coloured community suffer with regard to the provision of bursaries for higher education. The report states that it is hoped that there will be progress in this direction in the near future.

NATIVE MARRIAGE LAWS CONFUSED

The legal status of African women on marriage has been the subject of confusion for some years. This confusion has now been increased by a judgement given in December last by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court. This judgement took the view that, where two Africans get married and do not make a declaration in terms of the Native Administration Act that they wish to be married in community of property, their rights of property are more or less the same as if they had been Europeans who had married with an antenuptial contract.

In the past the Native Appeal Court had taken the view that, even where Africans are married under the common law, their property rights between themselves and their relatives fall under Native law, unless they made the declaration in favour of community of property, or unless they had entered into an antenuptial contract.

It is to be hoped that new legislation will be passed in this session of parliament to clear up a matter of great importance to all Africans. The state of the law is now so difficult for ordinary people to understand that amendments are urgently required.

THE MENTALLY AFFLICTED

It is reported that Dr. H. Gluckman, Minister of Public Health, intends to convert the Witrand Institution for the Feeble-minded at Potchefstroom into a mental hospital for Non-Europeans. He also stated that provisions are being made for the building in the Western Province of an institution for Non-European feeble-minded.

There has been for some years an acute shortage of institutional accommodation for the mentally afflicted of all races. Institutional facilities for Non-European feeble-minded are completely lacking. A small number of Non-European feeble-minded cases are accommodated in the existing institutions for the insane, an obviously unsatisfactory state of affairs. Existing institutions for European feeble-minded are grossly overcrowded and have long waiting lists.

At the beginning of 1944 it was estimated that the number of mental patients throughout the Union was about 15,000 but accommodation was available for only 12,500. Between 300 and 400 European mental patients were on a waiting-list for accommodation in mental institutions, and over 2,000 Non-European mental patients were awaiting institutional accommodation.

In cases where mental patients require restraint because of their mental condition, it has been necessary to place them in police detention cells, sometimes for weeks at a time, because no vacancies are available in suitable institutions.

AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS

Following upon the Prime Minister's statement to the Trades and Labour Council that the Government had decided to give some form of recognition to trade unions of African workers, the Department of Labour is considering the form which this recognition should take. A joint statement of the Trades and Labour Council and the Labour Party supports the principle of statutory recognition, but proposes special machinery for the representation on industrial councils of the needs of the African workers. A minute of the Institute's Council, dated 21 January 1944, instructed the Executive Committee to aim

at the full recognition of the rights of African workers by the re-definition of the term "employee" in the Industrial Conciliation Act, and by making the machinery of conciliation and arbitration more effective. Recently, the Director has addressed an inquiry to certain employers' organizations and trade unions, asking for their opinions on the memorandum of the Trades and Labour Council and the Labour Party, and for suggestions as to the form amending legislation should take.

PROGRESS IN NORTHERN RHODESIA

African Provincial Councils, started in Northern Rhodesia during the war, have, according to Sir John Waddington, Governor of Northern Rhodesia, proved a great success, and in his opinion the time is now ripe for the establishment of an African Representative Council for the whole territory. The first meeting of the proposed Council should be called some time during this year. The Governor also stated that the courses for chiefs, started in 1940, had had excellent results in broadening the outlook of the chiefs, many of whom were doing very progressive work.

Additional funds have been made available by the Central Native Treasury Board, to enable Native Authorities to pay better salaries to their employees, and to build up adequate reserves. Two Native Authorities have recently made rules to enable them to levy rates in their areas to build up additional services.

Application has been made to the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund to enable work on mass literacy to be extended, Health services, including leprosy settlements, have been improved, and sums of money have been set aside to finance schemes to help African orphans.

DEMOBILIZATION OF AFRICAN SOLDIERS

African ex-volunteers may now train as cooks and waiters. Authorities at Milner Park, where a training school is in operation, consider that there will be a number of openings for Africans in the catering trade. Plans are being made for an early start on training courses in boot repairing, carpentry, and tailoring. Africans taking these courses will be paid a subsistence allowance during the period of training.

Nine employment bureaux for African ex-volunteers have been established, at Johannesburg, Pretoria, Benoni, Vereniging, Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Bloemfontein, Kimberley, and East London.

Since their establishment on 30 November of last year, until the end of December, 7,573 African ex-volunteers have been placed in employment by the bureaux, and unplaced African ex-servicemen on their registers totalled 272.

We would like to remind our readers once again that many African ex-servicemen have not yet claimed their gratuities. Application forms for gratuities can be obtained from all post offices and Native Commissioners' and Magistrates' offices.

TB IN THE GOLD COAST

An article in the Bulletin of the National Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis stresses the extreme seriousness of tubercular infection in the Gold Coast. The writer asserts that medical services are inadequate in every respect, the main deficiencies being in medical personnel, modern equipment, and effective preventative measures. The difficulties are added to by the fact that many sufferers from TB still distrust hospitals, and are not prepared to remain in hospital long enough for a cure to be effected.

As in South Africa, vital statistics are difficult to obtain, as registration of vital statistics is only enforced in the larger towns, and even these cannot be considered accurate. It is estimated, however, that pulmonary tuberculosis is responsible for about one-tenth of all deaths, and that in Tarkwa the centre of the gold-mining industry, some fifty per cent of certified deaths in males between the ages of twenty-five and forty-five are due to pulmonary tuberculosis.

PENAL REFORM : AN APPEAL

The time has come for all South Africans of all races to combine in a corporate effort towards the prevention of crime and the improvement and reform of our present methods of treating delinquents. For some years past, the Penal Reform Committee of the Institute of Race Relations has tried to tackle this vital issue, and, following a very representative conference of all bodies interested in Penal Reform, held in Johannesburg on 25 and 26 June 1945, a Joint Committee of the Penal Reform Committee and the Social Services Association of South Africa was appointed for the ultimate establishment of a Penal Reform League. A constitution has been accepted and a staff appointed for the work ahead. The two sponsoring bodies have sanctioned these measures and we now launch an urgent appeal for the support of all organizations and individuals interested.

Penal Reform covers a wider field than the methods of treating anti-social persons. It is a comprehensive endeavour to tackle the whole problem of crime and its punishment. Therefore the Joint Penal Reform Committee of South Africa calls for immediate public and individual support in its endeavour to give information on, study, and stimulate interest in, Penal Reform.

The Rev. Henri Ph. Junod and Mrs. Junod have undertaken part-time work for 1946 as Organizer and Secretary respectively of the Joint Penal Reform Committee.

Affiliation to the Penal Reform Committee is sought on the basis of:—

- (i) Donor Members (not less than £10 per annum)
- (ii) Organizations or public or voluntary bodies (not less than £10 per annum)
- (iii) Individual Members (not less than £1 1s. per annum). The annual subscription for individual Non-European members is 7s. 6d.

Cheques should be made payable to the Joint Penal Reform Committee, and crossed Barclay's Bank, Pretoria. The Organizer's address is 376 von Wielligh Street, Pretoria.

BROADCASTING FOR AFRICANS

Improved radio services for Africans are now under consideration, according to a recent press report. It is stated that a loudspeaker system connecting houses and public places with a central broadcasting system could be devised at considerably less cost than ordinary radio facilities. Discussions with a representative of a British manufacturing firm concerning the provision of equipment have apparently taken place, and the general principle of improved broadcasting facilities for Africans has been approved of by the Native Affairs Department. Broadcasts for Africans would have an educational bias, and it is suggested that a large amount of the organization of such broadcasts could be done by Africans.

In a survey of broadcasting for Africans, done in 1943 by Dr. H. Kuper and Messrs. B. Vilakazi and E. Westphal under the auspices of the Institute, the inadequacy of the existing broadcasting facilities was pointed out. According to the survey, 98 per cent of the African population has no access to radio sets.

SHORTER ITEMS

Fort Hare's Proud Record.—According to the 1946 Fort Hare Calendar, twenty past students (of all races) have obtained medical qualifications overseas. One of those to qualify was a woman—the first South African Bantu woman to qualify as a doctor. Another, in addition to his scholastic success, had the distinction of gaining a “blue” for athletics at the University of Edinburgh. One of the former Fort Hare students served as a ship’s doctor during the war. Ten former Fort Hare students gained their M.A. degree, several from famous American universities.

The Colour Bar Overseas.—It is reported from London that the Home Secretary has stated that he will consider carefully cases where hotels or restaurants have refused to serve Indians or Africans because of their colour. He is reported to have said, speaking in this connection, “I am glad to have the opportunity of emphasizing my strong condemnation of such conduct on the part of licensed premises, and I am sure that it would be equally condemned by responsible opinion throughout the country.”

A Request.—Members are asked to notify the Secretary as soon as possible of any change of address.

NOW AVAILABLE

**CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES AND RACE
PROBLEMS**

by the HON. JAN H. HOFMEYR

This is the first Hoernlé Memorial Lecture, delivered by the Hon. Jan H. Hofmeyr in January 1945 at Cape Town. In it he emphasizes the importance of the Christian approach to the problem of race relations. An outspoken criticism and appeal.

Copies can be obtained from the Institute for 2s. 6d. each
(postage 2d.)

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