



LIBERATION

ONE SHILLING

No. 9, 1954

RENT INCREASES



SONGS OF LIBERATION



A JOURNAL OF DEMOCRATIC DISCUSSION

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CONTENTS

Editorial	2
Songs of Liberation by Scipio Africanus	7
No Place for Mission Schools by Father Trevor Huddleston	10
The Meaning of Bantu Education by Duma Nokwe	12
Rent Increases by Dan Tloome	18

THE KOTANE ARTICLE

In one of the many recent police raids on private homes and offices, an article written by Mr. Moses Kotane for this issue of "Liberation" (as mentioned last month) was seized by the police.

The article, written in long-hand, was waiting to be typed, and no copy was therefore available.

Representations have been made for the return of this and other material, and we hope it will still be possible to publish this article within a reasonable period.

OLIVE SCHREINER — AN ANNIVERSARY

Next year is the hundredth anniversary of the birth of the great South African writer, thinker and humanist, Olive Schreiner, who was born in March, 1855. So many things that Olive Schreiner wrote still provide searching commentary on South African affairs. Read an interesting article about Olive Schreiner in the next issue of "Liberation."

THE TRADES AND LABOUR COUNCIL

After thirty years, the Trades and Labour Council has committed suicide, in the cause of 'unity.' In our next issue, a leading trade unionist analyses the real significance of this move, and the formation of the new Trade Union Council.

AND OTHER ARTICLES BY WELL-KNOWN PERSONALITIES.

THE POLICE AND THE STATE

"Relating the circumstances of events on the Sunday and the urgent application as they affected him, Major Spengler (head of the Police Special Branch) said that he had been 'so overcome by the honourable judge's statement, "Do you know that this is not a police State yet?"' that he resolved to say no more at that stage."

—Report in "*The Star*," August 3, 1954.

IN a certain, limited sense, Judge Blackwell was correct: it is not a police state, yet. We can well understand Major Spengler's dumbfounded amazement, for the distinction is fine, and is becoming finer every day. Nonetheless private persons do still have some rights and safeguards in relation to the police.

If a person is accused of theft, or murder, or bribery, or illicit dealings, or any similar offence, he has the right to a fair and public trial before being punished. The police may not keep him under arrest for more than two days without bringing him before a magistrate and stating exactly what he is supposed to have done that is unlawful. At his trial he has the right to question the police witnesses, to answer his accusers and to call witnesses of his own to testify to his innocence. The court proceedings must follow strict rules, and the accused person has the right to employ a lawyer to state his case and to see that the rules are observed. The accused is not obliged to give evidence at all. If he thinks he has not been given just treatment in his trial, he may appeal against the judgment to a higher court, and again, up to the highest court in the land.

Again, there are many rules which are designed to protect the private citizen against arbitrary interference or arrest by the police. A man's home or other private premises are supposed to be inviolable, and the police may not enter such premises, ordinarily, without a warrant. A policeman may not arrest a private individual without good grounds, and he may not assault him at all. As we saw in the recent case of Mr. Kirchner against Sergeant Arlow and Mr. Swart, substantial damages may be claimed and awarded against the police where these rules are broken.

Imperfect Justice

It is, of course, notorious that these citizenship rights are constantly and habitually violated in our country. Africans know only too well the Sergeant Arlow type of bully. They know too well the midnight banging at the door that heralds the arrival of warrantless police to search for passes, home-brew or rent-receipts; the lawless police assaults in the pick-up van, awaiting trial, in prison after conviction. Day after day thousands and thousands of people, charged

with pass and other trivial offences go through a travesty of court proceedings, a sausage-machine to fill the farm jails. Day after day judgments are given which reflect vicious colour prejudice on the part of the European magistrates. There will never be real justice or fairness in South Africa until all our people have won the right to be voters and legislators, participants in making and administering the laws, magistrates, judges and jurymen.

Until then, we fear, we shall hear again and again in our courts of law of degrading and horrible perversions of justice: like that of the white farmer and his son. John and Matthys Snyman, who flogged an African convict Mpikwa with a hosepipe, beat him again and again until he fell down, beat him again on the ground until he was dead, went on viciously flogging the body of the dead man after he was past all punishment. And were found, by an all-white jury, not guilty of murder or even assault with the intent to do grievous bodily harm, but only of common assault — for which the father was sentenced to 18 months and his son to six months in jail.

Yet, despite all these glaring imperfections no-one in South Africa hitherto seriously challenged the basic conception that the citizen should be entitled to the rule of law. That none should be punished without being tried on a specific charge, before an independent tribunal in open Court, with the rights to legal defence and appeal: these and other root-concepts, each of them landmarks in the long, unfinished struggle of mankind against tyranny, may have been disregarded and dishonoured, but they were not publicly repudiated.

Moreover, notwithstanding the inevitable weaknesses and prejudices arising from their own background, the senior Judges of South Africa have on many occasions shown themselves to be as fair and impartial as men whose work it is to apply unfair laws can possibly be. In a host of judgments ranging from the High Court of Parliament case to the Ngwevela verdict, they have earned a reputation for courage and integrity which is one of the few redeeming features of South African society.

The Minister of the Police

But the Rule of Law, resting on the precarious foundation of Non-European servitude and oppression, has never stood very securely in South Africa. Smuts openly flouted it when he chose — usually when the gold-mining interests thought themselves threatened. Advocate Pirow struck it a crippling blow when he jockeyed through the Riotous Assemblies Act, conferring dictatorial powers upon himself as Minister of Justice.

It was, however, left to a later incumbent in that high-sounding office, another "officer of the Supreme Court" to carry forward

the task of systematically and deliberately destroying the rule of law. We refer, obviously, to Mr. C. R. Swart, that queer product of the "master race" who apparently thought it appropriate to his position to have himself photographed for the newspapers brandishing a cat-o'-nine tails.

Mr. Swart has repeatedly made it perfectly clear that he has no respect at all for the legal traditions of the bench and the bar. He is not a Minister of Justice at all. He is a Minister of the Police. Whenever the judiciary frustrates him and his policemen by reiterating some age-old liberty inscribed in the common law—such as that a man cannot be condemned without a hearing, or that the C.I.D. cannot enter a meeting without a warrant — Adv. Swart indulges in some public hysterics and rushes to Parliament for a new law to illegalise the illegality. To him, civil liberty or any treasured safeguards that protect the common man from arbitrary despotism, are so many "loopholes" that have to be stopped up. What, in Swart's view, is a "loophole" in the Suppression of Communism Act? A means whereby a man condemned by the Minister has a chance of getting a hearing in a court of law. From the policeman's viewpoint, no doubt, law courts with all their cumbersome procedures and demands for strict evidence, and their terrifying possibilities of a merciless cross-examination by some ogreish barrister with piercing eyes and beetling brows, are nothing but an unmitigated nuisance. We believe we may sum up Minister Swart's mentality by saying that he shares the police viewpoint to the full.

Nowhere is this viewpoint better illustrated (we shall say nothing at this stage about the incredible Public Safety Act) than in the terms and operation of Swart's pet creation — the Suppression of Communism Act.

The Suppression Act

Let us briefly turn our minds back to the circumstances in which the Act was introduced. It has never been denied that the Minister's chief adviser in framing this abominable law was a policeman—the British spy, Sillitoe. In order to bolster the case for the introduction of so limitless a tyranny, Swart had to present a picture of a country on the verge of riot and insurrection. Where did he get his fanciful material about well-poisoners and power-station saboteurs? From the police — letting themselves really go, once their evidence had to be submitted to the scrutiny not of a trained judge but of the gullible Mr. Swart, only too eager to believe it.

The Act clothed the Minister with dictatorial powers, unheard of in peacetime in any country claiming to be democratic. He told an apprehensive Parliament — yes, even our all-white legislature was a bit apprehensive — that he "would be reasonable in the exercise of his powers." How reasonable has he been?

We have no space in this article to relate the harrowing story of the scores of trade unionists, Congressmen, peace workers, democrats, who have been forced by the Minister's ukase to leave the organisation which they have devoted a lifetime to building, to leave their occupation and livelihood and, often in their middle years, to start life afresh. By now, South Africa and the world know of President Luthuli, virtually a prisoner on his farm, of Walter Sisulu charged with drinking tea with his fellow men, of Lengisi and Gwentshe banished from their homes and their families in East London to a remote Siberia in the Transvaal platteland. Not one of these charged with any offence before any Court; none was told what he was accused of or given any chance to reply. The Minister has expelled three elected members from Parliament. He has closed down one newspaper — *The Guardian* — and seems well on his way to banning another — *Advance*. Hardly a week goes by without reports of more bannings, more police raids on the homes and offices of private persons suspected of "dangerous thoughts," more threats of treason and sedition trials and hints of gigantic conspiracies from the Minister and his limelight-loving police chief, Brigadier Rademeyer.

How does the Minister select his victims for banning? The public might be forgiven for thinking that he sat down with a pin, closed his eyes, and jabbed it into his blacklist of "Communists" Congressmen and trade unionists, as some people are said to pick their fancy for the races, for Mr. Swart disdains to give reasons for his actions. What really happens was revealed a year ago by the same Brigadier Rademeyer in an interview with the *Rand Daily Mail*. The Minister, he said, only banned people after "careful investigations" by the police.

"A person is only banned," he announced, "if he is a person with influence and could use his influence detrimentally."

—*Rand Daily Mail*, September 23, 1953.

What a nice Minister is this Mister Swart. He doesn't bother a cop, like a judge does, with all sorts of demands for evidence and proof. You just give him the paper and he signs. And there's no appeal and no questions asked.

Mr. Swart has far from exhausted the possibilities of vindictive action under his favourite law: a law that is not much good in the Courts — for no one has yet been prosecuted successfully under it for actually propagating Communism — but very good for enabling the Minister to harry and intimidate his opponents outside the Courts. He has appointed a Mr. Terblanche as an "authorised officer." We may be forgiven for not knowing very much about this Mr. Terblanche, who hardly seems as yet to have made a very deep mark in South African history. Nor is it very clear what this particular officer is authorised to do. But it seems to be a great deal. One morning, at 8 a.m. sharp, members of the political staff of the

C.I.D., armed with his authority, descended simultaneously on the offices of *Advance* and the homes of its staff members and others in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban. A few weeks later the signature of the same Terblanche appears on documents authorising raids to investigate the Society for Peace and Friendship with the Soviet Union. Mr. Terblanche is also sending police to raid and investigate members of the Women's Federation. We do not know what else he is supposed to be investigating, or whom he will descend on next; but we do know that such procedures are utterly fantastic and intolerable.

The Pretorian Guards

Where is it all going to end?

Tsarist Russia, Hitler's Germany, Mussolini's Italy . . . history abounds in examples of police states: how they worked and how they ended. But there is another example we should like, at this time, to recall.

In the later days of the ancient Roman Empire, an armed body of palace guards, known, interestingly enough, as the Pretorian Guards, came to dominate the life of the State. They made and unmade — usually by assassination — the emperors. They sold the imperial office to the highest bidder. They terrorised the populace, and every man was afraid to speak out his mind lest he should fall into their bad books.

What brought them into power was in the first place the apathy and passivity of the citizens. It took a mighty explosion, involving the destruction of the empire itself, to dislodge them.

South Africa is not quite a police state — yet. But it is coming nearer and nearer to it every day. If we wish to save ourselves the unhappy fate of Rome at the mercy of the lawless and all-powerful palace guards, we must gird ourselves and organise ourselves now to struggle against the imposition of a police dictatorship here.

Let us never learn to become accustomed to these acts of tyranny and to tolerate them. Let us cry out and resist each new imposition, each departure from the rule of law. Let us so work for the Freedom Charter that it will become the shield of our liberties, like Magna Charter in Britain years ago, and open up the road to a true democracy in our country, basing our liberties not on shadows but on the broad and effective expression of the will of the people.

SONGS OF LIBERATION

By SCIPIO AFRICANUS

FEW things reveal the depth and breadth of the ideological changes that are taking place in the African more than a study of his songs. And in this article I am actuated by the urge to reveal these changes so that those who are interested in studying the African's development might understand that his restiveness and intolerance with the *status quo* is an outward manifestation of urges that are far too deep-seated to be suppressed by legislation or by the mere stroke of the pen; that his impatience with his subordination is woven into the warp and woof of his very being. An appreciation of the attitude thus revealed gives the lie to the popular feeling that the African is not aware of his condition and is therefore the victim of misleading and self-seeking demagogues.

As in the past when music was part of the life of the primitive man, like eating, drinking making love and making war, music today still expresses the African's likes and hates as well as his attitude to life generally. Admittedly he no longer sings of the hunt and the battle like his ancestors, for to him these things are no more; they belong to the past. On the contrary, he sings of the factories, of conditions in the factories. He sings of the trains that take him away from home and children at dawn and return him after dusk. He sings of the pass laws, the pick-up vans and the eternal police raids on his home and sanctuary.

Listen to the chant of a gang of railway workers any morning as they heave a section of rail:

*"Where is Lizzie, we drink at Lizzie's we drink at Lizzie's
The Dutchman's beard, the Dutchman's beard, the Dutchman'
White men goddam, white man goddam, goddam, goddam,
Where is Lizzie, we drink at Lizzie's, we drink at Lizzie's."*

Watching this little drama that is enacted daily at a thousand and one places wherever there is a group of Africa's dusky sons doing heavy manual work, the uninitiated spectator feels, "Hm—, here are people who are able to treat their troubles lightly and sing them away." How often does one hear this opinion expressed? Even the white foreman is deceived, little understanding that at that moment he is personally being made the embodiment and symbol of all that is vicious and evil in the white man. His beard — whether he has one or not is immaterial — is the object of ridicule, and as a white man he must be "Goddammed."

The emotional attitude hereby displayed stands out in marked contrast to the fatalism and defeatism of, say, forty years ago when it was not uncommon to hear a choir of Africans sing with gusto and nonchalance "From North and South, East and West, white and black, rich and poor, we are under the British kingdom for ever more." While it is not easy to pinpoint the date or year in which the divorce of the new attitude from the old took place, it is nevertheless possible to state that it was somewhere about the early twenties of the present or thereabout, for it was at this period that we hear Majombozi sing — this was his own wording to a familiar English song: (translated from Xhosa):

*"Whilst unworried we lived at ease,
The white man came and offered us peace;
In his hand he held a bible,
And under his arm he hid a rifle.
Whilst we took his hand and the bible,
In his heart there lurked guile.
We accepted the bible and his hand,
Today we are creatures without land."*

This expression of revulsion at the oppressor's yoke was, however, not isolated; it was not a manifestation of Majombozi's "warped soul" — lest the reader should think so—it was an expression of a general awakening and of an awareness on the part of the Africans as a whole although it was still possible at this time to hear some choir sing "God bless the Prince of Wales." Even today in the year 1954 A.D. we still hear Hamilton Masiza sing:

*"Behold! Behold! Behold! (thou black races,
Hearken! for we bring you tidings good,
That will put you in happier mood,
Look! the Queen of Britain good,
Has visited her subjects the black races."*

Among the many composers at this time who expressed the feeling and attitude of the day, was Reuben Caluza who for almost three decades dominated the African musicians and carved for himself a place of honour from which he is not likely to be overthrown easily. I make bold to say that, in the whole sub-continent of South Africa, no man sensed the feelings of the people more and no man interpreted them more aptly. Caluza was first and foremost a friend of the proletariat. In fact, he was one of them. He was their friend because he was their spokesman through his songs. He was

one of them because he felt with them and wept with them. Can anything demonstrate this more aptly than the following:

*"There is a great calamity, my fellowmen,
It has befallen all the black men;
From work the whites dismiss us,
In our place they employ their brothers.
For many years we served them,
We were so true and trusted,
Yet, and yet, the white men,
They chase us from employment;
They've chased them at Tekwini (Durban),
They've chased them in the Goldfields;
And now they will arrest us,
What shall we do, pray tell us."*

Throughout all Caluza's music, one is able to discern this invariable attitude of self-identification with the masses. At one time he is following the pick-up van as it careers in the townships stopping all and sundry and asking "*Waar's jou pas, jong?*" At the next moment his receptive mind is contemplating the misery which was caused by the notorious Land Act of 1913. An adept at taking in situations and weaving them into the matrix of his music, Caluza had a very high sense of humour. He was able to take the most serious situation and make it look ridiculous. In the "Pick-up Van," he makes even the policeman loathe himself.

I have given pride of place to Caluza, and not without justification, for he marked the beginning of an epoch, and up to the present, he stands peerless among the composers of the country as a man of the people. But the era he ushered in has not come to an end. On the contrary, after an interregnum which lasted for a few years, perhaps because the struggle for the overthrow of the oppressor was experiencing a setback which was reflected in barrenness of music of the people, a revival has begun. It is too early at present to attempt an appraisal of the contribution which the present phase of the struggle is likely to make, but it is clear that since the present phase of the struggle started, the initiative has been wrested from the intellectuals and the song of the people is welling up spontaneously from many sources and bubbling up in a manner unknown before. The people are expressing their emotion in song more than ever, as a visit to any Congress meeting will show. The new folk song is expressing their aspiration and their revolution against domination by the oppressor.

Why the Nationalists say there is

NO PLACE FOR MISSION SCHOOLS

By Father TREVOR HUDDLESTON, C.R.

ONE of the ways in which the Government attempts to influence African opinion is the familiar one of appealing to high-sounding principles to mask very shameful and degrading actions. So in the implementation of the Bantu Education Act, the approach is: "You have always been dissatisfied with Mission Schools. So have we. Here is your opportunity of making the divorce between Church and State in education. Here is your chance of controlling your own destiny. Here is the place for intelligent Africans — the Bantu Authority."

At least this is the kind of argument that Mr. Prinsloo and other spokesmen for the Native Affairs Department use from time to time. It is not without its appeal value.

"Titshala" in his very interesting and provocative article in the eighth number of *Liberation* deals with the basic principles of the Bantu Education Act very fairly.

I would like to suggest, however, that there are certain aspects of the matter which need further attention. And I would like, as a 'missionary' to challenge certain assumptions in the article with which I disagree — though with the general theme of it I have no quarrel at all.

"Tishala's" article in our last issue, *Farewell to Mission Schools*, has stimulated much comment and controversy. The Editor invited that well-known champion of African rights, Father Huddleston, to express his views on the issues raised. This is what he wrote.

It seems to me that, basically, the Bantu Education Act has nothing to do with the old and time-worn question of Church *versus* State. This is just 'one of those things' being used by the Government to cloud the real issue.

Dr. Verwoerd in his notorious policy-statement to the Senate has given the true reason for his determination to destroy Mission Schools when he says: "They" (Mission Schools and their Superin-

tendents) "were unsympathetic to the country's policy." And again: "The curriculum and education practise, by ignoring the segregation or 'apartheid' policy, was unable to prepare for service within the Bantu community."

And again: "... Education has served to create a class of educated and semi-educated persons . . . this is the class which has learnt to believe that it is above its own people and feels that its spiritual, economic and political home is among the civilised community of South Africa, i.e. the Europeans . . ."

In other words, Mission Schools must be destroyed *not* because in the Government's opinion secular education is better (the Government has explicitly denied this) but because no schools which oppose 'apartheid' in theory or practice can be suffered to exist. These are the schools which have dared to proclaim that it is a Christian principle for all men to have full and free opportunity to use their God-given skills and talents.

These are the schools which have assumed as a sound educational principle the right of every individual to his full share in the cultural heritage of mankind. These are the schools which on the whole, and however inadequately, have tried to equip the African mentally, physically and spiritually to hold his own with the members of the master-race.

What possible place have they in a country whose Government openly declares: "There is no place for the African in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour?"

No. It is not the issue of "church-school *versus* State-school" with which we should be concerned, and indeed it is foolish to allow that matter to cloud our minds. The real, fundamental principles at stake are absolutely simple. Is education to be *education* or is it to be *Bantu Education*? In so far as the Mission Schools have stood for the former they are regarded as the natural enemy and for this reason alone they must be destroyed. "Titshala" is absolutely right in his diagnosis of the situation and it is much to be hoped that the African people will recognise the truth of what he has said before it is too late.

Nevertheless I would be a poor sort of Christian if I were to let go unchallenged that assumption so easily made (and so truly indefensible) that the missionary is more interested in forcing 'conversion' upon innocent children than in educating them. That this may have been true in the past — the remote past — is open to argument. But, after all, it was the missionary who took the initiative in education everywhere and he had a right to call the tune, for even if he did not pay the piper, he himself was also without pay!

What I'm getting at is this: Every educationist, unless he is a jelly-fish, has *some* faith behind him. He could not possibly educate unless he was convinced of some standards, some immutables, some ideals. He might be an atheist or a dialectical materialist or a Quaker or an Anglican — his teaching would inevitably be affected by his position. *But it would not make him a bad teacher.* There is no evidence anywhere that "the devout evangelist and the conscientious schoolmaster" are "always at war within him." There is plenty of evidence to the contrary: plenty of evidence to show that nearly every revolutionary step forward in Western European education systems was in fact taken by the Church. It is not a bad thing to remember that the premier Universities of Europe to this day stand on a Christian foundation — and it is, paradoxically, for that very reason that men like Bertrand Russell are able to teach in them.

However, such matters need a whole article to themselves. As a missionary superintendent I am well content to be criticised so fairly and straightforwardly by "Titshala."

He concludes his article "we little thought the day would come when we should mourn the passing of the mission schools. The day is here." He might have added "And so is the night."

The Meaning of

BANTU EDUCATION

By DUMA NOKWE

BANTU education is the 'education' designed for the 'Bantu' by the Nationalist Government; it is a development of 'Native Education,' the education which was designed for the 'Native' of South Africa.

Like 'Native Education,' 'Bantu education' is a qualified education which is a product of the political and economic structure of the country. Like its predecessors too, 'Bantu education' was not introduced as a means of raising the cultural level of the Africans, nor of developing the abilities of the African child to the full, but as one of the devices which aim at solving the cheap labour problems of the country. The development of education amongst the Africans and the policy of Governments have been closely connected with the labour problems of the country.

Dr. Verwoerd's statement that "(Native) education in each of the four provinces, therefore, took into account neither the community interests of the Bantu, nor the general policy of the country," is incorrect in so far as it refers to the general policy of the country. It is, of course, correct that 'Native Education' did not take into account the interests of the Africans, it was never intended to fulfil that task. The Director of Education of the Transvaal made it very clear that "*teach the Native to work*" was the "*true principle by which the education of the Native is to be regulated and controlled*" and that a plan for "Native education" must "*contemplate the ultimate social place of the native as an efficient worker.*" The report continues to prescribe a scheme through which the aims of Native education could be realised, and the scheme which had to be for the continuation of MANUAL TRAINING with ELEMENTARY INSTRUCTION, and in the second place for the shaping of the elementary instruction to equip the Native for more intelligent comprehension of any industrial work before him." The scheme was implemented; and it determined the salient features of Native education, which were:—

- 1) The complete application of segregation in the purpose, administration and organisation of education.
- 2) The vesting of control of education of the Africans in hands which were not responsible to the Africans, despite the fact that Africans were made to pay for their education.
- 3) The careful regulation of the number of children who had access to education to keep it as low as possible, so as not to upset the reservoir of cheap, unskilled labour, Among of the 'controls' used were the denial of free, compulsory education to Africans and the insistence that parents who wanted their children "educated" should pay for them, and the inadequate and poor schooling provided for Africans.
- 4) The careful regulation of the curriculum of African schools so that African education remained basically elementary with an emphasis on MANUAL labour. This is illustrated by the following extract from the report of the Native Education Commission of 1930-1932 (P. 75) "The students were taught gardening other manual work, every student at Lovedale had to work two hours in the garden or on the road, this excellent practice continues to this day."
- 5) The denial of technical education to Africans, and the restriction of their training to teaching, nursing and interpreters and priests.

This scheme of 'education' consistent with the general policy of

The government attempted to check the flow to towns by imposing restrictions on the movements of Africans, in the form of permits under the Native Urban Areas Act of 1935. But as industry developed, the contradictions sharpened proportionately.

Successive governments of the country have tried various devices to resolve the contradiction between country and town. The Amendment to the Urban Areas Act was calculated to tighten restrictions on the entry of Africans into towns; elaborate influx control departments were established, the police force was increased, and pass raids were intensified; and arrested Africans found themselves working on the farms. Farmers were allowed to build farm goals and secure their cheap labour behind bars. The Nationalist Government, which represents the interests of the capitalist farmers and the mine magnates, has intensified the efforts to drive Africans from the towns to the country in a more ruthless manner. 'BANTU EDUCATION' is one of these numerous efforts of the Nationalists, aimed at resolving the conflict between the farms and mines on the one hand, and industry and commerce on the other, by compelling the African to accept the miserable oppressive conditions of work on the farms and mines.

'Native education' was the 'education' imposed upon the African during the period of the development of capitalism in the towns; the period when there was a shortage of cheap labour in towns and consequently a great demand for it. 'Bantu education' is imposed on the Africans in the period of the development of capitalism in the country, a period of intensified exploitation by farmers and the shortage of cheap labour on farms and mines.

Through it, the Nationalists are attempting to harness the African to the most ruthless exploitation and oppression.

BENEFICIAL — TO WHOM?

Dr. Verwoerd's exposition of Bantu education contains the outworn fallacy that it is intended to benefit the African. In his pamphlet on Bantu Education, he says:—

"The Bantu pupil must obtain knowledge, skills and attitudes in the school which will be useful and advantageous to him, at the same time *beneficial* to his community. The subject matter must be presented to him in such a way that he can understand and master it, easily making it his own, to the benefit and services of his community."

In the very next paragraph, however, Dr. Verwoerd proceeds to expose this fallacy by stating that:

"A school must equip him to meet the demands which the economic life of South Africa impose upon him." He admits that

the country maintained the difference in standards between European and African to perpetuate the illusion of white supremacy and black inferiority, the fallacy upon which the exploiters rely to justify their ruthless exploitation of the people. Native education fulfilled the function of supplying the growing commercial enterprises and mines with 'efficient' workers without disturbing the cheap labour reservoir.

Native education was the 'educational' scheme for Africans during the period of the shortage of labour in the mines and the growing commercial enterprises of the country; together with other measures like the Land Act of 1913 and the Taxation laws, it maintained a steady flow of cheap labour from the country to the towns.

Before World War I, when South Africa had mainly an agricultural-mineral economy, most of the energies of the government were spent in squeezing Africans out of the Reserves and driving them to the towns. With the development of industry in the towns after the first World War, the process which the Governments had begun assumed inconvenient proportions as the flow from country to town increased.

This created two 'problems' for the economy of the country:—

a. The participation of the African in industry and his low wage constituted a 'threat' to the privileged position of the European worker, according to the Report of the Economic Commission (P. 76):

"Industry in the Union in areas where the Native predominates used to be based almost entirely on European supervision and skilled work, and Native manual labour. This was the natural division of labour in the earlier period of the contact between races when however, the land began to fill up and the struggle for a share in the material goods became keener, this division of labour began to change. On the one hand, there arose a small but increasing number of natives who aspired to the more lucrative occupations of the Europeans."

To remedy this position, and to restore the 'natural division of labour' which protected the European, Colour Bar laws were passed which denied Africans access to skilled labour, the 'natural' preserve of the European.

b. Africans were naturally attracted by the more favourable conditions of work offered by the growing industries, as opposed to the feudal conditions on the farms and the exploitation of the mines. This created a condition of surplus cheap labour in the towns and a 'shortage' of labour in the country and on the mines, thus sharpening the contradiction between the town and the country.

"the economic structure of our country of course results in large numbers of natives having to earn their living in the service of Europeans."

These last two quotations represent a more honest declaration of the purpose of Native education. Dr. Verwoerd's exposition of 'Bantu Education' is full of glaring contradictions, but in characteristic Nationalist style he staggers blindly over the contradictions and imposes upon the majority of the people of South Africa a complete racist and fascist system of 'education.' It is a negation of every single principle of education, which has been accepted by democratic people of the world.

The content of 'Bantu education' is a gross lowering of the already low education facilities of the Africans. Dr. Verwoerd shamelessly sets Standard II as 'fundamental' education, after which pupils will be carefully selected for what is called higher primary education. Dr. Verwoerd keeps a judicious silence about the fate of those who are not selected for the higher primary course. The curriculum is distorted. Fundamental education consists of reading, writing and arithmetic, Afrikaans and English, religious education and singing. History and geography have been excluded. The intention is obvious, the African child who is being prepared as an instrument of cheap labour in a society which relies on fallacies must not know either the conditions of his country nor the truths about the world which are apparent even in the distorted South African history books, and are likely to expose the fallacies.

Dr. Verwoerd blames the African child for the low percentage of African children who have access to education, and not the completely inadequate schooling facilities. To increase the percentage, he proposes, first, to reduce school hours of the sub-standards to three a day . . . "it is wrong to utilise expensive teaching staff to supervise large classes of bored pupils while thousands of children who are entitled to the same measure of primary education are kept out of school."

Secondly, to remove children who keep in sub-standards for years, "keeping other children out of the *available* school accommodation and wasting public funds without themselves deriving any benefit worth mentioning."

Thirdly, to dismiss children who fail to attend school regularly.

Fourthly, to refuse admission to children who cannot afford school requisites, such as pens and exercise books.

These proposals are made under the heading of "Extension of School Facilities for Bantu Children." He does not mention a word about building new schools. On this point, however, he proposes later on:—

a. "Bantu mothers can, in accordance with local methods, erect walls where farmers allow it, and the Department will provide the windows, doors and roofs."

b. "The present arrangement in Native Areas by which the Department provides the necessary labour is sound and can continue. The urban Bantu community will have to meet its obligations just as the rural community has to do."

The net result of these proposals is a reduction in the educational facilities for Africans.

The intensification of oppression and exploitation is extended to the teachers. Women teachers who are less expensive than men will be preferred. Instead of an increase in wages which teachers have been clamouring and hoping for, Dr. Verwoerd proposes a reduction in the present scales, despite the fact that European teachers have had increases and cost of living continues to rise. Dr. Verwoerd argues that the European teacher has a higher salary because "he is in the service of the European community and his salary must be fixed accordingly." He ingeniously explains that the European teacher in the service of Africans gets a European wage because he can be regarded as on loan to the African. Dr. Verwoerd does not explain why he does not apply his principles to the messengers and the "large numbers of natives who earn their living in the service of the Europeans."

Dr. Verwoerd says of African teachers that they are entrusted with "a role in which they will be in the service of and *responsible* to the Bantu community." At the beginning of his pamphlet, however, he says "the control of the educational system has been taken out of the hands of the Provinces and placed in the hands of the Department of Native Affairs," and later he says "no new school may, however, be established without the prior approval of the Department." The only responsibility the African community has in Bantu education is that of providing the children and the schools.

The introduction of 'mother-tongue' education as a medium for teaching is justifiable on two grounds: first, as an expression of respect for a people and its national culture; secondly as a step towards the democratisation of education amongst a people.

The facts about Bantu education and numerous oppressive laws of the Nationalists indicate clearly that Dr. Verwoerd has no respect for the Africans and in fact despises them, nor has he any intention of democratising education so that it is available to all Africans to develop their abilities to the full, and so that they can contribute freely and fully to raising of the material and cultural standards of all people of this country. The reasons why Dr. Verwoerd introduces mother-tongue instruction is to enable the African

child to master his distorted schemes easily, and to fan the spirit of tribalism to divide the African people.

“Bantu education” is a reactionary scheme which very nearly destroys education for the African in South Africa. It is reactionary because it is designed to satisfy the needs of a reactionary and heartless class of exploiters. Whilst the Nationalists disregard the needs and interests of the masses of the people, and subject the people to a more ruthless oppression and exploitation in the interests of solving the contradictions of their society they do not take into account the sharpening conflict they are creating between themselves and the people, which will ultimately break their artificial political and economic structure.

DAN TLOOME writes on

RENT INCREASES

AN enthusiastic campaign is being conducted by the Non-Europeans throughout the country in opposition to rent increases recently introduced by the Government for African Townships, locations, and hostels, falling within the jurisdiction of the local authorities. Of all the outstanding issues which have provoked intense protest and resentment among the African people, the question of increase in rentals stands out as the most callous and a direct assault upon the ever-worsening economic position of the lowest income group of the community — the Africans.

The circular letter circulated to tenants of various Townships by the Johannesburg local authority states: inter alia:

“In terms of the Government Notice No. 1516 of the 23rd July, 1954, the Minister of Native Affairs has ruled that as from the 1st October of this year tenants in the African houses shall pay an economic rental if their family income exceeds £15 per month, and a sub-economic rental if their family income falls below £15 per month. The Minister has further ruled that all tenants will be regarded as belonging to the economic group and be required to pay an economic rental unless and until they are able to prove to the satisfaction of their respective Superintendents that their income was less than £15 per month on an average over the period 1st July, 1953 to 30th June, 1954.”

The Chief information officer of the Department of Native Affairs, Mr. C. W. Prinsloo, explaining the specified directive issued to Urban Local authorities on this question stated, inter alia, “that the Government has issued this directive after receiving continued and justified representations from local authorities about the excessive

losses they had to bear on sub-economic housing every year." He further stated that the Pretoria City Council and the Native Housing Commission have to subsidise a scheme of 150 houses to the extent of more than £50,000 a year, and many of the houses for which the average rent is less than £1.10 a month are occupied by Bantu Traders and Clerks with incomes ranging from £25 to £70 a month (Daily Mail 27/9/54).

The impression given in this directive is that only those whose earnings are above £15 a month will pay economic rentals. The position is that there are going to be increases in rentals for all tenants irrespective of whether or not they earn an economic wage. What is an economic wage? Who determines the standard? The fact that Mr. Prinsloo quotes people whose earnings range from £25 to £70 a month, is an indication that the standard of £15 as a border line wage group is unrealistic, as will be revealed by the facts showing the present economic position of the people. The increase in rentals will mean an average increase of 90% to all whose earnings are above £15 per month, and an average of 30% increase to all tenants irrespective of what their earnings are as long as they prove that their wages are below £15 per month. In short there is going to be increase in rentals of all tenants who live in Municipal Townships, locations and hostels.

Think of the state in which tenants find some of the houses erected under the sub-economic scheme; it is common knowledge that houses without ceilings, unplastered walls and uneven floors, have been offered to tenants during the last 15 years. In most cases tenants have had to pay not less than £50 on improvements before the house is ready for occupation. Yet these are the same people who are today called upon to pay increases in rentals.

Cannot Afford 1d. More

The major question to be considered is whether the average African labourer, living in Townships and locations can afford to meet the proposed increase in rentals? To answer this question, it would be helpful to examine some of the facts brought out by careful investigations conducted by some well-known institutions like the South African Institute of Race Relations, as well as Government Commissions of Inquiry.

According to information available, the minimum expenditures in 1944 for an African family of five living in municipal townships, to cover essential requirements which include only food, cleaning materials, fuel, clothing and transport was estimated to be £12. 18. 6 per month as compared with an average minimum income of £9. 18. 1 per month, whilst the average minimum expenditure for 1950 was £17. 14. 4 as against the average minimum income of £12. 6. 6. It is estimated that in 1954 the minimum expenditure

would be £23. 10. 4 a month as against the average minimum income of £15. 18. 11 a month.

It will be noted that during the period covered by the survey (1944-1954) the difference between the expenditure and the income is cash deficit which must be met by the families concerned. The result is that the vast majority of African families have to live from crisis to crisis in their struggle for existence.

Bearing these facts in mind, coupled with the recent increase in rail fares, it is undoubtedly obvious that the overwhelming majority of the African urban families cannot pay a penny more without great sacrifices of the minimum requirements for subsistence, health and decency, and disastrous dislocation in family life.

Take the report of the Non-European Bus Service Commission in 1944 and the investigation and survey conducted by the South African Institute of Race Relations in 1950. They all come to the same conclusion:

1. That the vast majority of African urban workers are paid wages wholly inadequate to meet the minimum expenditure necessary for healthy existence.
2. That even where the husband's earnings are supplemented by contributions from other members of the family, the essential minimum expenditure still cannot be met.
3. That there has been no increase in the basic wage in the occupations employing the largest numbers of Africans at least in the last six years, and the cost of living is inadequate to meet the increased cost of essential commodities.
4. That the steep rise in the cost of food in recent years has had a telling effect on the expenditure of Africans, who must spend the major portion (87%) of their earnings on this item alone.
5. The rise in the cost of clothing, especially women's clothing has also greatly affected African expenditure.

As could be expected, as soon as the proposed rent increases were brought to the notice of the tenants in the various townships, the African people lost no time in registering their resentment and indignation and labelling them as the most callous attack upon the appalling economic standard of a people, the vast majority of whom is on the verge of starvation. The unanimous opposition against this wicked scheme was clearly demonstrated at the various meetings, convened by the officials of the local authorities to place it before the residents. At all these meetings the effective reply of "NO" by the people left no room for doubt.

Coming so closely after the recent increase of rail fares the increase in rentals will undoubtedly cause great hardships and dislikes to the overwhelming majority of the African people.

As Africans are restricted by numerous legislations to seek employment in the best market: to operate trades which offer economic wages and to utilise the effective machinery of collective bargaining, available to other sections of the community, it is most unjust to expect them to pay economic rentals on sub-economic houses erected specifically and with the full realisation of the economic position of those who are to occupy them. In any case, if the authorities have now come to realise that sub-economic housing schemes are bad business, and that economic housing schemes will place them in a better position, it behoves the Government to enact special legislation fixing an economic minimum wage for all citizens so as to ensure that the people will afford economic rentals. But it is certainly absurd and highly unreasonable to call upon people to pay economic rentals on sub-economic houses.

Admittedly that it is the African who will be hardest hit by the new increases, one should not overlook the fact that the new regulations will affect workers of all sections of the community, Europeans, Coloureds and Africans and others, and if ever there was an issue on which all sections of the community should present an united front, that issue is RENT INCREASES.

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