

The New African

Providing for Sabotage

THE GENERAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL replaces one political paradox by another. It has removed the anomaly whereby four-fifths of the population of South Africa have been subjected to totalitarian control, while the remaining fifth was able to act as if it was part of a political democracy. But in the process of stifling opposition, it has created a situation in which violence and sabotage become increasingly likely.

When Mr. Vorster introduced the Bill, he seemed surprised at the amount of opposition that it had stimulated. In many ways, his amazement is easier to credit than the apparent astonishment of the Parliamentary opposition at the terms of the measure. After all, that same opposition—at a time when it still contained the present-day Progressives—had been content to allow the Government to take powers quite as far-reaching under the Public Safety Act and the Criminal Law Amendment Act; and as a Government it had done much to found the system of tight control over the political and economic existence of millions of Africans.

Nearly all the powers which will enable the Minister to intimidate and suppress opposition under the new provisions were implied in earlier legislation, and connived at by a White Opposition which thought of them as applicable mainly to non-whites and their organisations. It is the sudden realisation that they may be applied elsewhere, and nearer home, that has presumably led to the furious emphasis that is being placed on the "rule of law" in a country in which this term has long been meaningless for the majority of the population.

Even if the Opposition is tainted, however, its fight against the Bill and all it stands for is important. It does at least provide some indication that the pattern of future resistance to Government dictatorship will have to recognise the common interests of all South Africa's people, if it is to succeed without violence.

And violence cannot be dismissed easily as a possible weapon of an increasingly desperate majority against a minority which has done much in recent months to show its own belief in force—through its emphasis on military power for "internal security." In a country in which political deprivation coincides very largely with inability to own property freely, the tendency to confuse political with economic privilege is inevitable. The removal of all legitimate means of political expression may mean that property will become the sole target of the dispossessed.

The results of such activity, born of frustration, could be so disastrous that only concerted action from abroad could bring about the return of sanity to South Africa.

It is fortunate that Dr. Carpio and the UN Mission on South West Africa were in the country to learn the details of the Bill at first hand.

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Hard Work and Vision

PETER BROWN

The opposition's road out of adversity

AS THE GENERAL LAW AMENDMENT ACT moves on to the Statute Book and the armoury of the Government's police-state powers becomes more complete, one's overriding impression of South African politics is of a punch-drunk opposition.

The calls to white unity, the war threats, the kite flying in the Transkei are all having the apparent effect of winning more support for Dr. Verwoerd. Some white and some black South Africans, who were once opponents of apartheid, now wonder if there isn't perhaps some good in it for them somewhere. Where support is not won directly, there is a feeling of hopelessness. The Government's seeming invincibility takes the edge off the fight against it. Its growing array of weapons of intimidation makes critics think twice before talking. United Party voters start to vote Nationalist and Progressive voters decide it is safer to stay close to the laager, so they go back to the U.P. In urban areas non-voters are much less militant than a year ago. To relieve external pressure Dr. Verwoerd has struck a compromise over the United Nations visit to South West Africa which, even if it does not solve his problems, at least buys him time to manoeuvre. Some of apartheid's opponents have given up all hope of peaceful change and have made the first, tentative essays into violence, presumably knowing that this could lead in time to a second and more hideous Algeria.

IN THE FACE of this depressed and dispirited and sometimes desperate state of opposition, what does one do and where does one look for inspiration? One could look to the story of the British Labour Party or even closer to home, to the story of the rise of Afrikaner nationalism and the example of real perseverance in adversity set by its supporters in their fifty-year struggle for political emancipation. What could have been blacker than their prospects after the second Anglo-Boer War? Defeated, impoverished and rightless, how deep must have been their despair? How did they feel when, ground down by the full weight of the depression, they saw Malan leading them off into the political wilderness in the early 1930's? Or when, in 1943, Smuts inflicted that crushing electoral defeat on them? Yet, in 1948, they were in power! How did they do it?

They did it because on a foundation of endless hard

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work and meticulous attention to detail they raised the myth of the Afrikaner's divine destiny in South Africa—a destiny which would only be realised when political control was won and Afrikaner domination established. They knew that once most Afrikaners subscribed to the myth the distribution of the vote made it inevitable that they must control Parliament. So, in the face of their defeats, they kept on, behind-the-scenes, through the murky channels of the Broederbond, through the schools and churches, infiltrating into commerce, tightening their grip on the civil service, reasonably certain that ultimately they must win.

Many of the methods of the Nationalists are quite unacceptable to their opponents. Who wants to be a Broederbond bigot? Their ideal of a destiny which will only be realised when they are everybody else's boss is certainly quite obnoxious to everybody else. But their example of dedicated work and meticulous attention to the details of organisation, of an inspiring ideal and determination in adversity, is one from which we can learn a lot.

OF COURSE THE NATIONALISTS had many advantages in their struggle which they are careful to see that their opponents do not get. They had the vote. They had an expanding system of education. They had growing opportunities for employment and improvement. They were, through their churches, already a potentially highly-organised community in 1902. Against this anti-Nationalists today must wrestle with the vast organisational problems created by influx control, migratory labour, an educational system which leaves many children illiterate and attempts to persuade the others that their destiny lies in apartheid. This is quite apart from the administrative pressures which can be put on Africans living in municipal houses and the vast choice of criminal sanctions available to the Government and which it uses increasingly against those who refuse to conform to what it thinks is right.

Concede all this. Concede the fact that the Government comes out of each election better off than it went into it. Concede that it has successfully crushed every extra-Parliamentary campaign since 1948. Concede all this and the fact remains that apartheid has no future in the modern world and no future at all on the African continent. However desperately the Nationalists try to build propaganda on the Transkei and Bantustans the fact is that apartheid was conceived as a policy to entrench white supremacy. In the eyes of the world and Africa that is what it remains. As such it is an affront to the people of Africa and a blot on the continent which they are determined will one day be removed.

THE QUESTION of how the apartheid "blot" will finally go, is one that agitates us all but it seems to me that there are certain things without which it will *not* go and it is about these that we can learn from the story of the Afrikaner Nationalists.

It will not go unless its opponents have an inspiring ideal. This they already have, if they will only capitalise on it. The vision of a non-racial society in which the full potentialities of every individual will be realised is surely a much better one than the narrow urge to survival and assertion which drives the Nationalists on.

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It will not go unless anti-Nationalists as a whole work at least as hard and pay at least as much attention to building effective organisation as the Nationalists did. This they have not yet done. They had better start. They have relied too long on miracles and the off-chance of success. If anything they are going to have to work harder than the Nationalists did because the immediate obstacles they face are so much greater.

Finally, they must have the same courage the

Nationalist had in adversity. It may sound priggish to say so but this is not the time for punch-drunk opposition but for an opposition which realises that it must be as determined as its persecutors, confident in the knowledge that race supremacy is a dead faith and knowing that, if it gets down to brass tacks at home, with the world on its side, it will have nothing like the two generations of the Afrikaner Nationalists to wait before it comes into its own. ●

Thinking of BRITAIN

1. BLOKE MODISANE

An African in Britain

The Amateur Racialists

I AM AN AFRICAN from South Africa, where colour prejudice is a national expression, or in the words of Nadine Gordimer: 'Colour prejudice is far more than a question or a matter of discrimination or conflicts or loyalties—we have built a morality on it.' Every thought, every idea, every pronouncement, was conceived in and about, above, below the strangling presence of colour.

English friends in South Africa verbalised with idealism the colourlessness of Britain. We have no colour legislation, they said. You can go into any cinema, theatre, pub, anywhere. Being in South Africa, this seemed the absolute ideal. I could lose my colour in Britain, crawl out of the facelessness, the anonymity, of going under the name, Bloke.

I would outlive the necessity for the anonymity; re-define the features of my face, rediscover my personality and reassert my individuality. I would stop acting and release the essential 'me'. I would re-adopt my real name, and be myself, to myself, to my friends, to all the world. I would find my space, maintain it against all intrusion.

I arrived in Britain, vividly conscious that I had left prejudice behind me; full of love for life, for the world.

WILLIAM ("BLOKE") MODISANE, formerly of Drum, left Johannesburg in 1959 for London, where he is working as a journalist, broadcaster and actor. He has contributed to many periodicals, including The Twentieth Century, whose Spring 1962 issue contained the above article.

Not realising that I was the more vulnerable, because I was wearing the scars of discrimination from living in a pigmentocracy. Transition was to be difficult and adjusting hazardous.

I was unaware that my attitude to people, their reaction towards and against me, was not altogether free of colour overtones. When people moved away from me—in buses and tubes—I interpreted this as prejudice. I would be overcome by a sense of rejection. I rejected all self-analysis; it was 'they' who were responsible. And since race prejudice—or the reaction to it—always employs a scapegoat psychology, I accommodated the fear of self-analysis by rationalising my reactions to prejudice—often real—by being intellectual about it; advancing that I had been discriminated against by professionals, that English racialists were amateurs.

But in the streets, when the semi-professionals shouted: Nigger, go home, I would curl up inside and become frozen; afraid to explode, for fear of what I might do. The anger and the hate would be frozen inside. I would be the actor again, submerge myself in the anonymity of being black in a white man's world. One evening a crowd of middle-class thrill maniacs threw a bottle at me in Soho. I rationalised: there's no need to explode, the bottle didn't strike you. I knew then—and now—that the physical reality of my colour was being challenged. My right to be black, to be in Soho, was being called to question. Had it been in South Africa, there would have been a race riot.

The act of violence was not a protest against Bloke Modisane, but a reaction against my colour. I was a black face, a mask without definition. This would have happened to any black face. In a society which demands definite identifiable characteristics, the Negro is especially appropriate. There is no danger of him lowering his high visibility. He can be immediately identified under all conditions. With the Negro it is never a question of class. A Negro millionaire is black; a Negro Oxford graduate is black.

From the acceptance of this attitude come all the clichés about Negroes. The Negroes must conform to all the stereotypes. The Negro, like the Irish, is capable of all the lower forms of behaviour. He does not have to do anything; he is just guilty, by identification. The moment the Negro fails to conform to the stereotypes, he must be humiliated into submission.

BRITAIN IS, PERHAPS, the world's most perfect democracy. It has a rich and mature democratic tradition; is shrouded in glorious history, the cultural capital of the world. The British are the freest of all peoples of the world. They have a respect for discipline and have arranged themselves under the will of the law. Britain is, and has always been, a refuge or asylum of all political persuasions—even under ironic conditions where the refugee may be fleeing from British colonialism. Britain is the home of democratic freedom; in spite of historical blemishes like colonial America, India and Africa. Minority groups enjoy in equal measure and proportion all the formal freedoms.

But minority groups, anywhere, will develop minority complexes, anywhere; and, depending on the degree of visibility, social stresses, group identity and emotional strains will insinuate them into in-groups usually located in social igloos. Thus we have an essentially Jewish Golders Green and a predominantly Coloured Ladbroke Grove. A stratified social structure like Britain's—where a class minority dominates the economy, and therefore the whole social and political life—demands the establishment of definite identifiable groups; the Establishment must be different from the commonalty, and from the other Caucasian subgroups. Identification must be definite and immediate. The English identify each other by the accent, dress habits and other symbols of opulence. Accents can, however, be affected, and uniformity of dress commercialised. Low visibility has increased the risk of immediate identity—except where the black man is concerned.

A COUPLE OF WEEKS ago I was doing a recording for a film company, and it was necessary for me to go in and out of the building in Oxford Street. On one occasion I was confronted by a man who questioned my right to be there. There was that stupid dogmatism about him which I knew so well.

"You people are not to aimlessly wander in and out of this building," he said.

"What do you mean, 'you people'?" I insisted.

It later transpired that certain men—Negroes possibly—were using women's lavatories. I need not have done it, but the fact that I am a Negro was sufficient supposition. It has not yet become necessary for the man to apologise.

A West African describes, with relish, the assault upon him by two police constables, for allegedly being cheeky. This is the conversation—as near verbatim as possible—in the police station:

P.C.: Have you been to Oxford?

WEST AFRICAN: No.

P.C.: Cambridge?

WEST AFRICAN: No.

P.C.: You must be from Oxford or Cambridge.

WEST AFRICAN: No.

P.C.: Where did you learn to talk like that? You must be from Oxford.

WEST AFRICAN: I've always talked like this.

The high visibility of the black man has made him the target for a variety of attitudes. It is difficult—at the best of times—for a black man to exist in social freedom in the white man's world. Success, to the black man, seems to be the price for acceptance in the

white world. And of the most successful, Sammy Davis, Jr., has conceded that no matter how far you make it, you never make it all the way.

This lack of social mobility has disenchanted the black man. He no longer wants to be integrated; he is beginning to negrify himself. The black man is insisting on the right to be different, to the black, by refusing what is 'white.' The castle of his skin is no longer a sweat-house; it has become the fortress of positive consciousness. The black man no longer feels himself as a nonwhite, he asserts his blackness.

When I first came to this country, I used to be embarrassed by such questions as: "Tell me, are there still exclusively cannibal tribes in Africa?" Today there is a chilly conviction to answers for such questions. "Yes", I would say. "Take me, for example: I come from a long line of distinguished cannibals. There is a statuette—about fourteen inches high—in my grandmother's house. It is one of those commemoration things, with the inscription: 'To the London Mission Society—for having nourished Africa for so many years'."

I AM NO LONGER ashamed of my traditions. And the release from the inferiority complex of being black and struggling with white values has been adequately articulated by Jean Genet in his play *Les Nègres*.

The black man, in Britain and America, has battled for many years to be integrated; to lose himself in the national flora. He had always wanted to assert: "I am British", or, "I am American". But instead he is committed to being the eternal alien. His alienation is contained in the seemingly innocent questions like, "Where do you come from?" In America the Negro is integrally an American citizen, second-class as may be; but he is as American as the physical reality of the South. In Britain the situation is the complete opposite; and it is amusing that black men have become conditioned to an acceptance of this attitude. Recently I was introduced to a "West Indian" woman; three questions later, I said to her: "Which part of the West Indies do you come from?" She replied: "Wales." I killed myself laughing. For in that question I implied her alienship.

The alienation of the black man is always implicit, psychologically; and explicit, physically. In the public organs of communication, an advertisement for accommodation will conclude 'English Only'; and even the woman from Wales will be affected. The effect of this fundamental encroachment upon my 'right' to take accommodation in the house, in the area, of my choice, is the most vicious aspect of discrimination in Britain. Apologists for it say that it is social and not statutory. This is true. But the academics of this fail to be compensatory when the discrimination strikes at the bare essentials—requirements for a basic existence. A man—any man—needs a roof over his head, and the bread to nourish his body so it can enjoy the formal freedoms. These anachronisms argue that a man has the right—the freedom—to refuse accommodation to anybody, even on the grounds of colour. This is a free country.

I find it most strange, if not perverse, that I am expected on the telephone, to say I am sorry that a land-

lady is sorry that she does not take Coloureds. The reasons or excuses or rationalisations or whatever are irrelevant. I don't care whether Coloureds are noisy or dirty or whatever. That is irrelevant—since this is said about the Irish, the Italians and others.

The degradation of being forced to live in rat-traps is embittering. When the landlady says, "I don't mind Coloureds", then the amenities provided will invariably be inferior, and the 'privilege' is going to be costly. Censorship of personal freedom will be emphatic: no gramophones after eleven; no parties; not more than two visiting friends, and so on, *ad nauseam*. At my last rooming-house in Hampstead, the elderly woman in the sitter below mine complained untiringly about the thumping of footsteps which kept her awake. It got so that I could not walk from one point in the room to another, during those nights when writing was difficult.

The black man must be conditioned to realise that a favour is being conferred on him when he is offered lodgings which would have the R.S.P.C.A. up in indignant rage if animals were caged in them.

It is interesting to note the psychological effect that discrimination has had on the black man. He will, as Genet puts it, "persist to madness in what he has been condemned to be". The black man in Britain, particularly the West Indian, has become recalcitrant. He is often outrageous and arrogant, because he is expected to be that, condemned to be that. He finds very little reason to be house-proud, because the house is a rat's playground. He has developed a disregard for the law, and a contempt for British justice. Playing at beating the devil—the law—becomes an expression of protest. Only the most discriminated-against minority groups—Irish, Italians and Black men—are expected of being capable of being pimps. If a black man drives in a big car, flaunting his wealth and success for all to see, the sneer is that he lives off prostitution.

Psychologically, the black man may adopt a short-term morality, and abandon himself to, or seek compensation in, the lower freedoms. He will give himself up to sex, vice, drunkenness and crime. This black man says, "All right, I shall submit to your construction. You boast that your culture is unique in space and time, that I have contributed nothing to it, and therefore deny me admission to the status of equality of opportunity." An unfettered orgiastic sexual life and the stupor of drunkenness become all that life offers as a purpose. He is aware that he will never be able to leave the caste group into which he has been born. Because—according to Malinowski—"people are swayed by the errors of what they feel and not the truth which they ignore." I know that I will never feel completely at home in Britain. I want a place which I can call my own, a space in the whole, which will be a piece of the whole. Britain cannot offer me this, emotionally, and I cannot indulge in the compensatory day-dreaming that things are changing in the Welfare State; that my colour may—one of these days—be nationalised. The trend in the change seems to be mirrored in the new Immigration Act and the racial orgiastics of Sir Oswald Mosley.

I feel intensely the fact that I am different, confronted by the physical reality of my colour. It has made me

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Edward Roux

The use of land in Africa

James J. Ravell

The schoolboy—a story

Randolph Vigne

on the Mbari

conference of African writers
Makerere College, 8–17 June

perverse. And it becomes particularly ugly when misinterpreting a genuine attempt at friendliness. I feel that people deliberately impress this fact upon me; I have developed a complex about being different. People seem to be descending upon me, talking down to me. "You must feel this cold very badly," people would invariably say—most times with genuine concern. Then I would feel the difference that separates us; the difference which is implied should make me feel the cold more than others. "Why this privilege?" my mind would scream. Under a circumstance like this I always want to add that I sleep with the windows open. Or conversely, when the sun is oppressively hot, people look at me with resignation: "I suppose you like it like this?" In sympathy I will make appropriately suffering noises, acknowledging my complicity in the conspiracy. They seldom seem to accept that I can be suffering as much discomfort as they.

I must accommodate the fear of permeability of skin colour which is ever-present in the consciousness of the race purists. The vendors of this malignancy are out to draw blood, appealing to the lower instincts in man. They are to be found in various levels of society—in the citadels of reaction, like universities, where public school gentlemen are identified by eloquent rationalisations for social prejudice; in the attitudes of the man in the street who sees the black man as a sexual invader. The fear of bastardisation, the alleged virility of the black man, becomes a compensatory diversion for his own sexual repression. Such brutal terms as 'white trash' are used to describe white girls who go out with black men. The hostility in the streets is unbearable.

IF A COUNTRY will create minorities, then it has a moral obligation to protect them. The Coloureds must have the right to appeal to the law, to petition the machinery of state, to protest to the press, for protection. It is an anachronism to submit that there is no colour legislation in Britain. Coloureds are present in English society, and the prejudice against them is real. By refusing to recognise them the state is invading their privacy by exposing them—unprotected—to the humiliations they suffer.

2. JAMES CURREY

*Britain's
South African Policy*

At the Receiving End

A WELL-UPHOLSTERED PORTRAIT of Queen Elizabeth hangs in each British High Commission in the Commonwealth. There is one at the thatched British Embassy in Cape Town. It looked down on the back of the British Ambassador, Sir John Maud, as Eric Louw, the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, proposed the toast at this year's garden party to celebrate the Queen's Birthday. It was the first to be held in the Republic of Hendrik Verwoerd.

Sir John, an excellent host, was falling in with the kindly (and patronising) English attitude of 'Don't let's be beastly to the Afrikaner'. He did his star turn by replying in Afrikaans to Louw's loyal speech. An excellently diplomatic thing to do. He had carefully avoided asking any of the Cape Town councillors because Louw's government has classified some of them as non-whites. An excellently diplomatic thing to do—in South Africa. Nobody mentioned that Louw should not be 'beastly to the Africans'. Everything went well—the rain had even stopped in time. This was the South Africa Act garden party.

Christopher Hollis, the English M.P., referred to Portugal at the time of the Queen's visit in 1957 as 'Britain's oldest and dirtiest ally'. Let us hope that no Royal visit is planned to Britain's 'newest and dirtiest ally'. The garden party was yet another example of the Conservative government's failure to face the problem of white supremacy in Southern Africa. The written reply to Dingle Foot's question in the House of Commons was neatly dishonest. But who did it convince in Africa? The outside world sees Britain deferring to the selfish attitudes of Verwoerd, Salazar and (somewhat differently) Welensky. In a recent pamphlet, the Conservative Party's young Bow Group maintained that the West must actively dissociate itself from white domination in southern Africa. They are right. The emphasis, moreover, should be on 'actively'.

THIS IS NOT A CASE of idealistic humanitarianism. It is a question of facing economic and international realities. If Britain tries to divide its South African-Portuguese policy from its African policy it is going to queer both. It must assume that southern Africa is potentially

JAMES CURREY was sent from London to the Cape Town office of an English publishing house in 1959.

a part of the new Africa. It must realise that if it does not back the new states in Africa far worse things are going to fall than the prices of shares in Tanks and Union Minière. What policy Britain actually does have in Africa will be far less effective if it is still associated with white racialism. 'And, like it or not,' says the London *Economist*, 'South Africa and South West Africa are still associated with Britain in many minds'.

The new race for Africa is on. The Germans, the Russians, the Italians, the Czechs, the Japanese, the Poles, the Americans are all looking for a place in the economic sun. The results will be big. FAO calculates that the per capita income of the 33 countries of tropical Africa will double in the next 15 years. France and Britain are well ahead. But Britain will have to have a more positive African policy to remain ahead. Some of its present attitudes are dangerous. The South Africa Act may prove to be the most damaging thing Britain has done to itself in Africa.

Britain is embarrassed by its position in South Africa. The arrival of the Union Castle liner at Southampton with gold in its mauve belly gives Selwyn Lloyd quieter nights: and the Treasury has been the centre of English economic planning since Edward II. Over £900 million of British money is invested in South Africa; the Katanga lobby showed the power over the British government of international mineral finance in southern Africa. South Africa is the fourth biggest importer of Britain's goods; the threat to that £50 million favourable balance of trade leaves Selwyn Lloyd like a Buff Orpington hypnotised by a thin white line.

BUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN policy also arises out of certain British attitudes. African anthropologists will find the Conservative back-benchers a particularly worthwhile study. These creatures regularly bring up the KWV-soaked ideas which they have heard on the stoeps of United Party farmhouses. They may not like the Nationalist attitude but they do not want to make a fuss. After all, they intone, Verwoerd keeps order in South Africa. They do not like over-statement (except in accepted convention of an ambassador's fancy garden party outfit). They shudder at the idea of revolutions. Their minor public school ties stand for a continuing struggle to avoid recognising that Britain itself has passed through a social revolution (ugh what an ugly word!) The English Industrial Revolution was named by a Frenchman. Chester Bowles, an American, argues that the situation in South Africa is revolutionary. The South Africa Act garden party shows that the British government has not accepted this view. They, like their own back-benchers, will not accept the brutal fact that the longer the time before the change the greater and more vicious will it be. They apparently accept that people like Vorster and Verwoerd will actually allow themselves to be voted out of power.

The South Africa Act should have been used to show that Britain dissociated itself from the white racial policies of Verwoerd. Instead it gives one the impression: trade before politics. Forty per cent of the R320 million worth of farmers' produce exported annually by South Africa comes to Britain. The loss of preference tariffs would have knocked South African farmers. So

far the farmers are the section of the South African population which has been least hit by the disturbed trading conditions since Sharpeville. Stanley Uys has pointed out that more Nationalist M.P.s are farmers than anything else. The boycott campaign tried to give the idea that the only hope for a peaceful change is to bring Verwoerd down economically. The campaign's lack of success showed one thing; that organisation would have to be on a far greater scale. The British government had all the arguments not to give South Africa preferential treatment. Instead of underlining the advantage of belonging to the Commonwealth it even forgot to make a decent show of reluctance at giving Verwoerd such a victory in the South Africa Act. All that happened was that there was a garden party in Cape Town from which non-whites were excluded.

Secondly the Act leaves the way open for South Africa to benefit from any arrangements which Britain secures for the Commonwealth in the Common Market negotiations in Brussels. This is the only explanation for extending tariff privileges to South Africa which will only be effective until Britain joins the community.

Thirdly, the overriding impression of the Act is that the Africans in South Africa can expect no assistance in their struggle for rights if Britain has to forego advantages of trade. Every time a "soft voice" is cast by Britain at UNO on the questions of South West Africa and apartheid, the South Africa Act will be quoted.

THUS THE ACT WILL relieve many British business men who thought that their profits might drop by a small percentage. They do not seem to realise the damage that such a piece of legislation does Britain in other growing markets. Not long ago, the public relations man of an international concern was sneering about the 'non-viable' economies of African states. In an attempt to get a definition of what he meant by 'a non-viable' economy somebody asked him if he thought Swaziland was in that class. He did not answer directly; his firm was making investments in Swaziland.

The South Africa Act is symptomatic of the loss of impetus of Britain's African policy. It surprised nobody more than the white Rhodesians when the Conservatives started out upon a decolonisation policy which was more radical than the policy upon which the Labour Party had fought the General Election. McLeod was an acquisition at the Colonial Office. The Monckton Commission recommended legislation which would give a clear African majority in one legislature. But now McLeod is rallying the Young Conservatives and the announcement of a third constitution for Northern Rhodesia has been followed by strikes in the Copperbelt. Macmillan's super-cliché 'the wind of change' was evidence of a radical Conservative policy. Observers in the House of Commons have recently remarked that Macmillan fluffs some of the simplest questions whereas he used to treat such questions with slant-eyed superciliousness. Perhaps it will only be another man who can give straight-forward orders to Her Majesty's mission in South Africa to be diplomatically cool. Perhaps it will only be another government which can avoid similar South African Acts.

AFRICANA

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- I am delighted to learn that from May the South African edition of the *Reader's Digest* will be printed in its entirety in the Republic. The fact that we are the eighteenth country to achieve this distinction is proof anew of South Africa's close association with Western thought.—Letter from Dr. N. Diederichs, Minister of Economic Affairs.
- Young man, highest integrity, extremely deep, honest and sensitive, requires immediate loan of R300. Preferably from persons with similar characteristics capable of helping.—*Rand Daily Mail*.
- The deputy chairman (Mr. P. C. Pelsers): The member has criticised the word "Bantu" enough. (Die agbare lid het die woord Bantoe genoeg uitgekaffer.)—*Cape Argus*.
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- Organ, electronic Acme, as new. We never learnt to play. Cost £475. What offers?—*Rand Daily Mail*.
- "Bantu" or "Bantu person" means a Native —*Government Gazette*.
- Les B. Ans. Contact Gay re camping arrangements.—*Sunday Times*.
- God still answers prayer. Send your requests to P.O. Box 21, Goodwood.—*Cape Argus*.
- Yet this is what his flight log reads: Left Wichita January 23 (temperature 22 degrees F, 10 degrees below zero) and flew to Boston. Pressed on to Gandar, where the mercury stood at 17 degrees below.—*Rand Daily Mail*.
- Mary Ann Wall has condensed the events told in *Brief Authority* into a narrative which is a factual record of that grim repression, and of the Hoopers' part in it.—Back cover of *The Dominee and the Dom-Pas*.

THE LINGUISTIC BEHAVIOUR of the various language and cultural groups which make up the South African community reflect the social attitudes of the groups towards each other. There are many language groups, by any definition of the word "language"—Afrikaans, English, Zulu, Southern Sotho, Venda, Tswana, Xhosa and many more—but perhaps it is most rewarding, in the context of the political and social set-up obtaining in South Africa, to examine attitudes between the two large groups defined in terms of colour, namely the Blacks and the Whites.

The Bantu languages have many new forms of expression either acquired from English or Afrikaans or coined from indigenous material, as a direct result of Black-White contact and its repercussions. Some of these expressions (using Southern Sotho as model) will be seen to reflect new patterns of social relationship, such as, for instance, the subjugation of one group by another.

The example of such words as 'ox' and 'beef', 'calf' and 'veal', has often been used to show that, after the Norman conquest of Britain, the English tended the animals while the French carved them up at table, and the relationship might thus be judged to have been an unequal one with the English subjugated by the French.

We find evidence of a similar nature in Black-White relationships in this country, in the widespread use of the word for 'Whiteman' (Sotho *lekgowa*; Nguni *umlungu*; Shona *murungu*, etc.) with the additional meaning of 'master', so that a statement like 'Who is your master?' is very commonly rendered with the Bantu equivalent of 'Who is your Whiteman?' Conversely, we find that, in S. Sotho, the word for 'a Sotho person' (viz. Mosotho) is also ordinarily used for 'servant', 'Who is his servant?' thus being rendered with the S. Sotho equivalent of 'Who is his Sotho?' There is here, of course, no borrowing of new words; the position is that old words acquire new meanings reflecting new social relationships, or new words are coined from indigenous material as a response to changed circumstances. The new meanings attached to the two words referred to have become so thoroughly accepted, that a master-servant relationship between two Sotho people is sometimes described by means of those terms. The use, in English, of the words 'boy' and 'girl' to mean 'black manservant' (of any age) and 'black maidservant' (of any age), respectively, shows a similar lexical adjustment prompted by a new pattern of social relations. They refer, presumably, to people who are perpetual 'children', politically, socially, economically, and intellectually, and who therefore 'naturally' constitute the servant class. The use of these words in Afrikaans with the meanings given above is further proof that, in a given context, they are given entirely new (or slanted) meanings.

The word-complex *lekgowa/umlungu/murungu* etc. is often also used sarcastically to refer to Black people whose standard of living and general deportment are allegedly patterned on those of the Whites. Such state-

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D.P. KUNENE

"Who is your Whiteman?"

ments as *O ikêtsa lekgowa* (Sotho), *Uzenz' umlungu* (Nguni) meaning 'He pretends to be a White person,' are commonly used by those who like to think of themselves as behaving 'in a natural way', or 'as themselves', against those who are accused of 'aping.' And it is usually the intellectual who is in the line of fire. He belongs to the 'oo-excuse-me' group. The Sotho woman who goes daily to her White mistress's house to char, refers to this house as *hêisi* (from Afri. *huis*), as against her own *ntlo* (house). The homestead of a comparatively well-to-do African is thus often sarcastically referred to, by those of a lower social status, as *hêisi*.

These linguistic usages would seem to indicate a general acceptance of the *status quo*, by the popular mind, on both sides of the colour line. Menial work is 'kaffir work' or *kafferwerk* or *mosêbêtsi wa Basotho* (Sotho people's work), the normal thing being that the White man is always in charge of 'a gang of natives' who do the heavy and dirty work. A thorough flogging is, in Afrikaans, *kafferpak* (kaffir flogging), which speaks for itself. On the other hand, the African who strives to rise above the kaffir-something-or-other level, while admired by some, is generally scoffed at by most of those Africans who have not attained the same level as himself. Jealousy has a lot to do with this attitude, of course. Yet it would distort the picture not to take into consideration two other powerful motivating factors. One of these is the mental conditioning already referred to, making it seem 'natural' for things to be as they are. The other one, which is of comparatively recent origin, is a nationalistic feeling—the feeling of pride at being a member of a despised group which is now, however, visibly rising *as a group*, from the status of perpetual servitude; a group whose tenure of 'boyhood' and 'girlhood' is now quickly giving way to one of 'manhood' and 'womanhood'. Corresponding to this feeling of pride in belonging to this group is the tendency to view with scorn the way of doing things which has come to be generally associated with the Whites, who in turn are associated with oppression and a denial of rights. Indeed, the austere life of the African has come to symbolise his aspirations and hopes, and also his conviction that better times are just around the corner.

The African has, needless to say, found himself in a

umlungu
e
k
murungu
o
whiteman
a

position where, in order to ensure that he obtains employment, he must be able to make himself understood by his potential employer. Thus the acquisition of English and/or Afrikaans has, for him, been largely a matter of necessity. On the other hand, Whites who have a knowledge of one or other Bantu language are relatively few. It is a revealing commentary on the relations between Black and White generally that the Blacks are genuinely surprised and impressed to hear a White speak a Bantu language, especially if he speaks it well. Indeed, his mere attempt, such as it may be, to do so, is usually applauded by the Blacks. A possible inference to be drawn from this attitude, is that the Black interprets the Whiteman's attempt as a gesture of goodwill since, on the face of it at any rate, there could be no compelling reason for him to acquire the Blackman's language. Conversely, many Whites are astounded to meet a Black who does not know even the rudiments of a European language. At the bottom of their surprise, one may surmise, lies the question, 'Has he never worked for a Whiteman?'. This patronising attitude towards another's language is not confined to different colour groups. Up till very recently, the Englishman spoke Afrikaans (or attempted to do so) as a gesture of goodwill towards the Afrikaner. It is no exaggeration to say that, broadly speaking, he had a condescending attitude towards the Afrikaner and consequently to his language as well. He did not need Afrikaans to carry on his business, or to be acceptable in the highest social circles, or to use as a medium of instruction in school, etc. He could always choose to carry on his official transactions in English, and he invariably did so. In short, he did not *need* Afrikaans which has been, and still largely is, the language of the farm and the dorp. He could make blunders in his attempt to speak this language, laugh them away, and not blush. The Afrikaner, attempting English and making the same blunders, became self-conscious—and blushed.

There is today, however, a conscious effort on the part of the Whites to learn one or other of the Bantu languages of South Africa. White schools may voluntarily include a Bantu language in their curricula, but to what extent this is being taken advantage of, it is difficult to say. The Minister of Bantu Administration

and Development (Mr. De Wet Nel) is reported (*Cape Argus*, March 7, 1962—Review of Parliament) as having "restated what he had said before—that Bantu languages should be made a compulsory subject in White schools."

More and more, university students studying Bantu languages give, as their main reason for doing so, a desire to know something of the languages spoken by the Blacks around them.

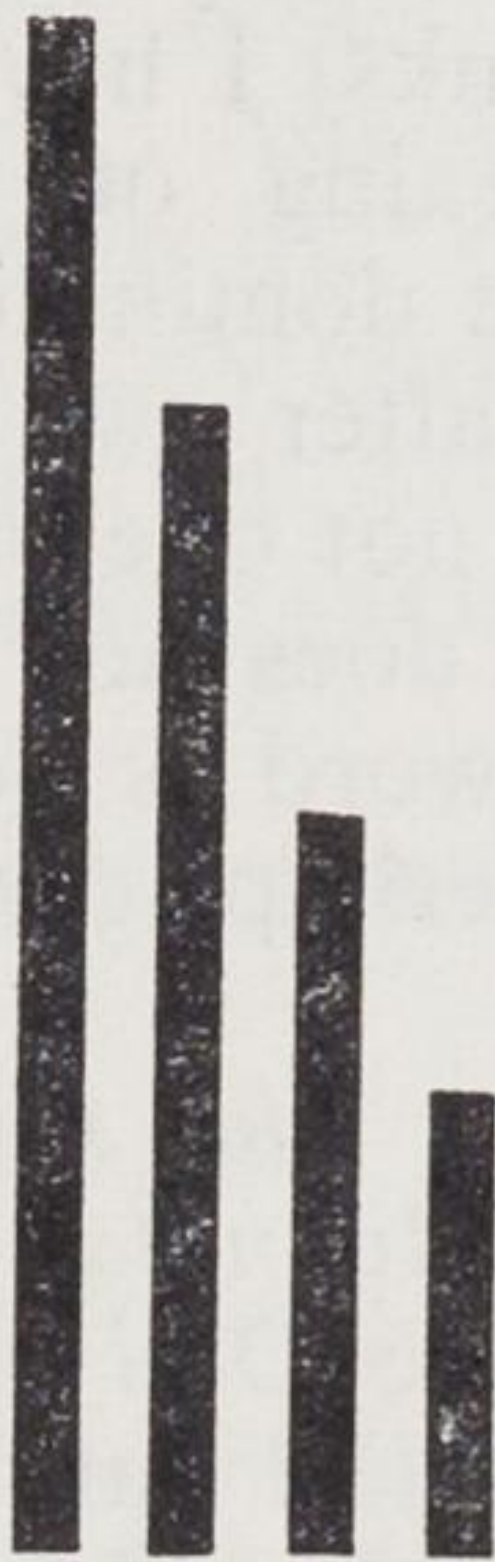
When peoples of different cultural levels come into contact, resulting cultural modifications are reflected, to varying degrees, in their vocabularies, and sometimes even in their modes of expression. The extent of the 'borrowing' of ideas, institutions, implements, etc., can often be gauged by the extent to which the borrowing of foreign words, which are '-ised' in order to fit them into the new structural pattern, has taken place.

Linguistic borrowing from the two European languages come into Sotho either from only one of the two possible sources per idea acquired, or from both sources at the same time, resulting in the enrichment of the language by two synonymous expressions where none existed before. Where words have come from one language only, Afrikaans has been tapped to a much greater extent than English. This is hardly surprising since contact between Afrikaner and African has, in most cases, not only preceded that between Englishmen and African by a long period of time, but has also been more extensive and intensive.

The social significance of certain linguistic expressions drawn from both Afrikaans and English will be examined in a future issue of *The New African*. ●

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3. MYRNA BLUMBERG

'Apartheid is Wrong'

The British Decide

TO ASK WHETHER the average person in Britain is actively 'engaged' with the problems of South Africa is like asking whether the average penal reformer could be engaged to a whore: the whole point is that he's interested because he's detached, his moral probity is high because, for some reason, he regards himself as being, thank Heaven, not a sinner like other men.

This often seems remarkable to visitors from other African territories who would like to see the British apply some of the passion of her moral criticism of South Africa to other territories where Britain is directly involved at present, such as Central Africa. For I think it is undoubtedly true that the ordinary men and women in Britain are much clearer in their attitude to South Africa than in their attitude to Central Africa. This is partly because the issues, from here in England, seem so much clearer—apartheid is known to be extremely hateful but the truth of 'partnership' is only beginning to dawn—and partly because of the sort of view expressed by one member of the House of Lords that the white settlers in Rhodesia are British 'kith and kin' while the mixture of white South Africans are not in quite the same way.

But reading the national newspapers and talking to people I meet (which is my unscientific way of trying to gauge what the 'average person' thinks) I have been greatly struck by the general hardening of feeling against apartheid and theories of white domination.

I returned to live here last year after two year's absence, and the fact that now there is not one national newspaper, as far as I can see, which does not take it for granted that apartheid is a dirty word is very far from the position three years ago—or perhaps one could almost say in pre-Sharpeville days.

Earlier it was just papers such as *The Observer* (Liberal: circulation about 700,000), *Reynolds News* (Labour: circulation about 300,000), the *Daily Herald* (Labour: circulation 1,400,000) and the late *News Chronicle* (Liberal: circulation 1,200,000) which consistently reported on the daily tragedies and absurdities of apartheid.

But today *The Times* (Independent Conservative: circulation 250,000), with echoes of its old thundering days, can scarcely be beaten, in its reporting and com-

ment, for regular, informed and certain opposition to apartheid; *The Guardian* (Liberal: circulation 260,000) has regular news from more than one correspondent in South Africa; and the *Daily Mail* which used to be orthodox conservative until it swallowed the dead *News Chronicle* and became schizophrenic Liberal-Conservative (circulation over 2,600,000) has one of the liveliest and most sympathetic coverages of African affairs in general, and South Africa in particular.

Those, I think, could be regarded as the most influential daily papers. What's left? The *Daily Mirror* (Independent Labour: circulation 4,500,000) does not often give space to Africa, but when it does, it's bang-on. (With Basil Davidson on their staff now, the *Mirror* is bound to talk sense in most of its comments on Africa.)

And even the *Daily Telegraph* (Right-wing Conservative: circulation over 1,000,000) does not mince its disapproving words on South African apartheid, although it is stonily reactionary on the Congo, Angola and so on.

BUT IT IS THAT square-eyed monster, the Telly, which I would back as the most intimately educational anti-apartheid agent. Few people who saw it could forget the impact of the film on South Africa on the eve of the 1961 May strike which was made by the B.B.C. magazine programme, 'Panorama'. (Average viewers: over 8,000,000). It began with a powerful close-up shots of the hindquarters of a couple of white women bowlers in Durban, and the sight of those indolent figures bulging at eye-level in the corner of your living-room is certainly a haunting image. When the women bowlers eventually straightened up, the B.B.C. interviewer, James Mossman, asked them what they thought about the impending strike. Strike? One hadn't heard about it, and the other said that although she did not always agree with Dr. Verwoerd one thing she liked was his firmness with 'agitators.'

What did they think of the present state of African opinion?

"Yer mean natives? Oh, I've got nothing against them myself. I mean, they make awfully good servants."

And then back their posteriors rolled in front of our noses while Mossman explained pithily about white privileges, leisure and ignorance and growing African bitterness.

In the past year or so these are some of the South Africans who have also appeared on both television channels, the B.B.C. and Independent Television: Chief Luthuli, Nana Mahomo, Tennyson Makiwane, Bloke Modisane, Oliver Tambo, Todd Matshikiza, Bishop Reeves, Colin Legum, Alfred Hutchinson. Mostly they have been interviewed on the B.B.C.'s peak-hour daily magazine programme called 'Tonight', which is said to be watched by over 9,000,000 people and has much of the radical flavour of the old *Picture Post*.

By seeing these men, probingly interviewed, so closely in your home, you feel you know them personally, and when Dr. Verwoerd or the South African Foundation talks about 'agitators' you can scoff from personal knowledge. I believe, in fact, that British television had made the British public the most knowledgeable people

MYRNA BLUMBERG, journalist and author of *White Madam, describing her life in South Africa and 1960 detention, has settled in London.*

in the world on South African affairs: there is no form of mass communication comparable in South Africa that informs people so vividly and impartially (it does not push one group of Africans against another), and which could have made these men's faces and their views so generally known.

I BELIEVE that South Africa House steadfastly refuses to put in one of their representatives to oppose any of these men on television. The last time I saw some South Africa House talent on telly was about six years ago, when a Government representative pitted his incoherent bigotry and lack of grammar against the urbane, cogent, aristocratic wit of Miss Noni Jabavu. It was a walk-over for Miss Jabavu, who remained coolly informative in her case against apartheid, while the poor South Africa House man mumbled savagely about 'primitive natives'. Since then, I gather, South Africa House has remained speechless both on British television and radio.

IT IS BECAUSE of this regular, informed newspaper and broadcasting coverage of South Africa that the ordinary person in Britain no longer needs to be convinced that apartheid is wrong. He's heard enough details—and it's the details rather than the rhetorical generalities that count—over a long enough period for the whining of the South African Foundation to make almost no impression at all. I am certain of this.

To take a small instance: only last month the Foundation had a letter published in *The Times* boasting about education for Africans in South Africa; the next day someone called Lord Lucas had an excellent letter published rebutting it with one or two famous quotations from Dr. Verwoerd, and this was followed by another detailed letter tearing Bantu Education to threads. There has been little interest in official propaganda on the Transkei simply because many papers do not even think South Africa House propaganda worth bothering about. And few people regard the wandering reports of Lord Montgomery with anything but bored amusement.

SO BRITONS, indisputably, have made up their minds about South Africa: they're against it. This is not only because they're well-informed and, in a muddled way, feel no responsibility for its problems, but because—and this is probably the most unpalatable of the

reasons—they far too often foist all wrong-doing on the Afrikaners, still frequently referred to as the 'Boahs.'

I should qualify all this by stressing that in talking about the majority of ordinary Britons I have not included the Big Business investors. I can't say how clear their minds are, but it is encouraging that *The Economist* that extremely influential weekly, frequently sounds more militantly opposed to the South African racial set-up than *The New Statesman* (and indeed this radicalism covers their attitude on Central Africa too, having recently run a campaign headlined, 'Welensky Must Go!'). In addition, the *Financial Times*, during the strike last year, suddenly broke out with one of the most sympathetic interviews with Nelson Mandela.

IF SO MANY PEOPLE have made up their minds, then, what are they doing about it? Could they be actively 'engaged' as well as morally?

That, at present, is probably asking for a lot. It is true that the idea of a boycott has lost momentum. But it must have been good for anti-apartheid morale to see M.P.s of all British parties recently spring to ask questions in Parliament about why Sir John Maud had a colour-bar party to celebrate the Queen's birthday—just to mention a small example. In practical terms, Canon Collins has shown that many people were prepared to give generously to his Defence and Aid Fund; he raised hundreds of thousands of pounds for South Africa, but it is proving hard to raise anything like that for defence and aid to Northern Rhodesian Africans. At the national annual delegates' meeting of the British National Union of Journalists a few weeks ago an emergency resolution was unanimously passed (a rare feat for journalists) condemning the new censorship law in South Africa and what they described as interference with the free flow of news in and out of South Africa.

All this adds up to the fact that South Africa receives unique attention, if not always action in Britain. There are no other countries with comparable tragedies—Algeria, Angola, Central Africa—which have received anything like the microscopic analysis and concern as this lonely corner of Africa. One regrets it for the sake of Central Africans; but one cannot help applauding it for the sake of South Africa. ●



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Soviet African Scholarship

I. I. POTEKHIN

SOVIET SCHOLARS like all Soviet people have always been irreconcilable enemies of colonialism, of any form of racial and national oppression. The Government of the Soviet Union expressing the will of the Soviet people pursues a persistent anti-colonial policy. It was on the initiative of the Soviet Government that at the 15th session of the UN General Assembly the Declaration of Independence for Colonial Countries and Peoples was adopted. This policy stems from the very nature of socialist society free from exploitation of man by man, from any kind of social and national injustice.

The racial problem in the South African Republic is a form of colonialism. Though not a colony, the history of the SAR and the present-day status of the native African population gives one every reason to consider the racial problem in the SAR as a colonial one. The difference between the SAR and such colonies as Southern Rhodesia, Kenya and Algeria lies solely in a ratio of the population of a European background and the non-European population, whilst the economic and political nature of the laws operating in those countries is much the same. The abolition of racial enslavement in the SAR must be therefore considered as a task of abolishing colonialism in Africa.

These conclusions have been drawn up on a basis of profound and comprehensive studies in the historical development of South Africa. Quite a number of Soviet scholars have done their contribution to the studies of South African history. Following below are but some of the works produced by Soviet scholars on South African history: *The Union of South Africa*, 1931; N. M. Fedorovsky, *In the country of diamonds and gold. Travels in the South Africa*, 1934; I. I. Potekhin, *Imperialist segregation of the natives in South Africa after the Second World War*, 1952; I. I. Potekhin, *The Formation of the national community of the South African Bantu*, 1955; A. B. Davidson, "Apartheid: a country of racial enslavement" (an article in the book under the general title *Racial discrimination in African countries*), 1960. Numerous books on South Africa produced by English and South African scholars and politicians frequently come out in the Soviet Union, among them: David Livingstone: *Travels in South Africa*, 1947; A. T. Bryant: *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, 1949; L. Forman and E. S. Sachs:

PROFESSOR POTEKHIN is head of the Institute of African Study, Moscow.

The South African Treason Trial, 1959; and others. Russian translations of Peter Abrahams' and Gerald Gordon's novels have also been very helpful for a better understanding of the nature of the race problem.

The studies in SAR history indicate that the racial relations prevailing in that country are underlain by the economic interests of the rich farmers of European origin, and of the gold and diamond mining companies. Let us recollect the pronouncements made in 1880 by the High Commissioner of South Africa and the Governor-General of the Cape Province, G. Grey: "Throughout this part of the British Dominions the coloured people are generally looked upon by the whites as an inferior race, whose interests ought to be systematically disregarded when they come into competition with their own, and who ought to be governed mainly with a view to the advantage of the superior race. And for this advantage two things are considered to be specially necessary: First, the facilities should be afforded to the White colonists for obtaining possession of land heretofore occupied by the native tribes; and secondly, that the kaffir population should be made to furnish as large and as cheap a supply of labour as possible."¹

To dispossess the "Kaffirs" of the land and make them toil for the European settlers, toil as much as possible at the lowest possible wages—this is the economic backbone of apartheid or the segregation policy as it was originally termed.

The apartheid champions are seeking to find justification for it in the pseudo-scientific theory of race superiority. The late Smuts maintained that the South African Bantu "... has largely remained a child type with a child psychology and outlook".² The scientific barrenness of this theory does not need any argumentation, it is being disproved by reality itself. Not only the current events that have placed into the arena of international politics prominent African politicians, scholars and thinkers, but the entire history of the pre-colonial Africa does prove the reverse.

The adherents of apartheid use the theory of race superiority not only to provide justification of the racial enslavement of the Bantu but also to prove that such a policy serves the interests of the entire white population of the South African Republic. This is also in conflict with the truth: the policy of apartheid serves only those

The Lion in the City

*The lion in the city waits all night
And sometimes moves behind you,
Dark across a street light,
Shadowing you.*

*Human memory never quite ends
And never quite comes forward,
But it always sends
Dark to your head.*

C. J. DRIVER

THE NEW AFRICAN JUNE 1962

who are exploiting the labour of the native African population, it runs counter to the interests of the national development of the European section of the population. To prove this is not at all difficult.

The founder of the English classical school of political economy, W. Petty, said: "Land is the mother of wealth and labour is his father". Labour is the father of wealth. Wealth is created by labour, but labour may have various degrees of productivity. The higher productivity of labour the wealthier is the country. The policy of apartheid has created an extremely low labour productivity of the Africans who constitute three quarters of the whole population of the South African Republic. Let us see for instance the yields of corn and wheat that form together about 60 per cent of the total of the South African field husbandry: the yields of corn in the SAR are twice as low as those in the USA, and the wheat yields are nearly five times lower than those in England. "In Great Britain it has been shown that one agricultural worker is capable of producing food for at least ten people. In Australia the labour of one male worker can supply an optimum diet for twenty-five people. In New Zealand one man in farming can produce an optimum diet for forty people. In South Africa it is doubtful whether one man engaged in agriculture can produce enough food for two people."³

To abolish the policy of apartheid and accord to the Africans the rights and privileges equal to those of the Whites means a manifold increase in the labour productivity of the whole population as well as in the national income of the SAR. The self-employed section of the White population will lose nothing economically by abolishing apartheid. Quite the contrary it will gain a lot. The South African Republic is a country of huge potentialities, and if a reasonable policy is followed, everyone in the Republic can be well-off. Bunting is absolutely right in saying that "South Africa can become a country of abundant wealth."⁴

The policy of curtailing the democratic rights of the Africans has inevitably led to restrictions of the democratic rights of the Whites. The abandonment of this policy will bring about a renaissance of democracy. Finally, the policy of racial oppression is detrimental to the national dignity of the White population of the SAR. The progressive public of the world condemns the policy of apartheid pursued by the SAR Government and this condemnation smears the honour and dignity of the European part of the Republican population. The progressive part of the European population has long realised the incompatibility of apartheid both with human dignity and the interests of their country. In the last years the SAR Government has been endeavouring to carry out the "Bantustan" programme. This is not a new idea. As far back as the 20's, the missionary Walter Cotton wrote: He said that the time had come for the last call for the territorial segregation which alone could prevent the forces working for the merging of the races. This issue had such a vital and fundamental importance for the Europeans in South Africa that no moral consideration would stand in its way. The Europeans saw it as a question of self-preservation.⁵

The whole history of the so-called "native policy" of the Government has been a realisation of this idea. All

moral considerations have been brushed aside at that. In the name of the "pure race" the human dignity of the Black man has been humiliated. But what has come of the idea? The Africans were driven to reserves but the way out of the reserves was not sealed, though restricted. It could not be sealed, anyway. Not because the Africans cannot live in the overcrowded reserves but because the Whites cannot do without their labour force. The reserves were set up as reservoirs of cheap labour. Millions of Africans now live in the towns at the white man's farms and mines. The policy of the SAR Government *vis-a-vis* the Africans is extremely controversial in itself. This controversy received a very spectacular definition in the words of the same Cotton, an irreconcilable supporter of separate existence of different racial groups: "We want the Natives' labour but we don't know what to do with them We don't want their family and social life impinging on ours We want their lands, but we don't want them".⁵

This old idea has been termed differently nowadays—"Bantustans". The idea is impracticable.⁶ Any attempt to translate it into life will only add to the complexity and acuteness of the racial problem.

Such is a general outlook of the Soviet scholars on the racial problem in the South African Republic, based on a thorough investigation into the issue. What is a solution? It has been already found; it is laid down in the "Freedom Charter", elaborated by the South African People's Congress in 1955. Pursuing the policy of apartheid the Government of the South African Republic has led the country to a blind alley and created a situation pregnant with very grim consequences. "The Freedom Charter" is the only reasonable escape from this blind alley. ●

1. E. Morel. *The Black Man's Burden*. London.
2. J. C. Smuts. *Africa and Some World Problems*, Oxford, 1930, p. 75.
3. E. Sachs. *The Choice Before South Africa*. London, 1952, p. 113.
4. Brian Bunting. *Apartheid—The Road to Poverty*, p. 8.
5. Walter Cotton, *Racial Segregation in South Africa*.
6. *Bantustan Bluff*. Publication of S.A. Congress of Democrats.

Is your
commitment showing?

TIMOTHY HOLMES

THE FIRST ISSUES of *The Lion and the Impala* bring to the South African literary scene the only (to our knowledge) magazine devoted to "committed" literary writing in the country. The magazine is published by Messrs. C. J. Driver and R. K. Parker at the S.R.C. Office, Students' Union, University of Cape Town.

In their introductory article the editors explain that they have decided to produce the magazine to fill a need at the university for a monthly literary magazine.

They aim, firstly, to publish the best work they can

lay hands on, whether from students or not, and secondly, they aim to "make this a 'committed' magazine". By this they mean that they will publish work only which does not put forward racialistic ideas. The editors explain that they do not intend to exclude writing which does not put forward political ideas of a non-racial character, but that such "pure" writing will have to take second place to the "political".

The editors' statement of their aims raises immediately the question of the value of "committed" writing in itself, and of the nature of the "commitment". It seems from their first editorial, that their "commitment" is to a concept held by the majority of mankind—that racialism is bad. If they are committed against racialism, what are they committed for?

Whether or not it is possible to tie creative writing to a political belief is another matter. We can only

hope that those writers who choose to produce material "which (has) political bias or political direction" do not come to believe that their political beliefs are in any way more important to themselves as writers, than the art of writing truthfully and unblinkered. And let us hope too that the editors do not allow themselves to make political criteria paramount in the selection of material for publication; if they do, their magazine will be able to make no better a job of its self-imposed task than those which reject material because it is "political".

Political commitment is the "lion" of the magazine, and "pure art" is the "impala". Perhaps these are mythical beasts as far as literature is concerned. But all those who are interested in the development of the arts in South Africa should get and read this magazine (5c monthly).

Whither,
O Africa?

M. F. DEI ANANG

*I sat beneath
The star-flecked dome of heav'n,
And watched the moon
Sail silently
And patiently
Along her course.*

*She did not fret
Nor seem to care
What Nature had
In store for her;
Just silently
She smiled
Amidst the clouds on high.*

*And then,
O Africa,
Land of the great Pharaohs
And the vast pyramids
With strange architectural laws,
My fatherland,
I thought me then
That, like the moon,
Thou too hast spread thy sail!
But whither bound,
O Africa,
Oh, whither bound?
Backward?*

*To days of drums
And festal dances in the shade
Of sun-kist palms;
Backward?
To untutored days
When maid was ever chaste
And lad abhorred unhallowed ways
For dread of ancient gods;
Backward?
To dark thatched huts
Where kindness reigned
And solace dwelt,
Backward, to SUPERSTITION?*

*Or forward?
Forward! To what?
The slums, where man is dumped
upon man;
Where penury
And misery
Have made their hapless homes,
And all is dark and drear?
Forward! To what?
The factory
To grind hard hours
In an inhuman mill,
In one long ceaseless spell?*

*Forward! To what?
To the reeking round
Of medieval crimes,
Where greedy hawks
Of Aryan stock
Prey with bombs and guns
On men of lesser breed?
Forward, to CIVILISATION?*

*Forward, to dusty tools
And sordid gains,
Proved harbingers
Of mortal strife?*

*Or forward,
To the crafty laws
Of Adam Smith
That turn the markets upside down
And steel men's hearts
To hoard or burn
The food supplies of half the world
E'en when the other half must starve?*

*Or backward?
Backward to the primal source
Of ethic qualities:
Man's love of fellow man
And fear of God
Emanating from a chainless soul
Full and frank and free?*

*The moon sails patiently
And silently
Across a star-flecked sky,
Adown predicted paths:
Sail cautiously, O Father land,
Along thy course well-tried;
But whither bound, O Africa?
Oh, whither bound?*

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The Martyr

PART ONE

J. T. NGUGI

WHEN MR. AND MRS. GARSTONE were murdered in their home by unknown gangsters, there was a lot of talk about it. It was all in the front page of the daily papers and figured in importance in the Radio Newsreel. Perhaps this was so because they were the first European settlers to be killed in the increased wave of violence that had spread all over the country. The violence was said to have political motives. And wherever you went, in the market places, in the Indian Bazaars, in a remote African duka, you were bound to hear something about the murder. There were a variety of accounts and interpretations.

Nowhere was the matter more thoroughly discussed than in a remote, lonely house built on a hill, which belonged, quite appropriately, to Mrs. Hill, whose husband, an old veteran settler of the pioneering period, had died the previous year after an attack of malaria, while on a visit to Uganda. Her only son and daughter were now getting their education at "Home"—Home being another name for England. Being one of the earliest settlers and owning a lot of land with big tea plantations sprawling right across the country, she was much respected by the others if not liked by all.

For some did not like what they considered her too "liberal" attitude to the "Natives." When Mrs. Smiles and Mrs. Hardy came into her house two days later to discuss the murder, they wore a look of sad triumph—sad because Europeans (not just Mr. and Mrs. Garstone) had been killed, and of triumph, because the essential depravity and ingratitude of the natives had been demonstrated beyond all doubt. No longer could Mrs. Hill maintain that natives could be civilised if only they were handled in the right manner.

Mrs. Smiles was a lean middle-aged woman whose tough, determined nose and tight lips reminded one so vividly of a missionary. In a sense she was. Convinced that she and her kind formed an oasis of civilisation in a wild country of savage people, she considered it almost her calling to keep on reminding the Natives and any one else of the fact, by her gait, talk and general bearing.

Mrs. Hardy was of Boer descent and had early migrated into the country from South Africa. Having no opinions of her own about anything, she mostly found herself agreeing with any views that most ap-

proximated those of her husband and her race. For instance, on this day, she found herself in agreement with whatever Mrs. Smiles said. Mrs. Hill stuck to her guns and maintained, as indeed she had always done, that the Natives were obedient at heart and *all* you needed was to treat them kindly.

"That's all they need. *Treat them kindly.* They will take kindly to you. Look at my 'boys'. They all love me. They would do anything I asked them to!" That was her philosophy and it was shared by quite a number of the liberal, progressive type. Mrs. Hill had done some liberal things to her 'boys.' Not only had she built some brick quarters (*brick, mind you*) but had also put up a school for the children. It did not matter if the school had not enough teachers or if the children learnt only half-a-day and worked in the plantations for the other half; it was more than most other settlers had the courage to do!

"It is horrible. Oh, a horrible act," declared Mrs. Smiles rather vehemently. Mrs. Hardy agreed. Mrs. Hill remained neutral.

"How could they do it? We've brought 'em civilisation. We stopped slavery and tribal wars. Were they not all leading savage miserable lives?" Mrs. Smiles spoke with all her powers of oratory. Then she concluded with a sad shake of the head. "But I've always said they'll never be civilised, simply can't take it."

"We should show tolerance," suggested Mrs. Hill. Her tone spoke more of the missionary than Mrs. Smiles's looks.

"Tolerant! Tolerant! How long shall we continue being tolerant? Who could have been more tolerant than the Garstones? Who more kind? And to think of all the squatters they maintained!"

"Well, it isn't the squatters who—"

"Who did! who did!"

"They should all be hanged!" suggested Mrs. Hardy. There was conviction in her voice.

"And to think they were actually called from bed by their houseboy!"

"Indeed?"

"Yes. It was their houseboy who knocked at their door and urgently asked them to open. Said some people were after him—"

"Perhaps there—"

"No! It was all planned. All a trick. As soon as the door was opened, the gang rushed in. It's all in the paper."

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Mrs. Hill looked away rather guiltily. She had no read her paper.

It was time for tea. She excused herself and went near the door and called out in a kind, shrill voice—"Njoroge! Njoroge!"

Njoroge was her houseboy. He was a tall, broad-shouldered person nearing middle age. He had been in the Hill's service for more than ten years. He wore a green trousers, with a red clothband round the waist and a red fez on the head. He now appeared at the door and raised his eyebrows in enquiry—an action which with him accompanied the words "Yes Memsahib" or "*Ndio Bwana*."

"*Leta Chai*"

"*Ndio Memsahib!*" and he vanished back after casting a quick glance round all the Memsahibs there assembled. The conversation which had been interrupted by Njoroge's appearance was now resumed.

"They look so innocent," said Mrs. Hardy.

"Yes. Quite the innocent flower but the serpent under it." Mrs. Smiles was acquainted with Shakespeare.

"Been with me for ten years or so. Very faithful. Likes me very much." Mrs. Hill was defending her boy.

"All the same I don't like him. I don't like his face."

"The same with me."

Tea was brought. They drank, still chatting about the death, the government's policy, and the political demagogues who were misleading the people. On one point they were all agreed. Political demagogues were undesirable elements in this otherwise beautiful country. But Mrs. Hill with a great conviction that almost carried the point through, maintained that these semi-illiterate demagogues who went to Britain and thought they had education, did not know the true aspirations of their people. You could still win your boys by being kind to them.

Nevertheless when Mrs. Smiles and Mrs. Hardy had gone, she brooded over that murder and the conversation. She felt uneasy and for the first time noticed that she lived a bit too far from any help in case of an attack. The knowledge that she had a pistol was a comfort.

SUPPER WAS OVER. That ended Njoroge's day. He stepped out of the light into the countless shadows and then vanished into the darkness. He was following the footpath from Mrs. Hill's house to the workers' quarters down the hill. He tried to whistle to dispel the silence and loneliness that hung around him. He could not. Instead he heard the owl cry.

He stopped, stood stock-still. Below, he could perceive nothing. But behind him, the immense silhouette of Memsahib's house—large, imposing—could be seen. He looked back intently, angrily. In his anger, he suddenly thought he was growing old.

"You. You. I've lived with you for so long. And you've reduced me to this? In my own land! What have I got from you in return?" Njoroge wanted to shout to the house all this and many other things that had long accumulated in his heart. The house would

not respond. He felt foolish and moved on.

Again the owl cried! Twice!

"A warning to her," Njoroge thought. And again his whole soul rose in anger—anger against all those with a white skin, all those foreign elements that had displaced the true sons of the land from their God-given place. Had God not promised Gekoyo that he would give all the land to the father of the tribe—he and his posterity? Now all the land had been taken away.

He remembered his father as he always did when these moments of anger and bitterness possessed him. He had died in the struggle—the struggle to rebuild the destroyed shrines. That was at the famous Nairobi Massacre when police fired on a people peacefully demonstrating for their right. His father was among the people who died. Since then Njoroge had to struggle for a living—seeking employment here and there in European farms. He had met many types—some harsh, some kind, but all dominating, giving him just what salary they thought fit for him. Then he had come to be employed by the Hills. It was a strange coincidence that he had come here. A big portion of the land now occupied by Mrs. Hill was the land his father had always shown him as belonging to the family. They had found the land occupied when his father and some of the others had temporarily retired to Muranga owing to famine. They had come back and *Ng'o!* the land was gone.

"Do you see that fig tree . . . Remember that land is yours. Be patient. Watch these Europeans. They will go and then you can claim the land."

He was then small. After his father's death, Njoroge had forgotten all about this injunction. But when he coincidentally came here and saw the tree, he had remembered. He knew it all—all by heart. He knew where every boundary went through.

Njoroge had never liked Mrs. Hill. He had always resented her complacency in thinking that she had done so much for the workers. He had worked with cruel types like Mrs. Smiles and Mrs. Hardy. But he always knew where he stood with such. But Mrs. Hill! Her liberalism was almost smothering. Njoroge hated all settlers. He hated above all what he thought was their hypocrisy and self-satisfaction. He knew that Mrs. Hill was no exception. She was like all the others, only she loved paternalism. It convinced her that she was better than the others. But she was worse. You did not know exactly where you stood with her.

All of a sudden, Njoroge shouted "I hate them! I hate them!" Then a grim satisfaction came over him. To-night, anyway, Mrs. Hill would die—pay for her own smug liberalism or paternalism and pay for all the sins of her settlers race. It would be one settler less. ●

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