

Kimberley and the Africans.

I am happy to be with you to-day in Kimberley and to address this meeting.

The discovery of diamonds 85 years ago in these parts of South Africa began a new era in the colourful history of this country. That discovery was and has been since the watershed of the economic and industrial development of South Africa. Before it the history of South Africa was the history of a comparatively speaking small outpost of European settlement in the southernmost part of the continent of Africa and vast numbers of an indigenous African population whose contact with the Europeans was almost confined to the battle fields.

There can be no doubt that there were evidences of some progress which the settlement had made. There were schools in the Cape; there were some kinds of roads that had been built; some progress had been made in the construction of the docks at Capetown. But that progress was nothing compared with the tempo and magnitude of the phenomenal progress which was an inevitable and necessary concomitant of the discovery of diamonds in these parts.

Thousands and thousands of people from overseas came and poured into this part of South Africa. As it were overnight the town of ~~Almoo~~ sprang up. Port Elizabeth and East London grew into magnificent towns and vital outlets to the outside world. Overseas capital flowed into South Africa to help industrialize and in many ways improve the states of South Africa which were passing through difficult financial times and whose prospects of advancement were meagre and disheartening. ~~Towns sprang~~ Towns sprang up. Markets were enlarged. Roads were built into the interior, and as soon as the railway came into South Africa, railway lines threaded their way into the country to help open up the interior. Your grand-fathers and fathers played a vital role in this colossal drama. They formed an integral part of the story of those days as they have continued and shall continue to form an integral part of the history of South Africa.

The towns and the roads were built by African manual labour. Agriculture flourished very largely because there was at hand a plentiful

and-fathers and your fathers. In an amazingly short time the town of Kimberley became not only the hub of the economic and industrial life of South Africa, but Kimberley placed Southern Africa upon the industrial map of the world. I wish to repeat that the Africans played a very considerable and substantial part in the making of the greatness of Kimberley and in the ushering in of a period of economic advancement in the history of South Africa.

It was a valuable contribution which the Africans made to the growth of South Africa. It was a contribution which in many instances was voluntary. It was a contribution also which was designed, controlled and thrust upon the Africans. When it was thus organised it was nothing but sheer exploitation, for it was designed and controlled for the exclusive benefit of those who designed and controlled it.

In 1894 the Glen Grey Act of Cecil Rhodes the then prime minister of the Cape was passed. There are many aspects of this law which are commendable. By a perpetual quitrent system of land tenure it replaced the outmoded communal system of tenure with its inadequate inducement for measures of permanent improvement. When and where this law was applied there has been an immediate harvest of benefit to both the Africans and the rest of South Africa. It has meant the voluntary adoption of those agricultural measures which have improved the soil and enhanced the value of South Africa for both black and white.

But there is a provision in this law to which the Africans offer the stoutest objection. It is that aspect of it by which Africans were forced to leave their families in the reserves and native territories so that they might come and work in the mines - notably the De Beers consolidated mines of Kimberley. Labour which is externally compelled has always been cheap and such labour is undemocratic and to that extent not in the best interests of those upon whom it is thrust. Men must work when they feel the inner urge to do so. They must work where they are free to offer their labour and skill to the highest bidder upon a free market. Any other description of conditions of labour is a description of conditions of slavery, and we only echo the chorus of the judgment of centuries when we say that slave labour is undemocratic and grossly immoral.

integral component of the urban population. This is a fact which is as historically true as it is alarming when one squares it up with the very real and substantial contribution which the Africans have made and are making to the rise and growth of the towns and the cities of South Africa. It means that whilst Kimberley and other towns and cities in South Africa grew in size and splendour the African counterparts attached to these towns and cities remained shabby, unhygienic, dilapidated and a very poor commentary on the opportunities which the Africans have had to promote their social amenities and advancement. Look at the European part of Kimberley. Look at the locations which in their filth enclose the town. We don't have all the splendid and convenient amenities of the towns because they are too good for us, or because we do not desire them. Far be it! They are not too good for us. We desire them very ardently. We do not have them because South African society has been so ordered by the Europeans as to deny us opportunities of acquiring these amenities as quickly and as fully as has been the case with Europeans.

The most pernicious feature of this matter is that the employment of African labour upon such terms and under such conditions as fit it into the pattern of conditions of slavery has become, a permanent feature of African labour in the commerce and industries of South Africa. Our trade unions are denied government recognition and this means that we cannot bargain with our labour and skill. The industrial colour bar has debarred us from engaging in skilled occupations and this has implied and been made explicit that our labour, whatever its quality, has the stamp of colour on it and for that untenable reason it is inferior and should be rewarded as inferior work.

Unjust Laws

The 1913 and 1936 Land Acts have kraaled us into small and overcrowded reserves where there are no industries or commercial undertakings to offer us employment. In the towns and industrial settlements we live under some of the most inhuman conditions to be found anywhere in the world. In the reserves we starve and are thereby at the mercy of the farmers, the mines and the industrial and commercial centres who, organised as they are into powerful employment machines, can dictate to the government and

In the towns the government^{and} the municipalities have a close and tight hold on our political, economic and even social life. In these towns many of us have no places where to lay our heads. Those who have some kind of roof over their heads, such roofs are hopelessly insufficient and many of them are very obviously unsuitable. These are some of the conditions under which our people live and these and other inhuman and unacceptable conditions are bred by unjust laws. These laws are specifically framed to create a political, economic and social set-up which is intended to place us where we are - in a position of utter subordination and subjection - in spite of (and perhaps because of) the contribution which we have made and continue to make to the general material and social welfare of this country.

The unjust laws under which we live are a legion. The Pass Laws; the laws which make possible beer raids in the locations; laws which deny us freedom of movement, laws which deny us freedom of speech; laws which reserve certain conveniences, amenities and essentials 'for Europeans only', and a host of others which are too numerous to be here catalogued are not just a nuisance to us. They are a serious danger which threatens our very existence politically, economically and socially. We are opposed to these laws and we wish to show our utter and inflexible disapproval of these laws not because we want to give the government an extra piece of work. We object to these laws because they are ~~made~~ designed in such a way as to destroy our political life. They reduce us to stark poverty and want, and they starve our souls and leave nothing for us to do and to live for.

The new Abolition of Pass Laws bill is nothing but a pass law. It is a pass law of the deepest dye. It is worse than any previous pass law for to injury it adds the unbearable insult of applying to our women folk. It is not a law to abolish passes. It is rather a law to make more effective and to widen the scope of the application of the pass laws. African women will now have to carry passes and those Africans in the reserves who have not, before, carried passes will, in terms of this bill also have to carry passes. This is a bad law. It is an unjust law, and it is a source of frustration and humiliation to the African people.

... government has made a ~~series~~ force of consultation of African opinion on

the true representatives of the people of South Africa at UNO and other inter-territorial and inter-national forums are those whom the people of South Africa have democratically elected, not those whom some outside, however well-meaning, people choose for South Africa. Those African men whom the Government chose to consult on this new Pass Bill could not be accepted by the Africans as their true representatives and spokesmen. They are local rather than national leaders. The manner in which these were apparently hurried down to Capetown without sufficient time being given to them and their people to consider carefully and with due leisure the Bill on which they were to give their opinion in the name of and on behalf of their people did not suggest that whatever they had to say would materially affect the nature and scope of the new Bill. This was apparently a mock consultation. I would be interested to know that some person can refute a report which implies that their collective opinion could not be said to have assured the Government that of the approval of the Africans they were said to represent on this law.

Education Report.

The education of the Africans has been fascinatingly interesting to the present Government. It was one of the very first tasks to which the Government applied ^{itself} with vigour and thoroughness. No sooner was the Government in power than it set about surveying and planning for the education of the Africans. In fact the Government's show of interest in this matter of national (not party political) importance was so immediate that we too have been aroused to a new and vital interest in the interest of Europeans in the education of the Africans. A casual reading of the 1949 - 1952 Dr. Eiselen Report on Native Education will find it difficult to dispell our darkest suspicions and fears. One thing looms very large in the Report and it is that there is contemplated a system of education for us which is based upon a previously designed pattern of life for the Africans. That pattern is that of people who have a destiny other than the destiny of the other racial groups which make up the nation of South Africa. The Report is a high sounding exposition of the often repeated slogan of letting the Africans to develop upon his own lines. Many people ^{who} have seen loud 'letting the African develop upon his own lines' have been nonplussed to tell us

In matters of education - education in, and, of this inter-dependent and inter-locked world - there are no African, coloured, Indian or European lines. The only lines we know are sound educational lines which fit a man wherever he is upon the face of the earth for the citizenship of the world.

but while the report suggests a preconceived destiny for us as an independent race, it prescribes an administrative educational machinery which utterly denies us that independence. It is the old bogey in an academic robe - 'apartheid' on the one hand, and very close contact between white and black. If there can be any lines on which the Africans will be led (not allowed) to develop, the report sees to it that those lines will be determined by Europeans - European directors of education, European inspectors, European dominated authorities of education. The lines will not be determined by an independent body of Africans - African directors of education, African inspectors and committees.

One other aspect of this report which strikes the most casual reader is the suggested method of financing the education of the Africans. We have never been tardy about helping the work of educating our children. We have given freely of our money and in kind to help further the education of our children. The suggestion that the education of the Africans should be financed from exclusively African sources of income is, to my mind, not fair. It is not fair because I maintain that the education of all citizens is the responsibility of the state which expects allegiance from those citizens. Secondly I think the suggestion is unacceptable because it is impracticable. We cannot separate European sources of income from those of the Africans. We are in one country and our economic activities are so intertwined that we cannot draw that in line which the report seems confident can be drawn between black and white. We contribute very substantially to the wealth of South Africa. Unfortunately most of it, as things are, does not come to us. It goes to the Europeans.

The Government has indicated its desire to introduce a Bill to implement all or some of the recommendations made in this report. But unless these recommendations or some of them are reviewed and recast

another of the unjust laws will be added to the statute book of the union of south Africa. This will disturb the peace of the soul of the Africans and it will plague their sense of self-respect.

The Campaign.

The campaign against unjust laws is proceeding steadily according to plan in the big industrial areas. The men and women who have volunteered are coming forward in their tens and hundreds. From what I know and from the daily press they are doing nothing to provoke violence and bloodshed. That is the spirit in which the campaign was conceived. That is what the African national congress expects of them. We do not seek the blood of the Europeans. We do not seek to plunge south Africa into a blood bath. We have explored every conceivable constitutional and democratic avenue to impress upon the white people of south Africa that many of the laws under which we live are intolerable. We have done this over a long period of time. This, we hope, will stir the conscience of the white men. It will, I hope, make them realise that indeed we are against the laws - the unjust laws - which make our life a burden and a curse.

In this campaign and by it we have not come to the end of our struggle. It is one those early and preliminary exercises by which we are training our men and women to prepare them for the more gruelling engagements of the bigger struggles to come. I would like to say that the numbers of the volunteers and the way in which they have rallied to the call of their nation has been very heartening to me. I wish to congratulate them on behalf of the African national congress. I wish to congratulate them also on behalf of the African people. They are setting up a monument at the shrine of African nationalism which Africa will never forget.

the Methodist Church and the African National Congress

I notice that the Rev. A. E. F. Garrett, head of the Methodist Church of South Africa is disturbed by the non-European campaign against unjust laws organised by the African National Congress and the South African Indian Congress. He is likely to allow the question of church ministers taking part in political issues such as our campaign to be raised at

of those hateful weeds which the Christian Church throughout the centuries has decried and tried to eradicate. In these days when even the Christian Church ~~has~~ seems to have laid down its arms against the powerful and untiring forces of evil, this campaign has set thinking one part of the church of Christ in this corner of the world.

but when the rev. Garrett says that 'a campaign of this sort is not their line of approach for the solution of problems', and when he calls this campaign negative, then I don't think that the rev. Gentleman is doing much thinking which is not negative. The rev. Garrett must ~~at~~ state his line of approach. For many years he has kept quiet and not given us his line of approach. We have been far more positive than the rev. Garrett can comprehend. We have tried every possible way to arrive at a solution of our problems, The African National Congress has sent a deputation to Britain; it has sent deputations to Europe; it has put its case even to UNO. What we have done in South Africa to show how positive we can be should be well known to rev. Garrett otherwise I can't see how he can keep his church outside purely political issues but meantime besmear his hands with an uninformed criticism of the political activities of the African national congress.

If he, his wife and children were to carry passes to enable them to move from his town of residence to the Synod of Uitenhage, if he could not of his own free will and according to the natural ability of his son choose for his son that skilled work for which he was naturally endowed, if his house were to be open to police raids at any time of the day or the night without a warrant, then he would have been so fired with moral indignation that he might even consider becoming one of the volunteers in this campaign against such unjust laws. If the rev. Garrett knows of a positive way out I would be glad to have it.

I am a born Methodist and a staunch supporter of the Methodist church. I am surprised to read a statement by a Methodist minister such as that made by the rev. Garrett. Such utterances, I am certain do no good as far as the relations between black and white Methodists are concerned. If anything should happen in the ranks of the Methodist church as a result of the African ministers of that church and the Africa.

we are not fools. we know that all Europeans who have qualified vote. European ministers of the Methodist Church are no exception. To that extent they part in politics. They help to tilt the balance of power one way or the other between those parties which contend for power to rule us all. We have no confidence in a church which whilst it recognises and furthers human rights - be they political - for one race compromises on the other hand, with those forces which deny us those rights.

The Christian ministers are a light in the world, and like the founder of their church they should be bold to take the whip and clear the church. African ministers are some of the most educated people amongst the Africans. They are likely to see more clearly and to appreciate better the conditions under which they and their fellow Africans live. Like the vast majority of their congregations these ministers, particularly the most enlightened, and therefore the most powerful in the church, are members of the African National Congress.

We are proud of them and I wish to assure them and to bring to them the congratulations of the African National Congress. We call upon them to come forward in their ever increasing numbers and to rally to the call of their people in this critical struggle against a Herrenvolk philosophy which would deny their people those human rights which are basic and essential. In this way they will help to establish faith in the church, and make the church not the handmaid of political corruption and oppression, but the guardian of truth justice and mercy.

In conclusion I wish to emphasise the obvious. The African National Congress is the pivot of African aspirations and legitimate expectations. We are one nation. We live under one system of laws. Our problems are the same throughout the length and breadth of South Africa. Therefore those who would balkanise us into tribal camps are either unrealistic or they bitter enemies of the Africans. We cannot afford to dissipate our forces and fritter away our energies by dividing ourselves into tribal nonentities. We cannot afford parties within the framework of the African National Congress. Within Congress we have always and we shall always have differences of opinion. We have always welcomed a healthy exchange of contradictory opinions at our gatherings. We be