

**CONTRIBUTION  
TO  
MODERN CIVILISATION  
BY  
AFRICA'S SLAVES  
AND  
SOUTH AFRICA'S TOILING MASSES  
BY  
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# **THE AFRICAN PEOPLES DEMOCRATIC UNION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA (APDUSA.)**

## **Presidential Address**

Delivered at Cape Town, April, 1962

By

**I.B.TABATA**

THIS is the first National Conference of the African People's Democratic Union of Southern Africa, which was founded at the beginning of last year. The name itself is aptly chosen. Any one approaching the organisation sees writ large on its banners the central theme of its programme. The Organisation stands firstly for democracy-for all those who accept this country as their home and therefore regard themselves as Africans. Every human being who lives in this, country and contributes to its welfare is a citizen and is therefore entitled to an equal say in the Government and management of the affairs of the country. In short he is entitled to full democratic rights.

Clause {c) of the Constitution states one of the aims of this organisation as follows: "To struggle for the liquidation of national oppression of the oppressed people in Southern Africa, that is, the removal of all disabilities and restrictions based on grounds of race r and colour and acquisition by the whole nation of those democratic rights enjoyed at present by only a small section of the population, namely the white people."

The programme "shall be the Ten Point Programme of the Non-European Unity Movement as laid down by the founding Conference of the N.E.U.M. in December, 1943." This, then, puts A.P.D.U.S.A. fairly and squarely within the fold of the N.E.U.M. As a child of the Unity Movement it inherits the policy of non-collaboration with the oppressor, and the boycott as a weapon of struggle. It inherits also the traditions of the Unity Movement, its intransigence in matters of policy, its unflinching devotion to principles. It treasures the experiences of t4e Unity Movement accumulated over the years of hard struggle. In the coming battles A.P.D.U.S.A. will draw from the arsenal of ideas, of the parent body, but, like all children who grow up under the tutelage of their

parents, A.P.D.U.S.A. must expect and prepare itself for situations that have not been met before by the parent body. For this reason APDUSANS must steep themselves in the fundamental ideas and the guiding principles of the Unity Movement; for only thus will it be able to face up to the new situation.

From the start I would like to warn Conference that this address may seem rather sweeping in scope and not coming down to the day to day problems that face the people. This is deliberate. We have recently held a Conference of the Unity Movement in which all the burning questions of the day were dealt with. I have been made to understand that the papers read at the Conference are going to be published, if not separately, at least in the minutes; Since A.P.D.U.S.A. was part of that Conference and will receive its share of the minutes, I deem it not only unnecessary but wasteful to cover the same ground. In addition to this, the address has attempted to avoid forestalling the paper that will be read in this Conference. In view of these considerations I have decided to limit myself to directing the thoughts of Conference towards certain aspects of our political life in the country. The central theme of this address is chosen to bring home to the membership the importance, the vital importance, of those classes who are generally accorded a lowly status in society, the toiling masses who carry society on their backs. Clause (c) of our Constitution, under "programme and policy", states:

**“The democratic demands and aspirations of the oppressed workers and peasants shall be paramount in the orientation of APDUSA in both its short term and its long term objectives.”**

This is the first time to my knowledge that such a clause has been included in the Constitution of any organisation in the Unity Movement. This alone marks a development in the outlook of the Movement and in a way also reflects the time we are living in. If this address should succeed in illuminating the full meaning of this clause I shall be satisfied.

A.P.D.U.S.A. is born during a time of crisis. If it is to survive it will have to learn not only to adapt itself to the present conditions but to develop such foresight as to be able to anticipate events and adjust itself accordingly. This presupposes a knowledge of the various forces at work and therefore of the environment in which it has to live. Social crises are not accidental phenomena. They follow certain laws that govern the development of men as social beings. They are part and parcel of the evolutionary process of mankind. Contrary to popular opinion, evolution is never in a straight line, gradual or peaceful. What is more dramatic than the appearance of a mutation which, thanks to its superior adaptability to

the changing or changed environment, supersedes its original stock? Is there anything more productive of convulsions than the dramatic transformation of a social order, during a social revolution? Yet these events, so different in form and appearance, obey each in its own way the laws of change and development. In nature changes are taking place all the time unnoticed by us. The natural forces operating on our planet, the climate which is itself changing and the intervention of the animal kingdom and other living things all produce a change of environment and this lays the basis for the appearance of new species. In human society man alters his own environment, chiefly by developing the means of producing his food and other necessities and comforts. These productive forces in turn acquire such a powerful influence that at a certain stage they impose on society the necessity for a drastic alteration of the social structure. A social change differs from what one may call the "blind" evolution in nature, in that it involves a conscious intervention of man in his own destiny. And this intervention is of the very essence of progress. The point we are making is that there is a unity in nature, and man, being part of that nature, lives in unity with it. In order to survive man has through the ages tried to adjust himself to nature. To do this he has sought to discover the laws of nature. All of science is devoted to this pursuit. But it has taken a long time for man to discover that in the same way as natural phenomena obey strict laws, so does human society itself. Its development is governed by strict laws and it is the task of those who have undertaken to change society to discover the laws that govern social evolution.

If APDUSANS take their work seriously, they will have to realise that politics is a full-time job. It is not enough to go around organising the people, -though this in itself is very important; but they themselves have to find time to study. Politics is a science and those who do not understand this are lost; for they are unable to know what, is involved in the events taking place Wore their eyes. Science gives us conceptual tools to predict the future and it is this ability to predict that will enable us to survive. In a time of social ferment many organisations spring up, society becomes prolific in producing its political offspring, but then the mortality rate also rises steeply. Many of them die out and only those that are furnished with the proper means of adaptability survive. In other words, only those organisations that arm themselves with the correct theory are able to live on and assist in guiding the struggle of the people towards a higher plane. We are at this moment living through that state of ferment.

Where capitalism is faced with an acute crisis it tends to move towards a totalitarian dictatorship: But a totalitarian regime of the fascist type is a condition of an unstable regime. By its very essence , it can only be temporal and transitional. Naked dictatorship is a symptom of a severe social crisis. Society cannot exist permanently under a state of crisis. A

totalitarian state is capable of suppressing social contradictions during a certain period, but it is incapable of perpetuating itself. A ruling class, like a wounded lion, becomes more vicious as it feels itself drawing near to its extinction. The more vicious it becomes, the more monstrous its laws against the oppressed, all the more insecure it must feel. The very condition of an acute social crisis means that the forces operating in society can no longer be accommodated within it. It is time to change the old social relationships. Only that class that is called upon to do so, by virtue of its historical role, can help to solve such a crisis. In this country it is the toiling masses, who are in the main the Non-European oppressed, those millions of workers and peasants toiling on the land, in the mines and in the factories, who are destined to lead this country out of the crisis and create a more rational social order. It is they who create the civilization and lay the basis for a cultural development. They, by virtue of their contribution, should be accorded their rightful place of dignity and worth in society. They should participate in the governing of the country for which they have done and continue to do so much. Without their labour all this magnificence, all this spectacular development, this wealth and progress would have been impossible. We shall try to convey how all society is indebted to the labour of those they so often despise.

When illustrating a point, it is often a good plan to direct the attention of the people to events far away; for distance enables us to see events in clearer perspective. It is often difficult for people to perceive the historical significance of their own activities; they are not able to step aside and examine with the eye of a historian the implications of their own action. Thus it is useful to refer to well-known events in order to illuminate current history. I am here going to digress a little and bring to life the drama of the 11th, 18th and 19th centuries. As we take a cursory view of this period, I hope in passing to demolish the whole myth of the so-called "Western Civilization": It is time that our people recognised that they are not step-children of the so-called civilised nations and that there is no such thing as "White Christian civilization" or "Western civilization" created by the westerners alone. **There is only human civilization to which man all over the world contributed.** The people of Africa made as large a contribution as any other. If, as we are told, human labour is the originator of all wealth, then we might justifiably claim that the people of Africa contributed a lion's share in laying the basis for the emergence of what is known today as "Western civilization". This may seem a tall claim, so it becomes necessary for us at once to define our frame of reference. By this "basis" of Western civilization in this context we mean the series of events that led to the emergence of industrialism in Europe, with its accompanying industrial revolution.

It is our contention that the industrial revolution would have been impossible at the time and in the manner in which it took place, if it had not been for the limitless slave labour drawn from the continent of Africa. The discovery of the new world with its vast potential of sugar, cotton and tea had the effect of accelerating the slave trade. As countries like the West Indies, Cuba, Haiti - the whole of the Caribbean Islands ~ and Central and North America were developed by means of slave labour, the slavers intensified their rape of Africa with a ferocity hitherto undreamed of in history. It is estimated that in **four centuries** covering the 16th century to the 19th century, *fifty million slaves* were transported across the Atlantic from the continent of Africa. So great was the concentration of slaves in some parts of the recently discovered New World, that in countries like Brazil and Venezuela more than half the population consisted of African slaves, ex-slaves and "Mulattos".

Basil Davidson, in his book, "Black Mother", reports that by the end of the 18th century "the value of British incomes derived from trade with the West Indies was said to be four times greater than the value of British income derived from trade with the rest of the world". It was not only the profits made on the sale of slaves as commodities that made the slave trade so lucrative. It was the profits made from the slave-grown sugar and cotton. "For many European merchants," writes Davidson, "the rest of the 17th century was almost literally 'the century of sugar'. Tobacco became important and so did rum and West Indian coffee and cotton, but the grand consumer of slaves and the great maker of profits for Europe was 'King Sugar'.

By this time the economy of the European countries, which was a mercantile economy, was dynamically and inseparably linked up with the slave trade. Speculation was the great fury of the age. Great profits were made, the average being 300% on investment. "Little men climbed to power on the profits of sugar, tobacco and slaves," he writes. "In 1720 England imported just over half a million tons of sugar and by the end of the century the average annual import was about five times as large. In Britain's rising accumulation of capital the West Indies was even more important than India. With this dramatic rise in the slave trade there was a tremendous impetus in ship-building. Davidson tells us that in 1719 the port of Liverpool had only 18,371 tons of registered shipping, but by 1792 "this rose to 200,382 tons, and it was the 'Great Circuit trade' of consumer goods, slaves, sugar, tobacco and rum that commissioned most of the tonnage." We might explain here what is meant by "circuit "trade". Slaves in the main were brought from African potentates. The media of exchange were all sorts of trinkets and other European manufactured goods. Chief amongst these were cotton goods and textiles. Slavers' ships on their outward journey were laden with cotton goods and yarn to

be sold mostly in exchange for slaves in Africa. On their return journey they crossed the Atlantic Ocean laden with the slave cargo, which was sold in the Caribbean Islands where depots had been established for supplying the rest of America with its quota of slaves. From this point the same ships carried back to Europe the product of slave labour in the form of sugar and cotton to be sold at high prices on the home market. This completed the circuit. It is not difficult to imagine how with this rapid exchange of commodities *en route* and the quick turn-over, tremendous profits were made, sometimes reaching the fantastic figure of 700% on the original capital investment.

This slave trade had a powerful effect on the European economy. It was not simply that it earned large sums of capital for re-investment in the citadels of Europe. It also created new demands which in their turn set into motion tremendous activity directed towards the building of factories for manufacturing goods. New towns sprang up with their shops, banks and business houses; commerce thrived, providing a home market for the newly-created cheap merchandise. Cecil Williams, as quoted in "Black Mother", writes:

“What the building of ships for the transport of slaves did for the 18th century Liverpool, the manufacture of cotton goods for the purchase of slaves did for the 18th century Manchester.”

The same development took place in France and indeed the whole of Europe. To the merchants the great circuit trade was returning a regular high profit. Private profits were made, public opulence appeared, industries were founded, towns were built and a new class, the bourgeoisie, appeared on the scene with all its glory. This was the time of the great Industrial Revolution. It was the time of the industrial inventions. New factories had created a demand for more coal. This could be met only if new and more efficient methods were devised. It was this need led to the discovery of the steam-pump for pumping water out of the ever-deepening coal mines. Out of this was developed the steam locomotive to run on rails, that is, the train that carried goods to the seaports and to other industrial centres. In the textile industry, too, the same growth took place and gave an impetus to the discovery of new inventions. The inexhaustible demand for textiles called forth new and more efficient methods of production. In 1733 John Kay invented a mechanical shuttle to replace the hand-thrown shuttle. Five years later Lewis Paul came out with the means of spinning by rollers. In 1768 Hargreaves combined various inventions into his “spinning jenny”. Then Arkwright followed with his "throstle" for spinning by the use of animal or water power. By 1811 Britain had more than 300 000 spindles working on Arkwright principles. All these inventions were the work of

craftsmen struggling to meet an apparently inexhaustible demand for cheap consumer goods. Export figures provide eloquent testimony to the extent that Britain benefited by this demand by way of accumulation of capital during this period. At the beginning of the 18th century British exports in textiles stood at about £23,000. At the end of it the export had grown to five and a half million. "Industrialism was born," writes Basil Davidson, "and it was the West African trade in all its ramifications that presided over the event."

We have drawn this picture not merely to establish our claim to the sum total of the civilization and culture of mankind today by virtue of the contribution made by our forebears, but also for a much more important reason, namely, that it was the labour of the millions of nameless slaves that made possible the transformation of a mercantile economy in Europe to an industrial manufacturing economy, that is to say, from a primitive economy of a backward society to industrialism. And this gave birth to new ideas that were to transform the nature of society itself. A new and powerful class, the bourgeoisie, had emerged. It could no longer tolerate the autocracy of the feudal aristocracy. It demanded such re-organisation of society as would give it state power commensurate with its economic power. With this in view philosophers from this class worked out systems of ideas that were to be guiding principles in their fight for dominance in society. Democracy was demanded as a condition of existence, without which no self-respecting man could live. The great revolutions in Europe were the logical sequence of the industrial revolution. These, then were some of the consequences of the great slave trade. Those nameless slaves who died in the sugar plantations, the cotton fields and the coal mines did not know that their labour was to lay the foundation for this magnificent structure, today known as "Western Civilization", with all its culture, science and technology.. The ignorant Boer back-velder may claim that his forebears alone built it but the facts give the lie to his boasts.

If we have not mentioned the contribution made by those millions of equally nameless white wage-slaves who were consumed by the Moloch of industrialism, it is because time and space do not permit us. We have no reason to minimise their contribution. We claim them as brothers to our forebears in suffering, fellow slaves who lost their lives in the march of progress of mankind. The point we are making ~ is that **labour and labour alone, whether it be manual, intellectual or technical, is the creator of wealth and civilization.** Only those who are actively engaged in the complex of production, administration and research are necessary to human progress. The rest are drones and parasites that feed on society.

We are now in a position to see by looking into the past what labour has done for mankind. Let us now turn our attention to our own country, the



Union of South Africa. It was mainly the labour of the Non-Whites that transformed the economy of the country in a short space of time from a pastoral agricultural economy to a mining economy, which in turn gave birth to an industrial economy. The curious thing in our country is that, while industrialism has taken root, the social relations insofar as the Non-Whites are concerned are those of a feudal economy. While the Non-Europeans have contributed a lion's share in creating wealth and civilization in this country, the herrenvolk have excluded them from enjoying the fruits of their own labour. Flying in the face of history, they are at this moment desperately trying to legislate into being a dead and long-buried tribalism or barbarism. More about this later. It is almost a platitude to say that wealth in this country has been and is being built up by the slave labour of the Non-Whites. This is easy to see. What, however, is not sufficiently appreciated, not even by the Non-Europeans themselves, is that the whole of the industrial life with all its manifold ramifications rests almost entirely on the African, Coloured and Indian sweated labour. If we accept this to be the truth, as we shall presently show, then it follows that all the super-structural activities, such as trade and commerce, communications, aviation, defence, social and cultural services, education (including 'white' education) and all those activities which flow from an industrial economy, are made possible in this country, thanks to the existence of a vast depressed Non-White labour force. This means that the national income itself, which provides luxuries for a section of the Whites together with the protected high wages for the White worker, rests on the same sweated Black labour.

In his book, "The South African Predicament," F .P. Spooner devotes a whole chapter to what he calls the "vulnerability of the economy." The word "vulnerability" is well-chosen. We, too, shall devote a chapter to the "vulnerability" not of the economy but of herrenvolkism. Spooner states:

"The progress and strength of a country's economy are usually measured by the growth of its national income. A special feature of this development (in South Africa) has been the growth of the manufacturing industry which today contributes more to the income of the country than either mining or agriculture. Its contribution for the year 1956-7 was not far short of the contribution made by the other two taken together. The following table shows the relative contributions made during that year.

<b>Agriculture, Forestry and fishing</b>	<b>R277.1 m -14.4% of total geographical income</b>
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<b>Mining</b>	<b>R259.7 m - 13.5% of total geographic income</b>
<b>Manufacturing (private)</b>	<b>R452.9 m - 23.5% of total geographic income</b>
<b>Total Geographic Income</b>	<b>R1,930.7    100% of total geographic income.</b>

Spoooner goes on to say: “These figures disclose that 54.4% of the geographical income of the country is derived from agriculture, mining and manufacturing – the sources of income which constitute the foundation of the country’s economy, the rest being mainly superstructure.”

There are three things to note here:

(1) That three industries, namely, agriculture, mining and manufacturing, constitute the foundation of the country's economy.

(2) That 51.4% of the national income comes from these three industries. The rest come from the superstructure, that is to say, from those activities which are themselves dependent upon these three.

(3) That the income from the manufacturing industry alone is almost equal to the other two put together. From this last, most people draw the wrong conclusion that it is the manufacturing industry that sustains the country's economy. That this conclusion is wrong is revealed when we examine the balance sheet of exports and imports, of the different industries. It must be remembered that all these groups in varying degrees depend on the importation of raw materials and equipment. Spoooner gives us the balance sheet of 1955 as follows:

Credit Balance:

1. Agricultural industry	Twenty Three million English pounds
2. Pastoral industry	Seventy six million English Pounds
3. Precious Mineral industry	Two hundred and fifteen English Pounds
4. Base Mineral industry	Thirty six million English Pounds
5. Other	Eight million English Pounds

But secondary industry shows a debit balance of one hundred and seventy five million pounds leaving an overall credit balance of only one hundred and eighty eight million pounds for direct imports. These figures reveal that, far from sustaining the country's economy manufacturing industry is in fact being carried by the other two, namely, agriculture and mining industries. The latter alone earns a sufficient credit to pay for all the import requirements of the manufacturing industry. In short, then, the manufacturing industry in this country is running at a loss insofar as external balance of trade is concerned. That is to say, it is unable to stand on its own feet. Yet, insofar as society internally is concerned, it is the manufacturing industry that provided the biggest national income, the bulk of which goes to the white section of the population who constitute a minority in the country. It is from it that the extravagant salaries are paid to Cabinet Ministers and Parliamentarians. It is from it that the luxurious buildings and other luxuries are paid for the whole army functionaries and other hangers-on. It is this that pays for the amenities of Whites-only grand holiday resorts for Whites-only, swimming pools, civic centres, entertainment and other luxuries for Whites-only. In short, it is out of this income that the Whites are afforded an artificially high standard of living, while the great majority, the Non-Whites, are languishing in poverty and are perishing from preventable diseases, because they earn less than a living wage. We have already shown that the manufacturing industry is carried by the agricultural and mining industries. The question then is: who are the producers in these industries? For it is they who, in the final analysis, carry the whole country on their backs.

In the agricultural and pastoral industries which, according to Spooner, earned £99 million for imports in 1955, there were in 1957, 11,071 White employees, but 952,551 Non-White workers. In the mining industry, including gold, diamonds, coal quarry mines, the biggest earner of foreign exchange, which made available for direct imports a sum of £251 million in the same year, there were in 1959 a total of 62,025 Whites, but 487,982 Non-Whites, that is, almost eight times as many Non-Whites as Whites.

These figures leave not a shadow of doubt that it is the Non-Whites of South Africa who carry the country on their backs. But figures at the best of times are cold and give only a shadowy picture of the reality. They have to be translated in terms of life itself, and this requires knowledge and a certain amount of imagination.

Earlier on in this paper we had digressed in order to deal with at length with what happened during the 11th and 18th centuries when slave

labour laid the basis for a new civilization, a capitalist civilization that was to lead to the present-day wonders and achievements in all branches of human knowledge. We showed how the sweat and sinews of those anonymous slaves built the foundation for a social structure that was to be the pride of man. The sole purpose of doing this was to hold the mirror up, as it were, before our own anonymous millions in South Africa today. It was to illuminate their own position of importance and worth in this country. They, too, in their turn, with their labour, slave labour, are laying the foundation for yet a more wondrous future. If only the oppressed people of South Africa knew their importance in the present social set-up, they would not continue for another moment to tolerate the lowly status imposed upon them they would not remain Calibans to White Prosperos.

When dealing with the one-sidedness of the South African economy, Spooner inadvertently uses the phrase "vulnerability of the economy". We say "inadvertently" because the term is charged with far greater implications than he thinks. In fact, if he thought about it, he would have considered the picture he presents of the economy of the country as frightening in the extreme. As an economist he was concerned only with figures. He followed them with a relentless logic without considering the political implications of the situation. We take these same figures, give them flesh and blood, and behold we see before our eyes the picture of the whole structure of South African society emerging with all its social, economic and political ramifications. Here we have a whole society, a prosperous White society precariously perched on the back of a discontented Black labour force. The implications of this situation are frightening enough to them, particularly as the Non-Whites are now beginning to be aware of their worth and power; but this is their problem, not ours. What we are concerned with here is to show how this economic structure dictates a certain course of action on the part of the herrenvolk. And by the same token suggests a course of action for the oppressed.

Long before Verwoerd came to South Africa, Imperialism had mapped out a political and social order that would maintain and perpetuate the existing economic structure. Every herrenvolk Government is charged with the duty of protecting the mining industry as the primary industry round which others revolve. All laws passed by every parliament of the herrenvolk had to bear this in mind. Gold-mining consumes a terrific amount of unskilled labour; therefore Parliament had to see to it that the whole of the Non-White population, from which this labour is drawn, was kept mainly illiterate or semi-literate. This became the policy of every successive Government since Union. That is why long

before the Nationalist Party was formed, there was already a separation of education between the various racial groups. That is how it came about that the educational monstrosities known as "Coloured education" and "Native education" were born. The mines demanded cheap labour. They had to make huge profits for the investors as well as provide foreign currency for import requirements for secondary industry. Therefore the wages of the whole Non-White population have to be depressed. It became the task of whatever Government in power to keep the Non-European wage low, no matter in what category or industry they were employed. The mining industry, by virtue of its primacy in the economic life of the country, dictates the wage policy for all its potential employees no matter where they happen to be temporarily working. This is the source of the wage differentiation according to racial groups in South Africa. In the eyes of the herrenvolk every child who is born black is a potential mine-worker. If, on growing up, he is fortunate enough to escape the mines and finds employment in some other occupation or profession, he nevertheless does not escape the implications of having been born into that section of the population that constitutes potential mine-labour. A Non-White clerk or teacher may have the same or even better qualifications than his White counterpart, but he cannot climb over the wage-barrier that barricades him in the same camp with the mine-workers.

The mines demand an inexhaustible source of labour. Therefore the Government of the country has to make laws to make this labour available. Long before the term "apartheid" was known of, the Government of the day created a special department, the Native Affairs Department, to work day and night at this problem. It had, created what are known as the "Native Reserves" in which they end that section of the population which was expected to work in the mines. It was not for lack of land that these Reserves were made small. They were overcrowded by design, so that the population, unable to support itself, would be forced to seek work in the mines at low rates of pay. As the mining industry expanded there sprang up secondary industry. Trade and commerce also grew and towns sprang up, increasing in size as the various industries increased. These in turn demanded labour. The Government had to legislate for these new demands; thus more laws against the Non-Europeans came fast and furious on the statute book. For a time, when South African economy was mainly agricultural, and mining, it had been hoped that African labour alone would suffice. Consequently the Governments of the period concentrated their racial laws mainly on the Africans, leaving ~ other Non-White sections in abeyance. But when the economy

changed into an industrial manufacturing economy, it became obvious that the African population alone would not be sufficient and that the other two sections of the Non-Whites, the Coloureds and the Indians, had to be roped in. The tremendous expansion that took place after the last world war didn't alter the basic structure of the economy. It merely expanded it. There was a great boom in secondary industry, resulting in the building up of heavy industry, the growth of many factories, the springing up of many towns. And all of these demanded more and more labour. Then there was the discovery of new gold mines in the Free State, far richer than those in the Transvaal. This created an acute shortage of labour. The herrenvolk were faced with an insoluble problem -insoluble within their own frame of reference. The boom in industry, trade and commerce gave them huge profits and to their sons and daughters lucrative posts. But all this new activity drew its labour from the same limited source. Since the very existence of the secondary industries depended on the gold mines, they could not afford to deprive the golden goose of its life-blood. Parliament had to make available other sources of labour.

It will be remembered that in 1943, when the United Party was still in power, steps were taken to form the Coloured Advisory Council (C.A.C.) to work with a sub-department under the Department of Social Welfare. This was the beginning of the present-day Coloured Affairs Department (C.A.D.) and the Union Council of Coloured Affairs. It was already known that there were rich deposits of gold in the Free State and that double the size of the existing labour force would be necessary to extract it. Thus the United Party set about creating a Native Affairs Department for the Coloured and Indian sectors. It was to be a Department of State that would specialise in the field of making Coloured and Indian labour available. The 1948 elections that brought the Nationalist Party into power, relieved the United Party of the task. When the Nationalist Government took over, it created nothing new. It had no plans different from its predecessors. How could it? It was faced with the same problems that were dictated by the economic structure of the country. What was new in the situation was the greater urge for super-exploitation and a much more acute labour shortage. The Broederbond (Nationalist) Government, unimpaired by any necessity to pay lip-service to democracy, took the machinery created by its predecessors and used it with a ruthlessness beloved of the fascists. They did not depart one whit from the policies of the previous governments. If anything, they pursued them with a brutal logic characteristic of men with a narrow vision, untrammelled, by the wider implications of their policies.

The point we are making is that without a radical alteration of the socio-economic set-up in this country, it is not possible for any herrenvolk Government to depart from the so-called traditional policy, whether it is called apartheid, segregation, multi-racialism or any other name. For it is not the names that politicians give to their policies that matter, nor is it the smooth oily tongues or vulgar formulations that decide the issue. It is the hard economic factors that dictate the policy and the programme of the Government in power. Those woolly-minded Non-European politicians who fail to grasp this fact will always remain abject sycophants of this or that section of the berrenvolk. Those simpletons who cry nostalgically for the return of the United Party days on the ground of the "lesser evil" reveal an abysmal ignorance of the forces at work. If the "lesser evil" of yesterday were in power today, under the pressure of the prevailing urgent problems, it would long ago have transformed itself into the "greater evil". That is why it is so ludicrous to see some Non - European intellectuals and politicians denouncing the Nationalist Party and in the same breath appealing to and even aligning themselves with the United Party and the ex-U.P. now organised as Progressive and Liberal Parties. It is tantamount to appealing to the old Nationalist Party of more peaceful days as against the present-day Verwoerdian Party, as though there were any intrinsic difference between them.

It is not that the Nationalist Party is especially vindictive towards Non-Whites, or that it is actuated by a desire to settle scores with them for some past grievances, nor is it actuated by hatred against all people of colour. Such motives and feelings are irrelevant to the practical questions of government. The Nationalist Party happens to be in power at a time of crisis, both internal and external. For the moment we shall pursue the internal problem which it is desperately trying to solve.

We have shown above how the economy of the country is precariously perched on the mining industry. This is to say, in plain language, that all social life and all the activities of society in this country as we know them today, are made possible by the smooth running of the mining industry. But the events today, both internal and external, are threatening this main prop. The mines, unable to find sufficient labour within the Union, had been in the habit of recruiting labour from the neighbouring countries beyond the borders of the Union. For years the Portuguese Government has been making a roaring trade with South Africa by hiring out its Black colonial subjects – slaves - to work in the mines. The Tomlinson Commiss'ion reports that 60% of the labour force in the gold mines of South Africa comes from the countries beyond the borders of the Union. Now, with the revolt of the oppressed Africans under the Portuguese iron heel, coupled with the agitation against the South

African herrenvolk Government by all the emergent African States, the danger to the South African economy becomes apparent. If all the neighbouring States decide to broaden their boycott of South African goods so as to include the stoppage of their labour supplies to South Africa, it is not difficult to imagine the reeling blow that would be dealt to South Africa by such a decision. With things as they stand today, a sudden dislocation of the mines would send the whole economy of the country toppling down with a crash. It is the threat that this situation holds that hangs over the herrenvolk like the sword of Damocles. It is the fear of the collapse of the country's economy that is haunting the herrenvolk and making them act like demented men.

We are not at the moment dealing with the larger and more important cause of their apprehensions, namely, the political upsurge threatening to abolish herrenvolkism itself. We are still pursuing the economic aspects of the matter - the threat of an economic collapse. The herrenvolk, acting through the ballot box, handed the state power to that section which has distinguished itself by its ruthlessness in dealing with the oppressed. The Nationalists are in power to defend herrenvolkism in a time of crisis. They make no bones about their plans. They make no secret of their intentions. They have no qualms about brandishing their sabres. They have been entrusted with the task of running the state. They have declared a holy war on all those dissentients who do not believe that it is the sacred right of the herrenvolk to live off the sweat of the "step-children of God". Their first duty was to ensure that they removed the threat of the economy of the country coming from the neighbouring territories. They have to do everything in their power to make the mining industry independent of foreign labour. For this they have to comb the population of every able-bodied male and female amongst the Non-Whites and make them available for work in the respective places of employment - the mines, the white farms and industry. The Broederbond Government passed the Group Areas Act and promptly declared the whole of South Africa one huge White Group Area, throwing all the Non-Whites into little enclaves labelled respectively "Bantustans", "Colouredstans" and "Indianstans". These are labour reservoirs from which they will be able to draw all their labour requirements. The Group Areas Act enables them to comb the country with a fine comb, to drive every Non-White out into his Group Area. Those who own property and have an independent means of livelihood, like the Indian Merchants for instance, will have to lose all that and move into the concentration camp. The only legitimate means of livelihood for the children of Ham is to serve the congregation, that is, the herrenvolk. These Bantustans and Colouredstans, townships or homelands, are nothing else but reservoirs of labour with high-sounding names.



Within these enclaves law as it is known in any civilized country, with the right of **habeas corpus**, will be abolished and the policemen-chiefs will wreak their vengeance on the people, controlling and regimenting their lives. For only in this way will they be put in a position to supply the required quotas of labour at any given time. The same system of drafted labour that the Portuguese used before the revolt in West Africa will be introduced into these segregated "stans". There the plantation owners and other employers used to send to the Native Affairs Department their quotas for supplies of labour, in the same way that one puts in an order for groceries or so many bags of sugar or potatoes. The Native Commissioner would pass on the order to the chiefs who were bound to supply the required number of labourers. In many cases the chiefs received special bribes to encourage them to execute the orders quickly. It requires little imagination to picture what methods these barbarous chiefs used in order to force the people from the villages to go and work in the slave-gangs. The herrenvolk are never over-scrupulous about the methods used to obtain labour. Their only concern is that they get sufficient labour supplies. The Portuguese always denied with sanctimonious indignation any charge of ill-treatment against the Blacks. They hotly asserted that the Blacks come voluntarily to work in the gangs. They are sent there by their own chiefs, who have their welfare at heart. In this way the Portuguese master who had handed over the whip to his lackey, the chief, could deny that he was responsible for the weals of the whiplash on the bodies of his workers. This is the system that is being recreated in South Africa under the grand name of "Self-Government".

It is not accidental that in the "Bantustans" the system of law itself is going to be changed. To cover this up they pretend that there will be no law courts with a hierarchy of Appeal Courts leading up to the Appellate Division, but the fact is that cases are going to be tried by ignorant chiefs under tribal law -the same chiefs who are the servants of the herrenvolk agency. The introduction of that tribal law is one of the most sinister aspects of the whole plan. First it is intended to deprive the population of the protection of law, as known in any civilized community. Secondly it is designed to enable the chiefs to carry out any order against the people issued by the herrenvolk Government. Thirdly -and this is important - it is designed to abrogate the legal rights to property together with all those property relations which are established by law in any capitalist system. It is designed to throw a whole population into a tribal milieu, to be governed by tribal law wherein individualism and individual effort are outlawed. The judicial system imposed upon the "Bantustans" brings into bold relief all the enormity of Bantu Education. It is a logical sequence and complement of that iniquitous system. Bantu Education seals off the whole population from the intellectual life of the world. The judicial

system completes the process. The present lawyers will be useless in the Bantustan Courts. There is no written tribal law. For precedents the Courts will have to refer to some decision in a similar case taken centuries ago by a Chaka, Hintsa or Moshoeshoe, and these decisions are brought down by folk law.

Litigants who require legal advice will seek out some old octogenarian who may still remember what his forebears told him in his youth. These will be the lawyers in demand in these courts. In such a situation, what need will there be for any child to take up law as a profession? This, taken together with Bantu Education and the whole system of retribalisation, means the strangulation of the people. There is no depth to which the herrenvolk will not sink in order to make sure of the maintenance of herrenvolkism with all the oppression that that implies.

These are like those schemes of mice and men which history in its relentless march sweeps into the limbo of forgotten things. And the Non-European oppressed of South Africa will be only too glad to assist in that process. The herrenvolk of South Africa have far greater problems to worry about than the local ones. They are caught in the grip of a world crisis. While they are still struggling to maintain feudal relations in South Africa, the world in general has reached a stage in which capitalism, having attained the highest peak in its development, imperialism is now engaged in the battle for survival.

The East, with its socialist economy, headed by the Soviet Union and China, is locked in a life and death struggle against the capitalist West under the hegemony of America and Britain. The two systems cannot live side by side indefinitely. Either socialism or capitalism must survive in the end. The battle of these two systems, as represented in these opposing Titans, is rocking the world. All countries are being drawn into it one way or another. South Africa is now feeling the effects of this war. As this matter was fully dealt with at the recent Unity Conference, we shall not cover all the ground again. We shall limit ourselves to those aspects which closely concern us here.

South Africa is divided into three main political camps. The two herrenvolk camps having the same aims, differ in their methods of achieving those aims; The third camp, i.e. the oppressed, is fundamentally opposed to the other two. The divisions amongst the local herrenvolk are sharpened by external events which flow from the larger war between capitalism and socialism. This war takes many forms. It sometimes breaks out into a shooting war limited in scope and at other

times it shifts back to the "cold war" in its various aspects, economic, political, and with threats of nuclear warfare.

Both sides are preparing for an all-out war which will settle the dispute between the two systems. In these preparations each side is trying to win over as allies the so-called uncommitted countries, and this is of the very essence of the "cold war". The United Nations' Organisation as a public forum reflects the manoeuvrings of the two camps and affords the world an opportunity of gauging the varying fortunes in the battle for the so-called uncommitted countries. The West finds itself with certain definite disadvantages. All the emergent States still remember the centuries of oppression and humiliation to which they were subjected by Western imperialism. To them colonialism is not yet dead. Every act on the part of the Western powers is watched with grave suspicion. The colonial and ex-colonial peoples have not forgotten the feel of the whiplash administered by those same people who today offer the hand of friendship. The Socialist East presses home its point of vantage. It accuses the West of hypocrisy. It argues that imperialism has not changed and cannot change its rapacious nature. If it can no longer afford to hold down its colonial policies by force, it will enslave its colonial people by economic means. It was imperialism in its hunt for super-profits that originally introduced the colour-bar and placed a stigma on all people of colour. It was imperialism that originated the theory of the inferiority of the Non-Whites. To this accusation the West has no reply. It is now trying its best to bury its past. It is in a hurry to establish new exploitive relations with the ex-colonies under the guise of this new so-called independence. In this way they seek to establish capitalist exploitive relations without the stigma of racism. In the battle to win over the Non-White nations throughout the world, imperialism is trying to forget its racist policies. It is in this respect that South Africa has become the polecat in the comity of Western Nations.

The South African Government under the leadership of the Broederbond, untrammelled by the wider considerations of the "cold war", has taken a granite stand on its racial policies. It upholds herrenvolkism as a noble ideal and defends it with a fanaticism of people engaged in holy war. This 18th century mentality is an embarrassment to imperialism. It would like a more enlightened section of the herrenvolk to take over the reins of government and bring South Africa into line with the rest of the Western policies. It is this intervention of imperialism that has sharpened the division between the two herrenvolk camps. The Progressive and the Liberal Parties, acting as agents of imperialism, are offering crumbs to a section of the oppressed Non-White leadership in order to win them over to the camp of imperialism. That is why a number of intellectuals together with Non-White merchants are veering over to these parties.

In so doing, they are renouncing the battle for liberation of the oppressed and throwing in their lot with imperialism in its fight for survival. It is not necessary here to explain that a replacement of one herrenvolk government by another would not make a tittle of difference to the sufferings of the workers and poor peasants. Neither the Progressive, nor the Liberal, nor any other herrenvolk Party can bring about a radical change as long as the present economic and social structures remain unchanged.

Verwoerd with his Broederbond sees the salvation of herrenvolkism in retribalisation of the Non-Whites, splitting them up into various ethnic groups and presenting each one with its own police-man-chief. These policeman-chiefs are going to be the front line of defence of herrenvolkism in this country in the same way the intellectuals constitute the front line in the defence of imperialism. The rest of the oppressed must turn their backs on both sets of agents. APDUSANS recognise that neither imperialism nor South African herrenvolkism will ever assist them in the struggle for liberation. Only the oppressed people, together with those who have irrevocably cast in their lot with them, can solve their problems.

A.P.D.U.S.A. believes that in any society the people who create wealth and civilization and are therefore responsible for the progress of mankind, are those who provide labour in its many forms. Here in South Africa the bulk of the people who create the wealth of the country are precisely those despised and neglected workers in the ~ gold and coal mines; those workers on the sugar plantations, in the white farms and in the Reserves. We are not saying that the White worker does not make his contribution, but we are saying that it is the majority of the oppressed Non-Whites who contribute the lion's share to a civilization the fruits of which they are not permitted to enjoy. It is those nameless millions who have been reduced to a position of Calibans who carry the South African society on their backs. In this sense all culture, science and technology, literature, music and drama, in short, all that goes by the name of Western Civilization in this country rests squarely on their backs.

This is the first lesson that every APDUSAN must learn. For it is only when we realise the supreme importance and worth of the toiling masses that we shall be able to adjust our attitudes properly towards them. Only then will the intellectuals in our midst rid themselves completely of all suggestion of condescension in their dealings with the masses. This is the *sine qua non* for the proper integration of the leadership with the oppressed masses. APDUSANS turn to the masses not with the idea of

using them or their numbers but of identifying themselves with them, drawing strength and inspiration from them, while at the same time imparting to them that feeling of confidence, self esteem and pride in their own achievements.

**Our belief is that those who create must decide what is to be done with what they have created. The producers of wealth in a society must be in the Government of the country. This is our attitude.**

We have spent some time analysing the economic and social structure of the country in order to show how this determines the policies of each herrenvolk Government in power. The picture that emerges suggests a solution to our problems. It suggests an approach to the task of organisation. It reveals the weak spots in the armour of herrenvolkism, as well as our own sources of strength. As we are going to have a paper read at this Conference on "The Task of National Organisation", I shall not anticipate either the paper or the discussion under this head. I shall sum up this address with a few remarks on the Trade Union Question. But let me first emphasise the theme of my address by quoting once more Clause (c) of our Constitution, namely: the democratic demands and aspirations of the oppressed workers and peasants shall be paramount in the orientation, of A.P.D.U.S.A., both its short-term policy and long-term objective's. Our Constitution enjoins us to put in the forefront of our work the problems of the workers. In order to gain their confidence we must not only find out their special problems but actively participate in their daily struggles in the factories, the mines, the sugar plantations and the farms.

First of all we must examine those organs which are supposed to belong to the workers, namely, the trade unions. As things stand to-day, every officially recognised trade union has agreed to partition its members according to race. This alone renders them incapable of performing the function of true trade unions. In this sense it is justifiable to say that there are not, and never have been, true trade unions in South Africa. What does exist are workers' organisations created by law and ringed round with legislation in such a manner that they serve only the interests of the bosses. The law of the country excludes the majority of workers, the Africans, from trade union organisations. The minority who are allowed to organise themselves can only have their trade unions recognised if they split themselves up according to their racial groups. From this alone it is clear that such organs cannot possibly serve the interests of the workers, They are emasculated bodies kept for the convenience of the bosses and the ruling-class as a whole. The so-called trade union movement in South Africa is merely part of an intricate machinery for

negotiation created by the bosses themselves for the control of the workers. Its leadership cannot by any stretch of imagination be regarded as leaders of the working class. Its function is not only to deceive the workers into thinking that they have organisations to fight for their rights, but to curb their militancy and direct it into harmless channels of negotiation. Such leaders are the policemen who stand guard over the interests of the employers. The very fact that the leadership of the official trade unionism has agreed to the partitioning of the workers according to colour, as a condition for recognition, means that they have consciously sold themselves to the bosses. It means that they have agreed to the tying of the workers' hand and foot and placing them at the mercy of the employers.

It is time that the whole concept of "recognised" trade unions was examined. APDUSANS should pose the question before the workers. What does the term "recognition" mean? It means that only those trade unions would be recognised by the Government and the employers which have committed themselves in advance to be tools of the bosses. Only those unions would be recognised which agree to the terms and conditions laid down by the Government, including the renunciation of the strike weapon. It is obvious from this that, if the workers are to build effective organs for their protection, they can only do so outside the framework of "recognised" trade unions. The only legitimate recognition which must be the concern of the workers is not recognition by the Government but by the workers themselves. For a trade union is their own weapon. APDUSANS, then, must go to the factories to discuss these matters. When the workers understand what a trade union should look like, they will build their own organs of defence and attack in the fight for their rights. In these organs they will have no colour bar.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion I would like to say that if this address succeeds in directing the thoughts of Conference towards the necessity of finding a solution to the crisis that faces this country, and convinces the members that only through the efforts of the toiling classes is it possible to put an end to it, I would be satisfied. We believe that only that class which has a historical future can lead society out of the crisis. History has placed the destiny of our society in the hands of the toiling masses. If we are to succeed in our task of liberation, we must link ourselves dynamically and inseparably with the labouring classes, i.e. the workers and the peasantry. Without them we are nothing. With them we are everything, and nothing can stand in our way.

**No power on earth can hold us back in our march.**