

BLACK RENAISSANCE

Papers from the Black Renaissance Convention,
December 1974

Editor

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RAVAN PRESS Johannesburg 1975
on behalf of the Black Renaissance
Action Committee

Published and distributed by
Ravan Press, 508 Diakonia House,
80 Jorissen Street, Braamfontein, Johannesburg, 2001,
on behalf of the Black Renaissance Action Committee,
P.O. Box 27764, Sunnyside, Transvaal

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First printed July 1976

ISBN 0 86975 056 9

Printed by Zenith Printers (Pty) Ltd.,
509 Diakonia House,
80 Jorissen Street,
Braamfontein, Johannesburg, 2001

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FOREWORD

Thoahlane Thoahlane

THE BLACK Renaissance Convention came at a time when the attention and the minds of the black people in the country were being constantly applied to the question of the survival of the basic tenets of Black Consciousness. With the passage of time from the beginning of the exposition of Black Consciousness, it had become quite clear that the powers-that-be were losing patience with the exponents of Black Consciousness especially in view of the critical stance taken by these people with respect to the policies of separate development as a whole. This had been made evident by the spate of bannings in 1973 and 1974 and the large-scale detentions of SASO and BPC leadership towards the end of 1974 and 1975. At the time of the Convention, about 40 people were reported arrested or detained without any indications of when they would be charged.

This kind of climate marked the beginning of a re-examination by the Black people of where they stood, *vis-a-vis* the direction to be taken by them, especially at a time when authentic black expression of the people's aspirations in the political, economic and social spheres was at such a low ebb.

These days, we the Blacks of South Africa insist, like other Blacks in other parts of the world, on speaking for ourselves. The insistence is part of a larger national conviction, that only we ourselves are competent to interpret the Black experience — that it is we and we exclusively who are capable of feeling and thinking and acting in our own best interests.

The Whites in our country live *over there*, inhabiting, as it were, an other world. Alienated and insulated from us, they cannot possibly feel, along their blood, what it actually means to be Black in this country. Small wonder, therefore, that their literature about us, that falls thick on library shelves, generally depicts us merely as so many cultural creepy-crawlies.

Cultural creepy-crawlies — interesting and exotic, a dark and menacing presence haunting the frontiers of Western civilisation. The complexity of our 'human veins' is a reality far beyond their grasp, beyond the reach of their ethnic imagination.

A complex reality, indeed, whose depths only we can fathom.

The Black Renaissance Convention was 'a convention of the Black people by the Black people for the Black people'. It was an occasion for us to come together 'to re-examine our cultural heritage in the light of modern

and contemporary developments' and in terms of our 'singular existential experience'.

In an attempt to present a cross-section of the thinking within black circles, a number of individuals were invited to read papers. As it will become apparent, no attempt was made to restrict or confine speakers to a specific theme. Hence the wide range of subjects to be found in this volume. But significantly, in spite of the wide thematic range, the speakers were unanimous in their demand for a radical re-reading of the Black experience. All of them felt that the urgent need was to move away from the colonial pathology of submitting ourselves to White judgement toward recognising our own autonomous and sacrosanct identity.

Underlying all the papers is a passionate plea for the development of unblinking self-confidence in the shaping of our destiny. As one reads through the papers one gets a strong sense of this destiny as a supremely precious Black condition, a special quality of life the denial of which constitutes an evil worse than death. Black South Africa is called upon to work as never before for the achievement of this quality, everywhere and all the time -- in factories; in banks; in the mass-media; in the schools; in the Homelands; as well as in Church.

The most important aspect of the Black Renaissance Convention must surely be its success in bringing together the various sectors of the black community in spite of disagreement about strategies for the way ahead. The Convention happened at a time when the gap between young and old was widening and when the difference was growing in political thinking between those who believe in the politics of complete non-collaboration with the present system and those who believe there is value in the politics of participation through the Bantustan system.

The debate between the two viewpoints, joined by and large by the rest of the conference, showed how sensitive the black community has become to its manipulation by the powers-that-be through the Bantustan policy. This takes on an historical dimension in that there had been no previous indication of the people's attitude to such questions at any broadly representative conference.

At a broader level, the Black Renaissance Conference was a call to the Black Community to take upon itself the trusteeship role over its own affairs. It had become evident that the exponents of Black Consciousness were right in proclaiming the Black man to be on his own. Clearly it was time that the entire community shared ideas on ways and means of creating a better world for themselves in the country of their birth. The myth of the

notions of despondency and dependence usually associated with the Black man had been exploded both inside and outside the country and it was time this Black Community of South Africa stopped philosophising about Black Consciousness and began to practically implement programmes that would lead them to a more self-reliant level of consciousness. This had to happen in the fields of labour, education, culture, women's leadership and broadly in the political sphere.

The term "Renaissance" ordinarily denotes a re-awakening by a people. In this instance it cannot be ascertained to what extent this re-awakening has been successfully sparked off by the Black Renaissance Convention. The value of a soul-searching conference of this nature is often not in the immediate sense of good resolutions being passed but more in provoking thought and asking the right questions. It cannot be denied that, as an oppressed community, the South African black community shows signs of lethargy and apparent resignation to being the political football of white politicians. Too much is said for them, about them and to them but very little by them. Often it escapes the minds of the Blacks in the country that any oppressive system will only succeed to cow down people only to the extent to which the oppressed allow it.

Informing this volume, which brings together in a single place a number of perspectives, is a committed and self-assured Black intelligence. There is also, radiating through and through, our indomitable will to survive, anchored on a faith in the ultimate validity of our struggle.

To Blacks, this volume should be both instructive and resolutely encouraging.

It can only be hoped that there will be creative thinking and valuable follow-up to the papers read at the conference. It is not often that Blacks meet and certainly it would be sad if nothing concrete comes out of this rare kind of meeting. Ironically, the paper by Mr. Pascal Gwala which perhaps is the most hard-hitting and carries the greatest indictment of the Black people, nevertheless is likely to provoke the greatest soul-searching by Blacks. This in itself is a necessary step towards a meaningful renaissance. We can only hope that the process will go on towards completion even many months after the conference. It is in helping this type of process that the need for a book of this nature has been felt.

INTRODUCTION

Rev. S.P. Mkhathswa

THE BLACK RENAISSANCE CONVENTION arose out of a deeply felt political need. It happened at a time when free political expression had been systematically suppressed. After the Sharpeville killings, the Pan Africanist Congress and the African National Congress were declared unlawful by the South African regime. Many members of these movements were routed, imprisoned, banished and hundreds skipped the country into exile. The arrest of Mangaliso Sobukwe, banning of Albert Luthuli and the marathon Rivonia Trial seemed to have dealt the *coup de grace* to the political life of Black people in South Africa. The repression that followed appeared to have lulled and muzzled Black people into a disgruntled political stupor. The government programme of balkanization quickened its pace. Bantustan governments mushroomed over a period of twelve years after the Sharpeville episode. Those who rejected the policy of separatism found themselves without a recognised public platform to air their views of dissent. Then, like a sudden thunderclap, the Black Consciousness movement descended on the newly-formed South African Students' Organization. Black Consciousness soon caught on among Blacks, because it spoke a language that was easily understood by them. In 1972, a broadly based political movement was founded, to provide the masses of Black people with a political platform. It was named 'The Black Peoples' Convention. A belated attempt to crush Black Consciousness was launched especially as from 1973 onwards. An unrelenting spate of arrests, detentions-without-trial, bannings and harassment became a scourge for those who wanted to change the unjust status quo. These included students, ex-Robben Island graduates and a wide cross-section of the community.

1974 was a year of momentous developments on the continent and in Europe. The collapse of Portuguese imperialism accelerated the tidal wave of the African liberation struggle. Its ripples were not only heard in Mozambique, Guinea Bissau and Angola. The roaring tide of independence had repercussions also in this country. 1974 was a year of hope, despair, confusion and uncertainty in political circles. Globe-trotting Homeland leaders were selling their philosophy of half-a-loaf-is-better-than-nothing. Black militants who represented the majority view demanded a non-racial society based on the democratic principle of majority rule. Racial and ethnic polarisation became more pronounced. Conflicting ideologies vied for the souls of the oppressed classes. With the exception of a few outstanding churchmen, the prophetic voice of the church remained faint and inaudible. It was against such an amorphous

background that the idea of a national convention was long over-due. It would by no means be the first of its kind in the history of Black people, except that this would take place within a new situation and meet a specific challenge. The Black Renaissance Convention was therefore a project which was conceived and launched *solely* by Black people, organised and controlled by them, for a definite purpose.

It was agreed that it should be a *Black* Convention. Although recognising the value of a racially open conference, Black people opted for pragmatism and realism. No one had ever questioned the right of white South Africans to hold their own exclusive meetings, whether these were of a general cultural or political nature. Blacks took strong exception only when whites arrogated to themselves the divine right of deciding what was good or bad for the politically dominated class and made laws to this effect without consulting us. Black South Africans were tired of being *seen* without being heard. They did not want self-appointed white or even worse still black government hand-picked spokesmen. It had become imperative for Black people to deliberate among themselves and articulate their needs without inhibition. Everyone would agree that it would be unrealistic to identify and solve the problem with the active or passive assistance of the cause of the problem. Blacks have problems which are peculiar to their man-made situation. They must attempt to find their own solutions, at their own time and using their own methods. The organisers of the Black Renaissance Convention hoped to provide the platform where Black people from all walks of life could exchange views, re-examine the South African situation, work for reconciliation and solidarity, criticize themselves, evaluate the forces that condition their lives, study the implications and significance of Black Consciousness and how to struggle to assert their humanity.

Thanks to the support of the Black community as well as from many other quarters, the Black Renaissance Convention finally took place on 13th — 16th December 1974. Represented were workers, theologians, housewives, professors, entrepreneurs, medical practitioners, social workers, students, politicians, youth, journalists, artists, lawyers, academics, clergymen, et al. They came from all the four provinces of South Africa.

Although the Black Renaissance Convention had been the brain-child of a few individuals, the Conference was so enthusiastic that it formally adopted five points to be the aims of the conference. These were:

- 1 Black solidarity for total Black liberation.
- 2 To articulate the Black people's aspirations.
- 3 Active support for existing Black organizations and unstinted support for liberation of Black people

4. Outline of a programme of action for black liberation
5. The appointment of a Steering Committee for organising and co-ordinating future meetings of Black organisations.

A word about the proceedings. When asked what their expectations were, the delegates listed the following points for serious consideration: Solidarity, Liberation, Commitment, Self-Determination, Power, Honesty, Action, Fearlessness, Freedom, etc etc. The very first speaker, Prof. Fatima Meer, asked the Conference to rise and pay respect to.

1. Rev Mayathula who symbolises detainees-without-trial.
2. Nelson Mandela who symbolises prisoners on Robben Island.
3. Oliver Tambo who symbolises those in exile.
4. Onkgopotse A. Tiro who symbolises those who have fallen in the struggle

From the outset, it was clear that the conference was very concerned about its dead heroes, the banned, political exiles and all who suffer persecution for the cause of freedom. Discussions were dignified and constructive, even though from time to time feelings would flare up. This was to be expected, especially because so many ideological and political viewpoints were represented. Paradoxically, these heated exchanges helped to crystallise the fundamental points on which the whole convention was in complete agreement. These were summarized in the Declaration and Resolutions of the Conference.

I — THE EDUCATIONAL WORLD OF BLACKS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Gessler Moses Nkondo

Introduction

One of the burning questions in South Africa today is that of the educational needs of the Blacks. There is a large body of South Africans, including most of the Blacks, who are convinced that education is the panacea for all the problems created by the juxtaposition of White and Black in this country. Diametrically opposed to this view is that of those who believe that our problems are either created or accentuated by ill-advised attempts to interfere with the simple acardian life of the Blacks by giving them that supreme destroyer of happiness and tractability — education. These believe that the remedy to South Africa's racial problem must be sought in the limitation of opportunity for the mental development of the Blacks by marking it off within fixed boundaries or at least checking a purposeful encouragement. There are others, the majority today perhaps, who though they dare not overlook the extent and complexity of the question, yet lack the moral courage to face the inevitable consequences and fall into a mood of *laissez faire*, of doing nothing, and just leaving things to develop in the happy expectation that eventually they will turn out satisfactorily; or, what is worse and cowardly, put the solution aside for the next generation to deal with. Then there are those who have not sufficient imagination to view and judge the question in proper perspective, who follow the 'ostrich policy' of closing their eyes to the facts of the case. Finally, some of our fellow-countrymen are simply indifferent to the question, and do not care which way it is settled as long as the solution makes no inroads upon their incomes.

But coming to us Blacks ourselves, we cannot deny that generally speaking we are dissatisfied with the existing state of affairs, and as we progressively realise this, get rebellious, and oppose what, from our point of view, creates a state which deprives us of the opportunity to which we consider we have the right, not the least on the grounds of a much-vaunted European civilization, on the grounds namely of justice, equity, and Christianity.

This is the general state of affairs as I see it today, particularly in the sphere of higher education with which I am connected and with which on

that account you might expect me more particularly to deal. But I wish to take the liberty, for the purpose of my address, of dealing with education in its broadest aspect, for education is an organic whole, and the principles which I wish to put forward are applicable to all spheres of it — the principles, namely, of equity, equality, and justice between Whites and Blacks in this country.

The Meaning of Education

1. One of the many fruitful sources of disagreement in this matter consists of widely differing views held regarding the meaning of education. To many the word education implies Western education, and knowing the limitations of the latter, they are not prepared to see the Blacks saddled with its evils. For some education means book-learning, and that, they are sure will render the Blacks, as it does other people, unfit to take their place among the workers of the world. No doubt other misconceptions exist, but these need not detain us here.

What requires emphasis is the fact that we must divest our minds of the notion that education means Westernisation. That conception is just as offensive to the Blacks as it is to the Orientals, and in certain thinking circles, to some Westerners. Western education is better known today because of its greater conquests in the realms of science and technology, and perhaps in some respects it is superior to such systems of education as have been devised by Eastern and other nations. But its most ardent admirers ought to realise that education is capable of a much wider and more fundamental interpretation than even Western education can lay claim to. Is not education rather the reconstruction of our experience in the light of past experiences of our fathers, our neighbours, other races and of mankind everywhere? While its roots should be laid deep in the soil of our national background, must it not be nourished by elements derived from outside itself?

The whole task of any educational system is to put man in touch with the whole field of human experience, so far as that is possible within the lifetime of an individual. Understood in this broad sense, education is needed by men everywhere, no less Western nations than any other. So every man or woman who can properly be called backward is a hindrance to the society to which he belongs, and it is the duty of those who know better to strive to alter such a man's situation, so as to make him an asset rather than a liability to his country.

2. "Now it does not matter what phase of Bantu life you examine", Prof. Z.K. Matthews once observed, "you will find that the Bantu are still in a very backward condition. Look at their agricultural life, turn to their industrial life, their church or spiritual life, their observance of the laws of

health, their housing conditions, their knowledge of how to govern themselves and to organise various aspects of their lives, examine all these aspects of Native life and you will be struck by the fact of backwardness."

Whilst this observation is true in many important respects, it is inadequate as an analysis of the South African racial and educational problem because it does not go on to demonstrate the causes of the pervasive backwardness. Without such a demonstration it can easily reinforce the fallacy of the intrinsic backwardness of the Blacks. And permanent solutions to the country's problem will not be found if the underlying causes are not courageously examined and publicised. Intrinsic backwardness, no: Ethnologists have often praised the unity, the balance and the harmony of African civilization, of black society, which was based on the community and the person and in which, because it was founded on dialogue and reciprocity, the group had priority over the individual without crushing him, but allowing him to blossom as a person. I would like to emphasise at this point how much these characteristics of Blackness, of negritude, enable us to find our place in contemporary humanism, thereby permitting us to make a significant contribution to what Leopold Senghór has called the "Civilization of the Universal" which is so necessary in our divided but interdependent South Africa, indeed in our divided but interdependent world of the 20th century. A contribution, first of all, to national co-operation in this country; a contribution, secondly, to international co-operation, which must be and which shall be the cornerstone of the new civilization; a cornerstone and the salvation of the new South Africa.

So the solutions to the racial problems in this country, which must include a positive vigorous educational programme, must acknowledge the contribution that the Blacks can make to civilization, and so seek the causes of their partial backwardness in certain external factors, but certainly not in their ontology.

Unequal Educational Opportunities

The most striking difference in the treatment of the two races in South Africa as regards facilities is this — that the principle of free compulsory education applies throughout South Africa for the Whites but not for the Blacks. If the justification for this practice in the case of Whites is that it is the duty of the State to look after the mental development of its citizens, since the welfare of the State goes hand in hand with that of its citizens, and if on the other hand it is true that the Blacks have been and will remain part and parcel of the community, then does it not appear, when viewed objectively, a little strange and illogical, that what is accepted and practised on the one hand is forbidden and opposed on the other? On what ethical and

moral grounds is the differentiation made? It should cause no surprise if the Black when contemplating this state of affairs gets confused and disturbed about the European conception of justice and equity as applied to himself, or feels hurt and rebels against this wrong relationship and, from his point of view, the infringement of his civic rights and privileges. The Black man's argument tends to be directed along these lines — "I am taxed by the State just as the White man is. In proportion to my capacity and my income I do not pay less than he, probably more. Why, then, should I be compelled to pay for the privileges for my child which my neighbour, my example if you wish it, is given free?"

Now I know only too well that the force of this argument is broken, or rather efforts are made to break it, by marshalling imposing figures to show that the contribution of one section of the population to the Treasury far exceeds that of the other, and that the Blacks enjoy many privileges to which relatively speaking they are not entitled. I am no statistician, economist, or politician to judge the accuracy of this statement. But one can still probe the issue in this way: Let us assume Blacks contribute less to the Treasury than the Whites; shouldn't the natural approach be to establish the reason why? If as it is the case, the Blacks are economically inferior, shouldn't the conditions for bringing them on par with Whites be created and sustained, surely by legislation? Is it sound policy, or good ethics, to use the results of differentiation as argument for the perpetuation of such negative conditions?

Effects of Differential Treatment

First of all I wish to state the axiom that the relations between White and Black as reflected in Education are not sound, for the latter believe in their hearts that they have been unjustly deprived of that to which they have a claim. And these relations will never be placed upon a sound basis, in fact they will become worse and worse in course of time and retard normal development unless this grievance is removed.

Is it, or is it not true, that we the Blacks have reached the state where we are conscious of the fact, just as the White man is conscious of it, that our race possesses an urge towards self-expression, towards spiritual independence? That is, that we are race conscious? Our attempts, in the name of Black Consciousness, to uplift and advance ourselves mentally, economically, socially and politically, are the tangible expression of that inner urge to independence in all its serious manifestations. Dare the Whites, dare anybody neglect, ignore, or suppress this Black Consciousness? The question is not whether the Whites — for any reason — ought to do it or may do it, the question is whether they can do it, whether it will be possible in practice? They are not in a position to do so, because the soul of

any race cannot be smothered or repressed for all time. Like the legendary phoenix bird it tends, has always tended, to rise renewed from the ashes scattered in the attempt to stamp it out. If there is any doubt on this point you have merely to look to history for confirmation, and the best and most recent example we find in our own treasured South Africa. The history of the Afrikaners proves that century-long domination, systematic oppression and violation of rights, hostility, contemptuous and unsympathetic treatment, nothing could extinguish and smother their race consciousness. On the contrary, because of such treatment the Afrikaners have emerged from the struggle against the English strengthened and perhaps "purified", as Prof. R. B. Saayman strongly suggests. Does not the history of other nations confirm this? There is sufficient evidence to show that in this instance history will repeat itself.

The Realities of African Civilization

Whatever may be the truth about the dynamics of genetic differentiation, it seems true that on Christian grounds some pattern of integration will have to be accepted. It has been said of South Africa that here the White man cannot live with the Black man and cannot live without him. Even policy makers readily accept that the second part is economically true; as for the first part, policy seems inspired by the conviction that the Whites in South Africa cannot live socially with Blacks. Literature on this problem reveals one dominant motivation for the policy of social segregation: the white man's fear of the Black take-over, which is seen to be inimical to White interests and civilization. Hence the slogan, "die swartgevaar". The Black man is seen, in this respect, as the negation of White ethics; and in the same respect can be said, in relation to Whiteness, to be the quintessence of Absolute Evil. It is this belief that motivated even the missionaries to associate education and civilization with Western civilization; it was this belief that motivated even the early missionaries to see Christianity basically in the context of Western civilization. The most tragic thing in the Western world, according to the American anthropologist, Margaret Mead, is the cultural instinct that perceives God and the Angels as White. This, according to Margaret Mead, is a terrifying temptation for the Whites, and a brutal annihilation of the African, of the Black ontology, and so it is not surprising that the system of education in South Africa is geared, primarily, towards the assimilation of Western values; so it is not surprising that colonial systems of education right across Africa were centred on the promotion of the White image, God's image as it were.

There are, therefore, in South Africa, and in the world, two mutually exclusive perceptions of Being. But we the Blacks have come to know and to believe that Blackness is an important dimension of the Divine Image; a

significant tissue of the sacrament. It is this inviolable belief that inspires us to seek a just place in South Africa, a country which we know constitutes a presence in God's Kingdom.

So we believe that linguistic and cultural differences are the many colours of the rainbow, variations of the same theme; certainly a manifestation of the world's plenitude, the many shades of God's Body. So we seek to evolve an educational system which does not only equip us with the know-how to control and exploit Nature; but also that which expresses as it promotes the essence of unity in and belonging to God's love.

South Africa's dilemma

South Africa's great dilemma is that the more vigorously racial separation is pushed socially, educationally, politically and culturally, the clearer it emerges that our eighteen or so million citizens of all races are involved in one national economy. No matter what is done in education and other spheres to bring about separation the economic wheels grind on inexorably towards closer and closer interdependence. This is a fact that has emerged from several studies in the recent past. The economy is the body of a human society, as its religious, intellectual and moral culture is its soul. Where the body is one, it will continue asserting its oneness despite all attempts to pretend the contrary. Where the social body is one, it must in the end find its single soul, its cultural consensus, at the risk of doing itself to death by striving to be one and many at the same time. It is my contention that we are in desperate need of a moral value to create our South African cultural consensus and that the value must be the respect of human dignity – and that this can be effectively done, almost consciously, in the context of education.

In an impassioned statement, Archbishop Hurley has said that the Whiteman who seeks what is good in his African neighbour will surely find it, but he will find human dignity in tragic disarray. In his words: "There is no little hardship in finding your life, with all its domestic, economic and social insecurities, hedged round by the sharp edges of a thousand laws and regulations that restrict your freedom at every turn and emphasise over and over again that you live near the white man's city only on sufferance. There may be no other place for you to go. In your wildest dreams you cannot imagine where you will go if you have to leave your city of domicile. You are permanently fixed there as anybody anywhere in the world. But your status is that of a worker in transit, temporarily housed near the city wherever your labour happens to be needed for the time being".

So as we seek to solve the South African dilemma in the context of education, we must comprehend the supremacy of unity and love, of co-existence, togetherness, as we formulate an educational policy that will impose upon the racial images the overriding Value rooted in God.

2 — THE CHRISTIAN CHALLENGE OF BLACK THEOLOGY

Dr Manas Buthelezi

IN A very real and special sense this decade marks the beginning of a "Black Renaissance". Never before now have black people been so successful in retrieving the image of their blackness from the dung-heap of colour prejudice and a maze of statutes that make it difficult for the black man to be proud of his colour. Never before now have black people driven inspiration and strength, not in possessing military might, wealth or constitutional political power — for all these are denied them — but in delving into the immeasurable resources of the liberating Gospel and exploiting that which God has implanted in their souls.

You can do what you like to the body and manipulate it with all the tools at your disposal, but you can never crush and kill the soul of a people that has been revived into a sense of self-awareness. A people's soul can survive the impact of a thousand bullets and is too resolute and immense to be restricted even in the largest of prisons. Spiritual ideals cannot be confined within the limits of space and time. For them it is true, as Richard Lovelace wrote, that "stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage".

History is full of examples of the tenacity of an indomitable spirit and of the ultimate triumph of spiritual visions that stem from existential situations. To try to block a deep-seated spiritual movement is, in terms of consequences, like the act of somebody who tries to stand in the way of an avalanche.

The history of the Afrikaans speaking people from the Great Trek to the creation of the Republic is the closest example to us. While I am not by any means suggesting that the Afrikaner experience can be compared to what many amongst us, especially our young people, have been subjected to even during this Christmas, may I point out that black people in general can derive a lot of hope and strength in the model of the Afrikaner struggle of the last century up to the present time.

Now that the Afrikaner is in a position of power, I only hope that he will live up to the great challenge to his honour and good faith by ungrudgingly encouraging our black young people to follow the example of the Afrikaner struggle against British imperialism, unless, of course, he thinks that the Afrikaner model presents such a disastrous and shameful precedent that

one is well-advised not to follow it. I, however, think highly of the Afrikaner model and I am sure the Afrikaner himself is not unduly proud of it.

It occurs to me that Separate Development is a distorted and watered down version of the Afrikaner historical model. It is a dry skeleton without flesh and spirit. That is why it will never and can never be expected to inspire into hope black independent thinking intellectuals. All it has done thus far is to harness and imprison their souls.

At this point I cannot responsibly continue my speech without pausing to pay tribute to the black youth currently banned or detained in prison cells, who among other things, have done so much to champion the cause of black awareness and solidarity as a positive reaction to the negative polarization induced by racism and tribalistic "homelands" institutions.

Having said this, may I share with you what I consider to be the challenges Black Theology poses to Christianity in South Africa.

I will describe these challenges one after the other with the hope that this will engender a fruitful discussion.

1. It challenges the Afrikaner to Re-examine the Implications of his Spiritual History

I single out the Afrikaner because there is a lot of interaction between him and the black man. My concern is that this interaction takes place on unproductive or negative spiritual and intellectual levels. My aim is to make this interaction creative and positive. My thesis is that for this to take place the Afrikaner should re-examine the implications of his spiritual history. Black Theology poses this challenge to the Afrikaner. I will explain why.

It is well-known that the Afrikaner has integrated religious consciousness with his nationalism. When he deals with the subject of *The Ideas of the Afrikaner on his Calling and Mission*, F. A. van Jaarsveld writes:

"Underlying this ideology too are the traditional ideas of select destiny, calling and mission. They are all interwoven in ideology as will be shown presently by referring to various pronouncements on the subject. Some theologians have harnessed biblical texts to bolster the ideology but others have stated that it is incorrect to invoke biblical grounds in support of our ideologies. Some learned men assert that God has drawn a line of distinction between peoples, and more emphatically between races, and that in distinguishing races and nations, He fulfils part of the divine scheme of things. Israel, for example, had to refrain from close association with other peoples: An admixture of races would make the goal of separate peoples unattainable and integration would lead to the downfall of "Western civilization" in South Africa. There exists a belief that the

Afrikaners have a "Calling" from God to effect the separation of white and black to the end that the whites may "permanently" be able to fulfil their "calling" The racial problem has a religious core." (*The Afrikaner's Interpretation of South African History*, p. 22ff).

In a message sent to troops during the Anglo-Boer War this marriage between the bible and national aspiration is at its best:

"Brothers! I exhort you to act with all promptness and with all zeal . Read Psalm 33, from verse 7 to the end ... The enemy have fixed their faith in Psalm 83. Read also Psalm 89 ... the 13th and 14th verses .. I need not draw your attention to the destructiveness of the enemy's works, for you know it, and I point again to the attacks of the Devil on Christ and his Church. This has been the attack from the beginning ... I am still searching the entire Bible, and I discover no other way which can be followed by us, and we must continue to fight in the Name of the Lord" (William Henry Vatcher *White Laager*, p 18).

The recent DRC Synod about which a lot was reported during the last months did nothing of significance to extricate itself from its traditional "political theology" Instead, through the Landman Report, the public is treated to an attempt to establish a biblical basis for the theory of Separate Development

I do not begrudge the Afrikaner clerics for having identified themselves in a creative way with the awakening of Afrikaner consciousness. In the 19th century the Rev. S.J. du Toit is an illustrious example. Dr. F. A. van Jaarsveld in his book on *The Awakening of Afrikaner Nationalism* refers to him as "the political theorist of the group of nationally inspired Paarl men" (p. 111)

Perhaps the most famous and best known Afrikaner cleric who has lived during our life-time is Dr. D.F. Malan, the first Prime Minister of the present government. Many more examples could be cited. The outlook of these clerics towards the national aspirations of their people can be best summed up in the words of Paul Kruger who said: "In the voice of the people I have heard the voice of God, the people's King, and I obey" (Quoted in Sheila Patterson, *The Last Trek*, p. 73)

I have said all this in order to put in historical perspective the case of Black Theology which is one of the most misunderstood great events of our time I am suggesting that Black Theology has come up for the same reasons as the creative contributions of such great theologians of all time in South African history as Reverend S.J. du Toit and Dr. D.F. Malan. It is the same message of the Bible which inspired and enriched the spirit of the Afrikaner in the great South African wilds which is motivating us to sing the song of Black Theology. Here we are standing face to face with the confluence of two historical experiences, one past and the other present:

Afrikaner and Black man's. Compared to what I would call the Afrikaner "theological excesses" in appropriating the historical model of the sojourn of the children of Israel in the wilderness to the Promised Land, ours is a modest theological overture.

We are not, for instance, claiming that we are the chosen race of God in relation to others in South Africa. We are calling none "Canaanites" or our "hewers of wood and drawers of water" (See van Jaarsveld: *The Afrikaner's Interpretation of South African History*, p. 5ff). All we are trying to do is to derive from the Bible bread for our people instead of the spiritual stones they have been given all these years. Through our theology we want to make the message of the Bible alive to the real and historical experiences of our people. To reject the currently held view in certain confused white circles that we are espousing a communist ideology is to state the case in no less uncertain terms than to deny that the whole Afrikaner Awakening of 1868-1881 was a communist conspiracy directed from Moscow.

It is just here where the Afrikaner has grossly failed to read and take consequences from his own history. His misreading of his own history seems to consist in that he has understood it as a singular and unique unrepeatable experience in the lives of others.

To put it mildly Separate Development is a fraudulent version of the Afrikaner experience. What makes it more so is that it is not negotiable: you either take it or, if you do not, and try to question its moral premises, you run the risk of being branded a communist. That is why Separate Development is like a building that pleases neither the owner (black man) nor the contracted builder ("homeland leaders"), but only the architect (Government).

I have suggested that Black Theology poses a challenge to the Afrikaner because I believe in the possibility of a summit conference between Black and Afrikaner theologians. I am not suggesting this in order to plead a case of the validity of Black Theology before Afrikaner adjudicators. The validity and integrity of Black Theology is not dependent on the attitude of the Afrikaner theologians or politicians towards it. It derives its validity from the Bible. On the other hand I make this plea because I believe that it is the Afrikaner's gross misunderstanding of our spiritual history and failure to draw legitimate consequences from his own past history that has led to the bannings and detentions of the young intellectual crop of the black community. Of all people, theologians using the common source of the Bible can afford to discuss the theological background to the present misunderstandings. In an era of dialogue and detente black and Afrikaans theologians should not be left behind.

2. **It Challenges the Church to Answer Questions Traditional Theology has Failed to Answer**

Because of the limits of space and time, I will only list these questions without discussing them in great detail.

(a) *Religious Questions:* In one meeting of SASO to which I had been invited to speak two months ago at Turfloop, during question time, one student asked me a very difficult question. He asked me why, if it is true that God is almighty and is also Lord and God of the black man, He has abandoned blacks for three centuries to be ruled by whites. He asked whether in fact we have not been worshipping a false god, a god who is himself an oppressor, who delights in and rules through the structures of oppression which shape and condition the daily lives of black people. I need not tell you how I answered the question. All I want at the present moment is to illustrate that here is a challenging question which needs a courageous theology to try to answer it. People are waiting to hear something about God the liberator who takes sides by carrying the Cross and going out to where the struggle is at Mount Calvary and suffering for others.

(b) *Political Questions:* What does it mean to the black man when we say that man was created in the image of God and was given dominion over the rest of creation? The daily life experience is that the black man is classified as a "non-white" which in effect means that he was created in the image of the white man. Black consciousness which tries to cultivate black identity and a sense of pride for the black man challenges theology to define in a relevant way the meaning of the doctrine of the "image of God". Dominion over creation? Which creation? The black man experiences that he is ruled and does not rule. He does not share meaningful power but other people have power over him. He is therefore waiting for a theology that wrestles with the question of the restoration and distribution of power.

(c) *Economic Questions:* The Bible teaches that man was given the right to share in the fruits of the garden of Eden. In other words God continually produces his gifts of life and places them at the disposal of man whom he created. Man was not created for poverty. Poverty is a creation of the greed of man who gobbles not only what belongs to him but also what belongs to others. Poverty is a state of displacement from the point of receiving the everflowing gifts of God. It is like waiting at a wrong address, other than the one to which goods have been consigned. The black man is not only poor, he does not even have a land in which to be poor. Where is his garden of Eden? Homelands? It is not convincing. There is a cry for a theology that wrestles with these questions and tries to find answers.

These are some of the challenges of black theology. One can add many more.

3 — TOWARDS THE PRACTICAL MANIFESTATIONS OF BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS

Mafika Pascal Gwala

AS BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS becomes an accepted life philosophy amongst the Blacks, the question now commonly asked is: Right, now that we have come to terms with our Blackness, what about it? This question raises Black Consciousness to a level of differentiation. How does a Black choose to remain Black, and to promote his Blackness, in the face of pressure from the White official culture?

If we are to get our priorities into correct perspective on the differentiated level of Black Consciousness, we shall have to come to terms with this basic factor that what we need right now is to effect a fundamental change in the assessment of our collective experience as Blacks — our experience as a righteous people of colour who were cast out of parliamentary democracy in 1910.

Our failure to answer the call of Black Consciousness in its entirety is now becoming more and more self-evident. As the politics of fragmentation made one attack after the other on the Blacks, we had a divided approach within the common situation instead of collective effort in the political, the theological, the sociological, the recreational and the trade union fields.

Yet, even our divided approaches showed collective experience. I once heard a Black who was very active in the quest for Black Theology say: "I don't have much to do with those SASO students; they act too radically." And again a comment from a Black student leader made my ears ache when he said, "What has sport to do with me? As far as I am concerned sport is irrelevant."

No need to quote further examples. They may be right here in this hall. Why, even the Bantustan bourgeoisie has been seen around in dashikis or dimbazas. And they claim some part of Black Consciousness. Actually I fear that to some individuals, Black attire is convenient accommodation for them not to be labelled "non-white" or anti-Black. But that can hardly fool us. We know wolves in sheepskins.

Black Consciousness ought to carry within it unbending resistance against Whites dividing Blacks on issues that affect our community. Black students are first of all sharing a collective Black experience. If you feel that

they are too radical then also worry about the cause of that radical spirit.

If separate sport to you as a student is to be analysed from a relevant standpoint, then you as a person with a higher level of consciousness ought to go to the ardent fans of the National Professional Soccer League and make those fans realise what is misleading about separate sport. Where Black people converge round an issue be there too. Then your Black comments will be relevant and you will not need sophisticated jargon to show people who you are. The people know. Because the people observe. And judge.

In my view Black Consciousness is in danger of being trapped within these two very negative approaches.

1. There is a danger of Black Consciousness being treated as an intellectual curiosity
2. There is a danger of Black Consciousness being used as an outlet for cultural activism.

The politics of liberation carry absolute connection between criticism and struggle. Or between objective analysis and creative initiation of change in the system. And by "system" I mean the whole superstructure of white domination. Many a time I have heard students say "system" when they mean a cop or an informer. That cop, that informer, is representative of the whole establishment. System is the establishment as a whole, with its policeman characteristics.

Therefore, the Black student must now ask how much a part of the system he himself is. Because the very idea that you are a South African student, this time Black, and you are studying within the education that you are criticising everyday, spells great need for challenge on your part. What is more, by the very nature of this country's set-up, you also have aspirations within that very education.

Now this may seem hard to understand. Especially if your alternatives to that education are still linked directly or indirectly with the system. Like boycotting Fort Hare in protest and running to UNISA. Is that the Black way of looking at the situation? Or is it not the "system" way of looking at the national problem? There is no University in Namibia and the SWAPO youth know full well what the struggle for their country is all about.

If this can be regarded as a correct assessment of the national situation, then the whole approach must be changed. Frelimo, with whom our own Black students recently expressed solidarity, have embarked on a programme of completely over-hauling the whole societal structure which they so bitterly opposed to safe-guard the aims and interests of the revolution they have fought so hard for.

We, too, in this country shall have to take actions consistent with the wishes of the majority of the people. There is no consistency in the propagation of Separatism. Within the third world context of struggle for human rights the middle class is basically unreliable. The conflicting statements and self-contradictory pledges being now and then given by the Separatists are evidence of this. This situation is perpetuated by the inability of these Separatists to plan independently.

What we need is a program that brings together positively all that is in opposition to Separatism and unequal rights. When we have to bear in mind that we are operating from crushing intellectual, educational and socio-political environment — especially with our present isolation from the rest of Africa — we must come to realise how critical the situation is. We are going to have to battle hard in order to overcome problems and insular attitudes long since superseded in the third world of which we are a part.

As the economic realities of the negative policies of Separatism become more and more obvious, the political power and influence of the Separatist leadership is going to drop markedly; unless these so-called leaders decide to assume dictatorial power. In the face of this possibility, the need for the economic interpretation of our struggle for human and social rights becomes all the more fundamental in our approach.

The Black middle class, generally referred to in Black terms as "non-whites", love to tell us through their speeches and articles in the press that to them politics is the art of the possible. Now may I ask this question: on what do you base the possible? No wonder the commonest feature that is characteristic of the Separatist leadership is its lack of originality — as can be seen in its dull political initiative. To my understanding I would say politics is the art of maximum effort and allowance for minimum but substantial gain.

That is why we within the quest for Black Consciousness cannot at this stage negotiate with the enemy. We just cannot afford to operate within the system and still say we are fighting it. You cannot act on terms dictated for you by the enemy and still maintain an active stand against that enemy. Nobody is going to bluff us on the understanding of this basic point in negotiation.

What is needed is a change in the method of resistance against those who direct the oppressive system; a different approach in the manner of protest and political action. Whereas all possibilities of change in the heart of white domination have exhausted themselves, the alternative possibilities of resistance in the Black sector have not been fully exploited. And we shall have to make a selective choice of the alternatives still left.

The tendency of change can now only come from those who negate the false reality of saying "ja, baas" to the master, and then turning to talk of

"my people". How can we accept leaders who recognise the legitimacy of a white parliament and the Land Acts that denied us human rights and took our land — the land of our forefathers?

The stand taken by the Black People's Convention (BPC) and South African Students Organisation (SASO) is the correct one on the question of dialogue. We must confirm it *no dialogue with our adversary; until it is on our terms.*

None of the leaders of separatism has successfully interpreted the historic and socio-economic implications of the politics of Separatism. What they have done is to conclusively advocate the negative ideas of apartheid philosophy. In this manner they sell out the aspirations of the people they claim to be representing.

We hear the middle class talk of homelands investment and the promotion of decentralised industries. Foreign investors together with industrial and commercial investors in the country are busy forging a strategy of integrating through mixed investment with the still far weaker "non-white" middle class a conformist pattern of economic utility in the Bantustans. That is why we often hear the SABC (South African Broadcasting Corporation) talk in terms of bulk estimation and thousands of rands. Are there no better measurement rates than bulk estimation and rands and cents? Bulk estimation and the exaggerated stress made on money cannot measure real or substantial economic utility or viability in the Bantustans

One is forced to ask objectively why the stress on private investment of capital when monopolistic capitalism is out to destroy the little that Blacks still have? In view of such grave misconception on the economic viability of Bantustans these "stans" cannot be seen as gaining any economic independence from white domination

The Bantustan leaders either do not want to face up to the politics of remote control, or they are merely dancing to the master's tune. Bantustan leaders have failed to realise that, because of their vested power interest in the *status quo*, we have achieved nothing by pretending we are unaware of the facts. Neither do we benefit from ignorance of the prevalent situation. No viable purpose is served and no justification is gained by lack of information — whether it be pretended or real

Bantustan leaders are, with their collaborationist platform, politically in the wrong place. Especially in the face of growing national consciousness amongst Black workers and young intelligentsia. Politically they are using the wrong means to obtain the political rights for the Black majority.

What we conclude, therefore, is that Bantustans are a continuation of the Native Representative Council system by other means. Separatists, by their very stress on the 1936 Land Act, the Common Voters Roll for Coloureds

and the Tomlinson Report in effect emphasise the continuation of economic and socio-political conditions which brought into existence the segregatory Land Acts, the dissolution of the common roll for Blacks and the enforcement of oppressive labour regulations.

Whatever material benefit is derived from the so-called development of the "Stans" goes to a very small sub-sector in the Black community. And the Black middle class is so small and baseless, since its socio-political base is being engineered by the white designers of Separatism, that to make any comparisons with examples elsewhere in under-developed countries becomes trivial.

It is gross miscalculation for the Black middle class to think that at last white expertise had "decided" to allow Blacks to progress economically. We should within the given reality say that we do not trust industrial investment in border areas for as long as there is centralised white economic domination. Do the middle class Separatists expect us to believe that we can leave the patterns of production, the stimulation of labour incentive and the control of foreign exchange at the mercy of the white dominant sector, the "herrenvolk"?

Right now there is intensive planning by the "herrenvolk" to decide for the "Separatist governments" their inputs and outputs for a long period in the foreseeable future. One only has to look around. We today have white organised educational aid, bursary funds, school feeding schemes for Black children. But this is not what we want. We do not want liberal handouts from whites - what James Baldwin has called "chicken shit goodwill". What we want is free and equal education for Black children.

On the other hand, we are also aware that this white "investment" of goodwill is for security reasons: it is a strategy to reinforce the position of white liberal charity and the position of the rising Black middle class in the Black community.

That is why if the purpose of our coming together here is to earnestly seek means towards the practical implementation of Black Consciousness, then we must advance the premise that "Black Consciousness is a way of life".

To safeguard against the relatively better-off sector of the Black community speaking of freedom and yet falling into tendencies of betrayal against the interests of the majority of the Black people we shall have to place constant watch on the Black elite. Because even outside the context of Separatism we do have a small but very opportunistic, and therefore dangerous, sector that shuttles between the Black cause and liberal politics.

Black people, the situation is well beyond the point of appeal for humanist feeling or for liberal sympathies. We are dealing with a ruling sector that is in no way prepared to lose its socio-economic domination and attached privileges. There can therefore be no true and lasting political,

social or psychological liberation of Blacks without economic liberation.

If Black Consciousness is to be what I believe it rightfully ought to be: a "Back to the People Movement", not just a counter-racism to the white dominant racist sector; we have to stand our ground and prepare for the better handling for the future. Nothing is going to stop oppressed Black majority from taking back what rightfully belongs to Black Africa.

It is black tears, black and bloody tears that have rolled from the eyes of our history down the face of our black struggle. Therefore we cannot break what we regard as our cardinal commandment: that of honouring our fathers and mothers. It is our fathers or sons of our fathers who are in exile or on Robben Island; or who are serving political restriction orders. It is our mothers who suffer whilst our fathers and brothers suffer political persecution. It is our mothers who get kicked by white cops when they try to make a living. It is our mothers who get trapped in sardine-packed trains in the evening dark on their way home to cook for our little brothers and sisters. Our little brothers and sisters who may grow up to languish in jail through state "misregulation" or die from abortion. Or die in the gutter. Our brothers and sisters who get thrown out of fast moving trains

The question to be answered is how do the absolute contradictions characteristic of this oppressed society present themselves to a lawyer, to a doctor, to an educationist, to a minister of religion, or to a student? Without wanting to under-estimate the role played by books and theories, we should by now be ready to set limits to certain possibilities. The importance of books for example must not be placed above ability to communicate effectively with our fellow Blacks, in a language they are able to understand. Such ability to communicate will only come when we suspend judgement and methods of operation that are based on white expertise, until there is enough of the Black expertise that Blacks are seeking through Black Consciousness.

Doctors can help by reassessing their true understanding of Black patients who often became psychotic under hospital confinement. Is patient psychosis not the antithesis of the doctor's social neurosis? Let our Black doctors do research in indigenous curative medicine and relate it to Black herbal or medical practice. White medical practice does not have the prerogative to the curing of disease. And by this I do not mean we should not fight with tooth and nail the white power designs of the dominant sector that is intent on hoodwinking us with the introduction of so-called "paramedics". First they gave us "bush colleges" then came the "bundu politician" Now it is "bush doctors" they want to impose on us. We must refuse this anti-Black strategy based on "herrenvolkism"

It is for the Black theologian to check his basis of evangelism. As the Archbishop of Cape Town put it before the students of the Western Cape

University: "Poverty is not cured by prayers or speeches but by providing all people with housing, education, training and employment opportunities".

The desired brotherhood of men is only possible where there are no rich and poor. For we do not become brothers by merely learning how we can be brothers. We have to live as brothers before we can know what brotherhood really means. Living as brothers can only be achieved through practice of sharing the little or the plenty that we have.

Any educationist who ignores the prevalence of an educational system that is geared towards the enslavement of the Black people's minds cannot talk for Blacks in whatever capacity he wishes to express himself. No argument or eloquence can now remove the factor of white fear in the planning of education for Blacks. So that all we can say now is: let the Blacks decide for themselves what education they wish to have. As Blacks have repeated time and again — we want an education for social change. We do not want to learn so as to prolong the present situation of white injustice. We must today decide our own future.

A series of measures must be taken against eroding Black ethics in family upbringing. Some parents tend to blame the younger generation for existing problems. It is, however, time we also turned our eyes towards the social workers and the sociologists. How do they research and provide the right answers? Research has become a commodity. Though much has been done through publicity and sponsorship by social research agencies. This is nothing when you come to consider that most research in this country is white-sponsored, white-controlled and is therefore bound to be white-washed. It is the type of research that only ends at the fringes of the Black community. No deep studies are really made.

But why allow this white-imposed limitation upon us, as people who should be going into the thick reality of self reliance and better planning for the future? Nobody here in this hall is going to dispute our right to criticize and to pass judgement on pseudo-intellectual tendencies amongst the educated Blacks. While we should not think we are perfect, we should nonetheless keep a close watch on those "certified Johns" who have time and again proved to be a threat to the Black cause.

If there is anything the student or intellectual can do to change the present system he should as matter of priority accept as precondition to liberation.

I that we must declare war first and foremost against intellectualism so that the Black intellectual must be made to feel he is one of his common Black people — neither floating above nor cringing under their collective will;

2. that to achieve such level of consciousness we shall have to fight ignorance and illiteracy amongst our people, in an effort to effectively weed out traditional prejudices and those installed by white domination; and
3. that this will mean a determined rejection of, and continuous fight against white socio-political and cultural values.

The purpose here today is to see to it that the intellectual decides whether he has to uphold superior status or is ready to phase himself out of the role of being carrier of a white official culture.

It is here that we have to begin to accept and promote the truth that we cannot talk of Black Solidarity outside of class identity. Because as our Black brother has put it, it is only the elite that are plagued by the problem of identity. Not the mass of the Black people. The common Black people have had no reason to worry about blackness. They never in the first place found themselves outside or above their context of being black. But the student, the intellectual, the theologian, are the ones who have to go through foreign education and assimilate foreign ethical values. Later, when weighed against the reality of the black situation, this alienates them from their people.

We cannot forget the Red Indian massacres. How can we not remember the extermination campaign against the Herero? Or British torture of Zulu warriors arrested following the Bambata Rebellion?

No matter how hard we try, we cannot stop remembering that white culture is responsible for the massacre of Blacks in Madagascar in 1947. Neither can we forget Hiroshima, the Nazi concentration camps, Sharpeville, Katanga, Vietnam.

Can we still find the high standard of journalism found during the days of Can Themba, Nat Nakasa, Henry Nxumalo? Today's Black journalists spend half their time deciding for Black readers - the Black community as such. They concentrate on coating the pill to make white lies more palatable. The rest of their time goes to chasing after white smiles and professional status. All this in a Black community that in terms of bread and butter issues, cultural and social stability, has long lost its true status within the existent reality of white domination.

Are we going to have our communal needs decided for us? If not then we must reject the so-called Poverty Datum Line or the Minimum Subsistence Level because they are based on the status quo on the prejudice that Africans do not need much more than mealie meal, samp and beans. This is an insult to us! Especially when we know that it is the African, primarily, who carries the national economy of this country on his shoulders.

Hence, we shall also always be suspicious of planned families for as long

as we do not have a planned economy in which Blacks can take major decision-making. If there is anything we have to be wary of it is diversion from common truth, the national truth. Diversion from national truth will mislead us into an ailing cultural activism and its twin — that retarded twin which we all have become acquainted with: Armchair politics. That national sport has to be decided by the majority of the people, for instance, and not the white parliament, is national truth.

Though this country has a high productive rate like most of the Western countries, though this country's whites are stinking rich to the level of swimming pool and caravan culture, the relations of production that span the high productivity are entrenched in the exploitation of the Black voiceless majority. One does not have to use white statistics to prove that.

Further, the white minority is colonialist in character no matter how violently it seeks to prove its permanence. If whites want permanence on this continent, they shall have first to decolonize us. Instead they are busily and aggressively creating domestic colonies. Bantustans must be taken as backyards of the relentlessly aggressive white economy.

We should not at the same time under-rate our concrete jungle, the ghettos. There we have the Black workers who are rising to stand against white exploitation of their labour. This spells out the need for industrial education. Such education demands greater involvement and control of matters affecting Black workers by Blacks themselves. For the pairing of cause and means now lies with the Black people themselves.

Trade unions must not be divorced from the objective reality existing in the country. They must also operate within the scope of Black consciousness. And the Black Resistance; Black national resistance alone can carry us to liberation. And if paired with Black Consciousness, the two constitute a healthy development of national consciousness. Economic interpretation of our socio-political demands is the correct road to true national consciousness. The truth of things to come shall be decided on this premise.

And what truths we can carry we shall have to convey. To the people. Right now there are people imprisoned for the truth. There are people restricted for the truth. People have been maimed and killed for the truth. The truth of national struggle always has painful manifestations of resistance.

The pain is upon us. But let that not worry us much at the moment. In Zulu we say: "Iva likhishwa ngelinye". And in Sotho it is: "Bohloko bo alafiwa ka bohloko". You have to consciously bear severe pain so as to get rid of that which causes you constant pain.

Black Consciousness has provided the connecting link between the break in the chain of political growth after Sharpeville and the growth of a new awareness towards the development of a national consciousness. For us to

remain prepared for the final and decisive point in our struggle we shall have to treat as matter of urgency the following basic needs:

1. A distinctly identifiable social outlook on matters affecting the Black community.
2. A long range orientation in the objectives governing our social outlook.
3. Consistency of orientation that is based on objective and proper analysis of what programme can be effected that are distinguishable enough from the oppressive power of the white dominant sector and are at the same time in keeping with the demands of long range orientation.

An American sociologist, the late C. Wright Mills, has lots to offer for our particular situation. Speaking of Reason and Freedom he says:

“Nowadays men everywhere seek to know where they stand, where they may be going, and what — if anything — they can do about the present as history and the future as responsibility. Such questions as these no one can answer once and for all. Every period provides its own answer. But just now, for us, there is a difficulty. We are now at the ending of an epoch, and we have got to work out our own answers”.

To criticize the state of affairs in this country is to lay bare its contradictions, is to demonstrate why such a condition of things cannot be maintained much longer. But in order to become effective, criticism has to abandon its purely theoretical status and turn into an instrument of change in our approach towards the liberation of ourselves as an oppressed Black majority.

Progressive and lasting change will only be found in our aiming at a complete restructuring of our South African society.

4 — THE BLACK WOMAN IN SOUTH

Dr Fatima Meer

"Strijdom — you have struck a rock when you have touched a woman", sang 20 000 Black women outside the Prime Minister's office in Pretoria on 9th August, 1956 "

The Black Woman in History

The history of the Black woman in South Africa is a history of silence. The record is relatively better in respect of White women -- only relatively, because in keeping with a patriarchal tradition, South African society underplays the role of women as a whole. Yet some accounts of her achievements exist, largely because she herself has chronicled them and writers from Olive Schreiner to Nadine Gordimer have blazed trails of new tolerances and pushed through the barrier of race.

The few references to Black women are at best patronizing, and often insulting. The heroines of the Black world are projected as Jezebels, hussies, and bloody intriguers, or held up to demonstrate the evils of mixed marriages. Anna the Bengali slave girl and Eva the Khoi Khoi are recorded because they married van Riebeeck's officers.

But Eva, the mother of our Coloured people, was the great Krotoa, one of the most gifted diplomats of all times, inspired by a deep and glowing passion to join Black and White, Khoi Khoi and Dutch into a single nation.

Krotoa of the Goringhaikona¹

Krotoa of the Goringhaikona was about eight years old when Jan van Riebeeck arrived at the Cape. She almost immediately caught Mrs. van Riebeeck's attention and was taken into the Commander's household where she quickly learnt the language and the ways of the Dutch and became a family favourite. At the tender age of thirteen she assumed the position of chief interpreter at the castle replacing her uncle Autshumao, and her kinsman Doman, who by then had become both disillusioned and hostile against van Riebeeck and had started a guerilla movement against him.

The child woman, Krotoa, had continued at the castle, refusing to be torn between two loyalties and struggling to marry them into one. Hers was

a unique position in seventeenth century Cape, for she was the only person who understood the two cultures that were close to clashing on that southern shore. Product of both, she loved and respected the two equally, and in her innocent, child-like, but inspired way, she attempted to bring them together in peace and harmony. Her own marriage to the Dutchman, Pieter van Meerhoff symbolized this attempt.

Krotoa appreciated the techniques and talents that van Riebeeck brought and realized the great good that they could do for the country if they were shared with the Khoi Khoi. At the same time, close to van Riebeeck and drawn into his confidence by the very nature of her relation as interpreter, she understood van Riebeeck's mind and motives. He desired, above all, the cattle that the interior clans possessed in such abundance. He needed them for the passing ships, for the whole purpose of the settlement was to provide a half-way house.

The guerilla bands were bent on isolating van Riebeeck from this cattle. Rightly or wrongly, and in retrospect she was proved wrong, Krotoa disagreed with them and negotiated trade relations between van Riebeeck and the great chiefs of the massive Cochoqua tribe of which the Goringhaikona were only a small part.

Krotoa at the age of about fifteen became the key figure at two courts, her adopted father, van Riebeeck's, and that of her brother-in-law, Oedaso, the humqwe or second in command of the Cochoqua whose fighting strength was well over 40 000 and whose cattle were "as numerous as the grass on the veld."

The safety of the little white band was entirely dependent on her agency. During 1658-1660, it lived in terror of the guerilla raids. Silent and skilful, the little men made off with Company and Free Burgher cattle, and wounded and killed quite a few of its numbers. The guerillas themselves lost only eight in all that time, despite Dutch muskets. More serious, the guerillas attempted to woo the great chiefs of the Cochoqua, and presented them with the cattle taken from the Dutch and warned them of the great White peril that threatened to exterminate the entire Cochoqua nation. Van Riebeeck only had 200 men and he knew that such an alliance would be fatal for him.

But Krotoa won out against the powerful anti-Dutch propaganda and the compelling appeal of the Khoi Khoi liberatory movement. Oedaso did not join the guerillas and so the mainstream of Khoi Khoi power remained aloof from the onslaught on the Dutch, and the Dutch were saved. Yet so great a debt to Krotoa, the Goringhaikona, has been entirely suppressed and White history has recorded her as the little Hottentot that van Riebeeck for all his efforts failed to civilize.

In saving the Dutch, Krotoa unwittingly doomed the Black people. Her

own clan suspected as much, and called her "lickspittle" and refused to have anything to do with her. But in the mid-seventeenth century, the sixteen-year-old supreme diplomat at the Cape could not be expected to see into the future, neither could she be expected to see van Riebeeck's intentions as wholly evil. A true synthesis of Black and White, a citizen of a South Africa yet to come, she could only believe that the brewing conflict of cultures could only be resolved through bringing together of differences and redefinition of sentiments as had occurred in her own personality.

Krotoa failed in her attempt to build one nation out of the two; she succeeded in producing a third. The Coloured man, for too long ashamed of his mother, and seeking to push her under the bed where none would see her, cannot but swell with pride in his discovery of Krotoa.

Queen Mkabayi²

To Dingeswayo and Shaka has gone the credit for making the Zulu nation; the contribution of Queen Mkabayi is no less. Mkabayi acted as regent while her brother Senzangakhona, the father of Shaka, was still young. She remained the presiding wisdom when he ascended to the throne, and advised him to accept Nandi, who, through his indiscretion, had fallen pregnant, and she was good to the child Shaka, which he remembered when he took over the kingship after Senzangakhona's death.

Mkabayi survived Senzangakhona and Shaka and longer in government than both, she grasped the consequences of their impulsive actions. She understood Shaka's great power, bent with it, but feared its excesses. Shaka in recognition of her wisdom and capacity made her his general in chief over his forces at Eba Qulusine near Hlobane to guard his northern and western frontiers. She helped him to spread his power over the neighbouring clans and to draw them together into the great Zulu nation, but when, on the death of his mother, his passion went beserk and threatened to destroy the nation, she had him killed and supported the accession of his half brother, Dingane.

Mkabayi may well have guided the Zulu people to a new era of peace and plenty but the times were against her. The domination of Shaka was replaced by the arrival of white power and first the Dutch and then the English destroyed the Zulus.

Mma Nthatsi¹

Mma Nthatsi was another great protector and nation builder. Regent queen of the Mokhotlong Flokwa, the accounts that remain project her as a reincarnation of the great Hindu Goddess Kali herself. She is variously depicted as a "warrior queen at whose breasts the warriors drew sustenance and courage"; "a bloodthirsty and warlike virago", "utterly callous to

human suffering"; "a drunken old lady"; and "a woman of great intelligence and beauty".⁴

The French missionary, Arbousset, meeting her at the age of 50 in 1836, wrote, "The queen Mantetsi is a woman of great intelligence, and has a sweet agreeable expression of countenance — and an elegant figure".

The true meaning of Mma Nthatisi's reign and movements will continue to elude us because of scarcity of records. All are agreed on the one and important fact, that she preserved her people and progressed their fortune during an African epoch, that of the Difaqane, which resulted in the destruction of many persons and clans. Some authorities trace the origin of the word Difaqane itself to her characteristic response to the troubles of the time — to cut down the enemy into pieces with a battle axe — Lifakani.

The Difaqane was the violent chain reaction to the pressures set up by the expansion of the Zulus. Mma Nthatisi's Tlokwa, a rich and powerful people living and trading peacefully in the mountain passes of the Drakensberg in the Harrismith district, were about 1822 faced with a sudden threat of extinction by the Hlubi and Ngwane fleeing Shaka under their leaders, Matiwane and Mpangazitha respectively. Mma Nthatisi gathered together her people and cattle and led them to safety to her brother Letlala of the Basia. But it was evident that he could not shelter the thousands she brought, and it was evident too, that neither she nor her people were prepared to be absorbed by the Sia. The Tlokwa, accordingly, with Mma Nthatisi at the helm became the new Israelites in Africa, or something of the present day Palestinians in the Middle East. For two years they wandered, challenging other clans and tribes in the area and steeling them to new resistance. The great Moshweshwe himself was first sensitized by her. A minor chief, he retreated into the mountains and built up his first impregnable defence in response to the threat she constituted. Later similar fortifications saved his Sotho from the white peril.

Mma Nthatisi, for her part, brought her people safely home at the end of the long pilgrimage, and settled them just 70 miles from their original country. The Tlokwa were one of the few people who survived the Difaqane and regained their sovereignty in the turmoil.

Nonqause⁵

Nonqause of the Xhosa has suffered the fate of the Old Testament Eve, and has been blamed for driving her people out of their paradise. Yet if the events of that 1856 tragedy are followed closely, her role was confined to kindling new hope in the defeated and dejected Xhosa. The national suicide of the Xhosa was urged on by her uncle, the Prophet Mhlakaza, very probably the victim of a horrible Ku-Klux-Clan-type white conspiracy.

Nonqause was closer to the Maid of Orleans than to the mad house. Her

"visions" were likewise inspired by her great passion to free her people. The Xhosa, after years of battle and brave resistance, found themselves exhausted and depleted in 1856 and it seemed that nothing short of a miracle could save them from the Whites, and Nonqause saw that miracle and communicated it to revitalise, rejuvenate, and resurrect her people. So she inspired them with hope, with the promise that the old heroes would rise again and redeem the people and restore them to wealth and hurl the Whites into the sea. Nonqause roused the people to new expectations, her uncle, the Prophet, killed those expectations by commanding that in order to be saved they had to kill all their cattle and destroy all their crops, and history remains for ever silent on the conspirators who duped him.

There must be hundreds of others who deserve to be included in the historical roster, but no accounts remain of their courage and their wisdom.

Black Women and the Modern Movement for Liberation

Indian and African women in particular have left indelible marks on the modern movement for liberation from colour. Indian women at the beginning of the century virtually made Gandhi, and proved the efficiency of the new liberation dialectic of satyagraha that he introduced. The South African Indian resistance movement remained by and large elitist protest, until the women satyagrahis from the two ashrams in Natal and the Transvaal, Phoenix and Tolstoy respectively, communicated it into a mass movement. In 1912 they defied the anti-Asiatic law, crossed the provincial border from both ends and provoked the miners of Newcastle to lay down their picks, and strike. A thousand workers thereafter began the epic march led by Gandhi, across the Natal border into the Transvaal and the entire Indian labour force of Natal went on strike, bringing industry to a standstill. Arrests and imprisonment followed, and the government was forced to modify some of the hardships against the Indians. The great figure of that struggle was not Gandhi, but the emaciated young Valamma, who refused to surrender despite her fatal illness following repeated imprisonment. She died in the struggle.

In 1946, the Indian women again took the lead in launching the second Passive Resistance Campaign against the anti-Indian land act; at the end of that campaign, almost 2 000 persons had been imprisoned for defying segregatory laws.

The militancy of the African women has moved in a continuous stream from the last century to the present. Their most stringent resistance has been against the pass laws. Lilian Ngoyi highlighted the particular sensitivity of the women, sharper than that of the men, when she said, "Men are born into the system and it is as if it has become a life tradition that they carry passes."

At the time of Union, Africans did not carry passes in the Cape and African women carried passes in the Orange Free State alone. Accordingly an intensive women's anti-pass campaign was mounted in that province, starting with deputations to authority and building into passive resistance, when women in Bloemfontein — 600, and Winburg — 800, led by Chorlett Makeke, marched to the city halls in 1913 and dumped their passes. In 1918 the movement spread to the Transvaal, following an attempt to extend passes to African women there.

The women finally saw the Prime Minister and passes for African women were suspended until 1952 when the local authorities were empowered to issue what they called "letters of privilege" to African women and in 1956, when all African women over the age of 16 were required by law to carry passes. There was an instant reaction. Angry women picketed the offices of the native commissioners, snatched away the passes from the hands of the faint-hearted and tore them up and burnt them. Thousands were prosecuted, at first for destroying government property and later for defying the law. In 1954, 2 000 were arrested in Johannesburg, 4 000 in Pretoria, 1 200 in Germiston, 350 in Bethlehem. In 1955, 2 000 women marched to the Native Commissioner's office in Vereeniging and dumped 10 000 protests.

In August 1956 when the pass law for African women was passed 20 000 marched to the Prime Minister in Pretoria, with babies on their backs and food baskets on heads. Their leaders, Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph and Rahima Moosa, carried their individual letters of protest into his office but found the office empty. The Prime Minister had fled. "Strijdom you have struck a rock when you have touched a woman," sang the women outside when their leaders returned.

The women's revolt continued into 1957 — Mma Nthatsi's spirit lived on. In the September of 1957 the Bahurutse women burnt the passes distributed in Zeerust, and triggered off a twelve month long agitation. The government charged in with military aircraft, diving them low above the heads of the angry women, to disperse them. In 1958, the police descended on protesting women in Lady Selborne and injured 14. In 1959 the pass laws were aggravated by new laws, which imposed closer settlement of rural communities and deprived them of fees for attending to the dipping of cattle. The women's revolt grew particularly intensive in Natal. Natural leaders arose, among them Margaret Mncadi, a young medical doctor who moved briskly from area to area, galvanizing the women. Hundreds of women drove from Durban to Pietermaritzburg, among them Dorothy Nyembezi, Bertha and Florence Mkhize, Sushila Gandhi, to lodge their protests at the Native Commissioner's office. Six hundred were arrested.

In the more spontaneous outbursts, beerhalls were ransacked, beer

drinkers put to flight and official buildings damaged to the value of R200 000. The fines imposed by the Courts totalled R26 000, the prison sentences 228 years.

Black Women in the World of White Men

Black women are often the sole supporters of their families. The Black man is almost without exception partnered by the Black woman, but she is often quite alone and left to her own economic and emotional resources. Her problems are all the greater, because she has to face them in a world which is defined by men, and White men at that. Unmindful of her needs, they have imprisoned her in a system of laws which generally operate against her independence. Within such narrow confines, she struggles to educate the children and to kindle in them the values of their cultures and the pride of being black.

Of the three Black women, the Indian continues to be the most protected by parent, brother, and husband, but with such protection comes a patronage which can have a crippling effect on her mind and personality.

Black Women in Employment

Of the total proportion of economically active women in 1970, approximately 86% were Black and 72% African. South African women generally are concentrated in the lower occupational rungs: White women in clerical and sales, Black women in domestic service, in farming and production. Only 4,3% of the gainfully employed African women are in the four top-most occupational rungs in 1970, as against 14,2% of Coloured women, 29,6% of Indian women and 77,0% of White women. The economically depressed position of women in particular, of Blacks generally, of African women pointedly, is reflected in Table 1.

Table 2 compares the gainful occupation of men with that of women in South Africa. Whereas in 1970, 67,3% of the gainfully employed were men, only 32,7% were women. The fact that so few women are gainfully occupied means that they are the economic dependants of men, and with dependency comes all the usual problems of subservience.

African communities in the reserves are by and large communities of women, children and old people. In a recent study of 150 families⁶, in the Nqutu area of KwaZulu, gainfully employed male heads were present in only seven. In all the other cases women were the effective heads of the family, but dependent on the cash, averaging R14 a month, sent to them by their husbands, who were migrant workers. Clearly the well-being of the women and the families they were responsible for, would have been considerably improved had means of gainful employment been available to them in the reserves, through farming and cottage industries as a start.

Educational Status

Almost 80% of South African girls at school are Black yet a minute proportion of these reach matric and graduate to institutions of higher learning. There is an enormous wastage of Black intellectual power because of the prevailing discriminatory system of education. The greatest wastage occurs in respect of the intellectual power of Black women.

Whereas approximately equal numbers of boys and girls were at school in 1970 in South Africa, the proportion of Black girls in the matriculant classes, standards IX and X, was much lower than that of Black boys. The proportion of White girls in these classes was slightly higher than that of White boys. Only 816 Black women held university degrees in South Africa in 1970, as against 31 580 White women and 4 990 Black men. (See Table 3)

No figures were available for the medical and legal professions. At a guess there are probably about a dozen Black women lawyers, mainly Indian, in the country, and about 50 doctors, at least two of whom, both Indians, have MDs.

The Legal Disabilities of African Women⁷

The position of African women is the most vulnerable of all in the White defined society. They have been placed under the jurisdiction of what the White legislators see as traditional "native" law, but traditional "native" law has been so distorted that they have been reduced to the condition of minors. Had African society conceptualized the role of women as codified in existing "native law" in South Africa, no Mma Nthatsi or Mkabayi could have emerged, since native law denies women guardianship and property rights. That law deems them perpetual wards of male guardians, who may be their fathers, husbands, brothers, sons, or in the absence of these, other male relatives. A woman wishing to seek employment, or to marry, must have the permission of this guardian and since she is a ward, she cannot enter into legal contracts or institute legal proceedings; he acts on her behalf. He also "inherits" her property. There have been cases where such male guardians while appropriating the inheritance have refused to support their wards. Dependent women, such as young orphans, have been forced to give their labour or wages to male guardians without receiving anything in return.

In traditional African society, property belonged to the 'umdeni', the joint household, and the family head was a trustee, whose violation of the joint property rights was spontaneously and automatically challenged. In the closely knit community, traditional sanctions had an operative effect in regulating interpersonal relations and preserving rights and obligations. With the destruction of the traditional economy, scarcity of land, and the emergent system of migrant labour, the traditional sanctions have fallen

away. The family head has disappeared and become replaced with the legal entity of the male guardian who, far from being a benefactor and protector, is often a serious encumbrance, and when the woman is the effective head, a redundant anachronism.

Black women have fought vigorously to preserve the integrity of Black peoples. When South Africa is finally liberated, a great debt will be due to them and it will be paid, if the future society guarantees both racial and sexual equality.

FOOTNOTES:

- 1 The history of Krotoa is extracted from the *Diary of Jan van Riebeeck* Struik, Cape Town
- 2 The account of Mkabazi is based on Cowley, Cecil, *Queen Mkhazi's Story* Struik, Cape Town, 1966
- 3 My information on Mma Nthatisi is based on the paper *The Difaqane*, presented by Colin Shum Department of African Government, University of Natal, to the University Extension Lectures in 1973
- 4 These are the assessments of Bryant, Corey, Theal and Arbousset respectively cited by Colin Shum, *ibid*
- 5 Perhaps the most concise available account of the "National Suicide of the Xhosa" is that of Mrs Brownlee in Brownlee, Charles, *Reminiscences of Kaffir Isle*, Lovedale Mission Press, South Africa
- 6 Liz Clarke and Jane Ngobese, *Women without Men Families in KwaZulu* Institute for Black Research Durban 1975

ANALYSIS OF TABLE:

- 1 67.3% of the South African male population was "gainfully" occupied in 1970
- 2 32.7% of the South African female population was "gainfully" occupied in 1970
- 3 A high proportion, 46%, of those engaged in professional and technical posts were women, employed in the main as nurses and teachers African women exceeded African men in this category due to the nursing profession which is virtually a female profession White women accounted for the "feminizing" of the clerical and related category
- 4 Women predominated in service, being employed in the main as domestic servants, the lowest paid and most unattractive of all occupations in the country
- 5 70.8% of all gainfully employed African women, 81.3% of Coloured and 26.2% of Indian, were employed in "service"

TABLE 1:

WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA IN 1970

Type of Occupation	WHITE WOMEN			COLOURED WOMEN			INDIAN WOMEN			AFRICAN WOMEN			TOTAL		
	% of all employed women	% of all White women	% of all women	Total Empl	% of all women	% of all women	Total Empl	% of all women	% of all women	Total Empl	% of all women	% of all women	Total Black and White	% of all women	% of all women in occup
Professional	51.2	17.4	6.1	2940	1.9	8.8	56100	37.0	2.9	48.8	151700	100		5.8	
Technical															
Administrative	94.1	0.7	0.0	60	1.9	0.2	104	3.1	1046	5.9	3220	100		0.1	
Managerial															
Clerical and Related	92.2	55.9	4.0	3770	1.0	8.3	7300	2.8	0.4	7.8	231140	100		10.3	
Sales	65.0	13.0	3.6	4070	4.6	12.2	18000	20.3	1.0	15.0	80990	100		3.4	
Service	3.0	5.0	4.3	4430	0.5	13.2	16700	83.8	37.9	97.0	854700	100		32.7	
Farm, Forestry, Fishing, Lumber	0.5	0.8	0.6	410	0.1	1.2	68420	97.8	34.6	99.5	660840	100		25.6	
Production and Transport	8.1	3.2	38.8	12000	6.8	15.9	80120	45.3	4.2	91.9	376800	100		6.8	
Not Classified	3.7	3.3	9.2	6750	1.9	20.2	35500	88.9	19.0	96.3	400300	100		15.3	
Total Active	17.1	100.0	100.1	34450	1.3	100.0	188800	22.2	100.006	82.9	2614060	100		100.0	
Total Inactive				276560			276420				2757510				
Grand Total				310010			2165020				5372370				
	Active	Inactive		Active	Inactive		Active	Inactive		Active	Inactive		Active	Inactive	
	23.8	76.2	75.9	30.8	89.2	87.2	12.8	48.7	51.3						

TABLE 2:

**COMPARISON OF THE GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT OF MEN WITH WOMEN IN
SOUTH AFRICA: 1970**

OCCUPATION	ALL RACES				AFRICAN					
	MEN	%	WOMEN	%	TOTAL	MEN	%	WOMEN	%	TOTAL
Professional Technical	178270	54	151790	46	330060	37200	19.9	56100	60.1	93300
Administrative and Managerial	07266	91.8	8220	4.2	75880	1300	97.1	100	2.9	1400
Clerical and Related	308950	53.3	270140	46.7	579090	88900	92.3	7380	7.7	96280
Sales	240750	71	88990	27	329740	92800	83.7	18080	16.3	110880
Service	412190	32.5	854700	67.5	1266890	235240	29.2	716700	70.8	1011940
Farm Forestry Fishing Lumber	161190	70.7	668340	29.3	2780230	1397280	68.1	654320	11.9	2051600
Production and Transport	2303030	92.9	176880	7.1	2479910	1608720	95.3	80120	4.7	168894
Not Classifiable	244110	37.9	400300	62.1	644410	193100	15.2	355900	64.8	548900
Total Active	5371350	67.3	2614860	32.7	7986210	3716540	66.3	1888600	33.7	5605140
Total Not Economically Active	5174750	38.6	8241510	61.4	13416260	3670880	39	5760420	61	9431220

The proportions are calculated from the Table on Occupation.

South African Statistics 1972 Government Printer, Private Bag X85, Pretoria, A-27

TABLE 2: (contd.)

COLOURED				INDIAN				WHITE					
MEN	%	WOMEN	% TOTAL	MEN	%	WOMEN	% TOTAL	MEN	%	WOMEN	% TOTAL		
9670	31.2	15010	60.8	24680	67.50	2960	30.5	9690	124670	61.6	77720	38.4	202390
760	96.2	30	3.8	790	1780	94.7	60	3.3	66820	94.7	3030	4.3	68950
26280	70.7	10890	29.3	31170	23400	89.4	2770	10.6	107370	40.7	249100	59.3	356470
18230	66.9	9000	33.1	27230	27280	87	4070	13	102440	63.9	57840	36.1	160280
24930	18.7	108120	81.3	133050	12460	73.8	4430	26.2	79560	75.8	25450	24.2	105010
113850	91.4	10690	8.6	124540	6470	94	410	6	93790	96.5	3420	3.5	97210
238540	77.2	70430	22.8	308970	61800	83.7	12000	16.3	393970	96.5	14330	3.5	408300
24280	51.7	22840	48.5	47120	6590	49.4	6750	50.6	20140	57.5	14910	42.5	35050
456540	64.9	247010	33.1	703550	146510	81.4	33450	18.6	1051760	70.2	445800	29.8	1497560
537910	40.8	779910	59.2	1317820	161620	36.9	276560	63.1	804420	36.1	1424560	63.9	222890

SEE BACK FOR ANALYSIS OF TABLE

EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF
MEN AND WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA
Reff. A26, 27, S.A. Statistics 1972

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT

	AFRICAN		COLOURED		INDIAN		WHITE	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Total Number	1,372,543	1,364,907	259,278	256,230	86,223	77,302	443,980	420,424
Sub A and B	42.8	39.8	35.9	35.3	22.5	24.4	19.0	18.7
Sid I-V	53.0	55.5	52.3	53.6	50.5	53.8	43.6	45.6
Sid VI-VIII	3.8	4.5	9.9	10.1	21.2	17.8	24.5	24.8
Sid IX-X	0.4	0.2	1.5	0.8	5.6	3.8	9.6	9.9

DIPLOMA AND DEGREES

	AFRICAN		COLOURED		INDIAN		WHITE	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Diploma	14880	25740	5780	7840	3300	1500	89030	100840
B Sc			280	20	400	90	21340	5480
B Com, B Econ			60		160	10	9620	1200
B A	1480	246						
Other B	300	20	650	120	1470	270	30690	22560
M Sc			10		10		1280	400
M Com M Econ							400	10
Other M	40	20	40		50	20	5190	1510
D Sc							650	40
D Phil							1090	130
Other D			20		20		2330	250
Total	1820	286	1060	140	2110	390	83590	31580

5 — BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE ECONOMIC POSITION OF THE BLACK MAN IN SOUTH AFRICA

S.M. Motsuenyane

The Origin and Effects of Black Consciousness

The strong wave of Black Nationalism which swept like a whirlwind across the African Continent during the past two decades, culminating in the end of the Colonial Era in part of Africa, left as its aftermath a rich legacy of Black pride and Freedom. When that freedom came it emancipated not only the body but also the soul of the Black man. A new intellectual and psychological climate arose, which imbued Black men with an irresistible feeling of pride, confidence and adequacy. This to my mind symbolised the emergence of the phenomenon now called Black Consciousness. Dr Kwame Nkrumah appropriately described this happy awakening as "the flowering of a new African personality".

The overcoming of a pervasive sense of subjection, humiliation and inferiority which for centuries had been deeply implanted into the minds and souls of the Black Folks, must represent one of the most important social and spiritual revolutions of our time.

All of us ought therefore to be thankful for the new day of Black Consciousness that has dawned over Africa. We have every reason to feel proud of what the Lord intended us to be; Human beings, no less than other men! We owe no man an apology for being created Black. Let us therefore echo the slogan of the times: **Black is Beautiful!**

Black Consciousness must lead to positive Creation

Black Consciousness being something associated mainly with human emotions or attitudes, could be used only as a stepping stone to greater achievements. In order for this concept to mean anything to the present and future generation, it must not just end with empty expressions of pride and discontent or disenchantment with the existing conditions. Black Consciousness must direct the Black man to become more positive; more self-prompting; more self-reliant and creative.

To achieve anything worthwhile the Black community ought to set itself some *goals or objectives* bearing in mind the fact that success in any undertaking demands cooperation, commitment and dedication on the part of those concerned. The goals as well as the direction and pace of our progress should not be determined for us by others, but by ourselves.

Let us take note that our best dreams and visions will remain unattainable ideals if we do not strive to become good implementors of our objectives. Africans are said to be good at planning and talking but poor at implementing their plans. If this be a true reflection of ourselves let us by all means hasten to conquer this weakness. One man says that the difference between men and boys is that men do and boys talk. So let us be men. Our minds must undergo a complete reorientation. Our thinking must become less bound to the past, and reflect more on the hopes of our glorious future. We must indeed display the character of a new African personality and take full responsibility for the shaping of our destiny. I strongly believe that a nation develops only when it has a development ethic i.e. "the will to develop"

Important Landmarks in South Africa's Economic Development

(i) Emergence of the Black Labourer

The African was at first an independent pastoralist who wandered about at random in search of pastures in what he construed as God's Land. The Land was plentiful and in his view limitless, thus everybody in the community was entitled to a piece. Then three hundred years ago came the European who settled in South Africa. He found some open places and some settled territories.

On account of his superior military prowess and excellent technological skills, he subdued the indigenous people and laid claim over much of the country. Having occupied a great bulk of the land he used his superior technology to develop industries; agriculture being the first. Slave labour was used extensively in the early days of farming in the Cape.

As the white frontiers moved further and further into the African territories, their land became so much smaller that eventually they could not sustain themselves in those areas on the basis of traditional peasant agriculture. Africans were compelled both by hunger and stringent tax laws to seek work on European farms.

Mining began first at Kimberley more than 100 years ago; and later on the Witwatersrand. Black labour was used in ever-increasing numbers, in the digging of the minerals as well as in the building of roads and bridges, houses, railway lines and the seaports. From where both the agricultural goods and the minerals were exported. Manufacturing and the distributive services started in the great industrial centres that sprang up everywhere throughout South Africa, after the turn of the century.

(ii) Emergence of the Black Entrepreneur

The Indian community was the first group to produce Black businessmen, before the turn of the century. Their development was however extremely

hampered by discriminatory laws which began to appear even before the end of the last century. They were forced out of the White markets in Durban, and compelled to establish their own business areas and markets elsewhere.

Their success so far is largely attributable to the fact that they have for centuries been a trading community with vast trading experience and business acumen.

The African businessmen came into prominence after the turn of the century. Unlike his Asian counterpart he was historically a newcomer to commerce. He was more of a product of chance and economic necessity than of deliberate causation. To a great extent he was a graduate of the school of hard-knocks, without any business training nor experience at all. Most of our African businessmen up to the present time have begun their careers either as labourers, clerks or teachers with no formal business training whatsoever.

When Black urban townships began to develop around the periphery of the White industrial centres that sprang up everywhere in South Africa, after the turn of the century, the need for Blacks to sell and distribute consumer goods in these townships arose. By 1910 there were 27 licensed African entrepreneurs in South Africa located mainly in Natal and the Cape. There were no licensed Black traders in the Orange Free State until 1944, when the Bloemfontein Municipality leased the first trading sites to Africans. It is presently estimated that there are more than 30 000 Black licensed businessmen in South Africa.

Lopsided Development Prejudices Black Involvement

In our analysis of the position of the Black man in the economy of South Africa, it is important to take note of the key factors which have influenced the overall structure of the economy.

- (a) The Economy has developed hitherto on the basis of a predominantly White entrepreneurial class and Black labour force. More than 70% of the economically active persons in South Africa are Black. Their share in the GDP is only 20%. Current trends indicate that Black and White economic interdependence will increase rather than diminish in the future.
- (b) South Africa is a common market for all its people, having an integrated economy, but offering unequal opportunities to the various racial groups in the country.
- (c) The Black entrepreneur operates within a restricted and restrictive milieu. His scope is limited and oriented towards meeting only the needs of his own community, instead of the needs of the country and its people as a whole. He is debarred from establishing big competi-

tive Company retail operations in the Urban industrial areas of South Africa.

- (d) The Black community is isolated from the main-stream of the South African bustling economic life by the maintenance of an artificial wage gap and racial discriminatory practices. The Blacks are often relegated to the lower income categories of employment whilst the best-paying jobs are reserved for Whites.
- (e) The African workers do not have the same protection and bargaining powers as all other racial groups in South Africa.
- (f) Much less money is devoted to economic development in the Black areas than the situation there demands. South Africa is a rich country and could afford to spend more money on developing the so-called Homeland areas and the Black Urban locations. More attention is given to expansionary development projects outside the Black area.

New Attitudes and Policies Must be Evolved

In South Africa's economy the Black man has traditionally been seen as a source of cheap labour, or as a customer. His right to take part as an entrepreneur or co-participant in national projects, has all too often been disregarded or circumscribed with unnecessary restrictions or impediments.

The economy of this country, which is White-dominated at the top, will have to change and be restructured in such a manner as to offer the Black people a large measure of participation as full partners in all spheres of our commercial and industrial life.

In order to make this major policy adjustment possible, the Black man must come to be regarded as a full citizen of this country, entitled to all benefits and privileges enjoyed by every South African regardless of his colour. The artificial impediments which deny him the right of forming companies, and establishing large business enterprises in Urban areas, should be nullified. South Africa can continue to ignore the valid pleas and protestations of the majority of her citizens only at her own peril.

The Black man's task will be to demand a new role in the National economy of South Africa. He should no longer be satisfied only to play the part of an unskilled or semi-skilled labourer. He should become an entrepreneur in his own right and a contributor to the overall economic growth of the country. He should have equal scope for skilled and professional employment.

African Market should Benefit Black Development

The continuous increase in the Black earning and spending power in recent years has drawn tremendous attention of both the White and Black entre-

preneurs alike. The Black businessmen although keenly interested in the buying power of their people, are not in a position to compete against the better trained and more competitive White retail outlets in town. As a result 70-80% of the Black buying power amounting to more than R3 500-million per annum is dissipated in the White areas. Blacks also support White financial institutions who have used Black investment for furthering economic development in the White sector.

Something very urgent should be done to curb the steady flow of Black profits and investments into the White areas. It is the Black people themselves who must take steps towards solving this problem. A project such as the Black Bank will help to keep our funds circulating among the African people themselves. The Black Bank alone is not enough. We are called upon to create as rapidly as we can our own Supermarkets, Chain Stores, Wholesalers, Factories, Insurance Companies and Building Societies etc. The Central Government should constantly be prevailed upon to open opportunities for Black development even in the urban locations.

Future Strategies for Black Economic Advancement

In order to give its Black population a real stake in the country's economy, South Africa cannot escape the challenge of rapidly moving away from a White-dominated to a shared-economy of partnership and participation by all its peoples.

There is also an existing demand for Black labour to be organised, trained, and adequately rewarded which must be met.

The African areas must be rapidly developed to provide higher and decent standards of living for the people resident there. They should however remain integral parts of the Republic of South Africa.

The Above Objectives can be Attained only if:

- (a) The Black communities could unite on the basis of common goals and objectives. Our power to bargain for change depends largely on our unity. The fact that Blacks share common problems and have similar aspirations only emphasises the need for oneness.
- (b) The Black people become more action orientated and practical. The future of the Black man will not be made for him by others. He himself must carve his own destiny. To do this we must become doers and initiators of progress not just talkers.
- (c) We overcome the sense of inferiority, subjection and frustration resulting from our depressing South African environment. The Black man has the capacity to rise to the same heights as all other men. We must have faith in our ability to succeed regardless of what obstacles are placed along our way. The most important thing is to motivate

our people and to give them a sense of purpose and direction, something to live for.

- (d) Get accustomed to starting and supporting our own ventures. The African in South Africa has contributed much towards the enrichment of other sections of our population but is himself at the very bottom of the economic pyramid in this country. Time has come for our Blacks to emancipate themselves from all forms of exploitation.
- (e) The Black working population must take an interest in organising itself into viable Trade Unions. Homeland leaders should give their support to the establishment of such Unions which may operate from their areas.
- (f) More domestic and foreign capital is mobilised to bring about a faster rate of agricultural and industrial development in the Black areas of South Africa. The present amounts budgeted for development of the Homeland areas are far too inadequate to bring about significant changes in those areas.
- (g) More emphasis is put on formal and technical education. Greater involvement of the Black people at higher categories of employment will call for special skills which we must be ready to furnish. Engineers, Accountants, Surveyors, Agronomists, Veterinarians, Mechanics, Electricians, etc. these are the people we need very urgently.

The challenges and problems facing the Black community in the economic sector are indeed very enormous and could be most difficult to overcome. Yet, if we could marshal sufficient courage, perseverance and determination, to go on constructively and objectively, initiating and making positive contributions towards the betterment of our lot, our future can only be a glorious and hopeful one.

6 — THE LABOUR SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Harold Nxasana
and Foszia Fisher

MOST BLACK South Africans are workers. We believe, therefore, that to understand the problems facing black South Africans we must begin with the labour situation. It is the situation in which blacks experience oppression in its acutest form. And it is the situation in which there is the greatest potential for forging new organisations through which blacks can reclaim their human dignity.

In this paper we shall begin by showing how conquest was institutionalised in a system of exploitation of cheap labour. The black workers and the other black classes play different parts in this system, and we have to understand these differences if we are going to work out a programme for a renaissance which will satisfy the needs of all.

Having discussed these differences, we shall then go on to show why trade unions are at present the best organisations through which black workers can assert their human dignity.

The present situation was created by conquest. The conquest divided South Africans into two species: the conquerors, who controlled the country and have full social and political rights; and the colonised, who lost control over their country through the conquest, and so are in practically every way second class citizens. Seen in this way, all black South Africans are similarly deprived, and have one common aim: to be restored to full citizenship in their own country.

But it is not as simple as that. The conquest was used to impose a particular kind of social system on South Africa. The blacks were deprived of most of their land. This meant that they had to go out to work for those who now had their land. By keeping up a continuous pressure on the land, by taxation, and by measures which made it difficult for black farmers to compete with the subsidised white farmers, the state was able to make sure that there would always be more workers than there were jobs. So wages were low and remained low.

The conquest was used to impose a system of economic exploitation through which the blacks were forced to work and to create wealth which enriched the whites. This economic system produced, and continues to produce, more white wealth and more black poverty. The reserves get poorer, the cities get richer.

The original conquest was carried out by the soldiers. But to impose an economic system, and to make sure that it continues to reproduce itself, more is needed than just soldiers. The new system needed chiefs who could be used to keep the peace in the rural areas. It needed a religion that would teach the people the virtues of obedience and poverty, and it needed priests to teach that religion. It needed schools that would teach people what they needed to know in order to obey orders and to do their work, and it needed teachers who would teach them these things. It needed a new legal system which would ensure the dominance of the new order, and to make this system work it needed clerks and interpreters and lawyers. It needed minimum health care to make sure that the workers reached their jobs and stayed alive, and it needed doctors and nurses to provide this care. In the factories it needed clerks, and now it needs personnel managers to help in operating the system.

So to operate the new economic system of exploitation of cheap labour, it was necessary for the colonists to train some of the colonised to do all these jobs. These people, quite unconsciously, then became important cogs in the machinery of exploitation. As such, they also received greater rewards. They earned higher wages than black workers, and they also had a bit more prestige.

In this way the colonised were divided into two groups: the workers (and their families in the reserves) who were the source of the country's wealth, and the others, the functionaries, who played some part, however small and however unintentional, in making the system operate smoothly. Both groups, the black workers and the black functionaries, are oppressed: they are second class citizens. Both groups are discriminated against because of their colour, the symbol of their subhuman conquered status. But each group experiences oppression and discrimination in a special way. The groups have some interests in common, but they also have some conflicting interests. To understand how they can work together, we must understand both the similarities and the differences of interest.

In order to play their part in keeping the system of exploitation going, the functionaries had to be trained in the rules of the system. That is, they had to learn many of the same things as the colonists themselves learned. They had to be "educated". Because they were educated in the same way as the colonists, and came to share their culture, they experienced the situation of oppression essentially as DISCRIMINATION. They were deprived of equal chances within the system because they were black. In Africa, many of the independence movements were started by, or most strongly supported by, black civil servants who found that they were confined to the bottom rungs of the civil service. Their struggle for independence was a struggle for the right to move to the top of the civil service. After in-

dependence they africanised the civil service, but the civil service continued to perform its function of ensuring that the system of exploitation functioned properly.

The workers, on the other hand, experience their situation of oppression as one of EXPLOITATION. Discrimination exists but it is not the central issue. Whether the foreman or the personnel manager is black or white makes no difference to the essential situation of the workers when they have no power over what happens in the factory. This is what exploitation means. To be exploited means to have no control over how you work or over how the product of your labour is to be used. It means that your body can be used to produce wealth for other people.

An end to discrimination would not necessarily mean an end to exploitation. It would not change the fact that there is a small group of exploiters and a large group of exploited. It might only mean that there would be equal competition between black and white for positions among the exploiters.

The point that we want to make is that the functionaries have an interest in the abolition of discrimination, while the workers have an interest in the abolition of exploitation. The functionaries want an end to discrimination in salaries, they want equal pay for equal work. The workers do not do "equal work", and would not be helped by such a principle. They want a change to the whole way in which wages are set. They want Trade Union rights which would enable them to use the power of their numbers to get a more equal division of the wealth that they produce.

Now if the colonists in South Africa were clever, they would do what has been done elsewhere in Africa. They would accept the functionaries as equals, and co-operate with them in a new way to keep the system of exploitation going. Some people want to do that here. This is what a lot of fuss about "petty apartheid" is about. The right to dine in 5-star hotels will be nice to the functionaries who can afford it, but it will mean nothing to the workers. However, it is likely that the colonists in South Africa are too blinded by their own propaganda to use this division of interest between the black functionaries and the black workers in order to divide the people successfully.

What this means is that the functionaries cannot hope to act independently to end discrimination. They can only hope to end it through a policy which will also end exploitation. Of course, the other alternative will be to accept discrimination as the price to be paid for the relative privilege of being functionary, and many functionaries will doubtless choose this course. But many will not. We believe that the growth of "Black Consciousness" among the black middle classes indicates a growing awareness of the extent to which they have up till now been used as functionaries.

to keep the system running. They are beginning to realise that the "Western culture" to which they have been given access is nothing but a set of tools for domination. But "Black Consciousness" does not as yet seem to have got beyond a simple rejection. And it does not seem to have made a clear analysis of the relation between conquest, discrimination and exploitation. This is why we welcome this opportunity to focus upon the problems of the workers. We believe that it is only by a careful consideration of the relation between the interest of the exploited workers and the interests of the discriminated-against functionaries, that the nature of a Black Renaissance can emerge.

The main problem facing the workers, then, is the problem of exploitation. This exploitation is based on two principles:

- 1 The continued underdevelopment of the "reserves" (whether inside South Africa or outside), which ensures continuous supply of workers to the industrial areas;
- 2 The fact that African workers do not have institutions through which they can combine and use the power of their numbers to negotiate for a fair share of the product.

This means that the workers have an interest in policies and strategies which

- 1 Ensure rapid development of the rural areas throughout Southern Africa, with an increase in the employment capacity of the rural areas;
- 2 Help in the growth of worker organisations through which workers can begin to assert some control over their labour.

In this paper we shall deal only with this second aspect. The rapid development of the South African economy brings about changes in the role of the African work-force. African workers have always been predominant in the farming sector. But, for a number of reasons, it is usually very difficult for farm workers to organise. African workers have also always been predominant on the mines, but the compound system and the migrant labour system as practised on the mines make possible a very tight control over workers. It has been equally difficult for black mine workers to organise.

However, what is happening now is that the industrial sector of the economy is the fastest growing, and over the past 15 years African workers have also achieved predominance here. Firstly, the percentage of white workers in industry has continuously declined. Less than 25% are now white. Secondly, black workers are moving into semi-skilled operative

jobs. In these jobs their skill is more important to production. The result is that they have more power. Employers can dismiss unskilled labourers and replace them without any loss of production. But it is not easy to replace a work-force of experienced machine operatives.

The Durban strikes, and increasing workers militancy throughout South Africa, are made possible by this change. Unless there is a very serious recession in the rest of the world, the South African economy will continue to grow, and with it will grow the potential power of the black workers. But this power will remain a potential power unless it can find organisational form. This is where Trade Unions come in. Trade Unions will not grow of their own accord. There are three main obstacles in the way of Trade Unions

The first is the state. It is legal for African workers to form Trade Unions, but nevertheless the government does not like them. There is no legislation which adequately protects workers' organisations against employers. Most African Trade Unions suffer a lot from Security branch harassment, and a number of Trade Unionists have been banned. However, the state is subject to a lot of external pressure to recognise, or at least not to ban, African Trade Unions. Also, at least some people seem to be beginning to realise that Trade Unions must come.

The second obstacle is the employers. The employers have long benefitted from high profit rates and from total control over their black workers. Very few employers are willing to recognise Unions unless they are forced to do so by the organised power of the workers. Meanwhile they use every trick they can: they victimise active workers, even when such workers are on legally recognised works committees. They co-operate with the Department of Labour and with the police in trying to harass Unionists. And they spread lies to the workers about Trade Unions

The third obstacle is bad leadership and bad strategy. The most obvious danger here is corruption, and many Unions in South Africa and elsewhere have suffered from corruption. But there are more insidious dangers. It is very easy for a Trade Union to become a complaints office, to which workers come with individual complaints. Then the office solves these complaints for the workers. In this way the Union becomes something separate from the workers themselves. Even if the workers pay subscriptions, they remain essentially unorganised. As such, they can never exercise any collective power.

A real Trade Union is something different. It must be based on the organisation of the workers within each factory. The workers, through their organisation, must be able to deal with most of their own problems. The Union organisers should act only as expert advisors in very difficult situations

The factory organisation is the most important unit of the Trade Union. It is only on the basis of a strong factory organisation that it is possible to build up a Union which can negotiate for all workers in an industry.

The shop steward organisation within each factory has three functions:

1. to deal in concrete terms with the problems of that factory;
2. to keep the rank-and-file members in close contact with the Union, to keep them informed, to collect subscriptions, and to mobilise them when necessary;
3. to act as a training centre and as a recruiting ground for potential Union leadership. Through strong factory organisation the Union can produce its own leaders, instead of being dependent on outsiders.

The main organisational principle is that the workers' organisation should be able to combine short term benefits with an awareness of long term goals. One of the difficulties with many organisations in South Africa is that they often talk about excellent long term goals like freedom and justice, but are not able to work out tactics which will help to solve people's immediate problems.

For the Trade Union, the long term goal is not just higher wages. In fact higher wages is always a secondary goal. The main goal is human dignity. We said earlier that exploitation is a situation in which the workers have no control over the way in which their own bodies are used. Exploitation is above all a denial of human dignity, a way of turning a person into a means to somebody else's satisfaction. The aim of Trade Unionism is to change the workers from being part of the machinery into being full participants in industry. The aim is to help workers to participate in deciding how work should be done and to participate in deciding how the product should be distributed. Higher wages are merely a by-product of human dignity.

The Trade Union is itself a beginning of the affirmation of human dignity. Through the Trade Union the workers can immediately begin to assert some control over their own lives. They can do this through their power within their own workers' organisation, and through the power which they can exert through the organisation within the factory. A democratic Trade Union organisation is in itself an assertion of human dignity, and a means to greater human dignity. And at the same time it can offer immediate short term benefits of a material kind.

It is for this reason that we believe that the development of Trade Union organisation is central to any "Black Renaissance" in South Africa. Most black South Africans are workers. They experience the problems of oppression most acutely at their work place, and it is there that they must begin to fight back. This means that the struggle of the workers through their Trade Unions must be the pivot of any attempt to reassert the right of black people to full humanity.

7 — SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS (MASS MEDIA) AMONG A DEVELOPING PEOPLE

Rt. Rev. Mandlenkosi A. Zwane

Introduction

Development as I understand it means a conscious and unconscious movement of man towards his fullness and that fullness is in God the Creator and Father who has communicated, through various ways, the abundance of his goodness in which man has a share. Development as seen by others means the "unfolding of the human person in every dimension: political, economic, spiritual, social and cultural" (Church Communications Development: A Sodepax Report, Driebergen, Netherlands, 1970).

For this reason and because of differing circumstances, for some, development means escape from hunger, poverty, disease and ignorance. For others, it means sharing out more fully the good things of civilization. Development can mean seeing more clearly what makes life really human. It can mean a whole people setting off courageously to find their self-fulfillment (Introduction to *Populorum Progressio*: An Encyclical letter of Pope Paul VI)

We communicate in order to develop. Both these are elements of an ongoing society, an extension of man's growing and sharing. Social Communications means communication among man for the betterment of man, using Press, cinema, radio, television. In developing countries, the radio is of prime importance as its programmes can reach so many and it is to this medium that I will refer many of my thoughts, without totally ignoring the other means of social communications as well. The Press is second in importance as its effectiveness is in proportion to the literacy level of the people.

Man's development means his growing to maturity both physically and spiritually. For this man needs material things, but he always remains master, the master in companionship, because his genuine growth to full manhood is initially and ultimately tied up with the 'other'. "Man cannot progress by himself alone. All men must grow together ... man must meet his brother man, and nation meet nation as sons of God together. United in such communion, all men must work as one, to build the common future of mankind" (*Populorum Progressio*, Part II, Para. 43). Hence communications become the key if man is to avoid the consequences of the Tower of Babel.

Furthermore, the pace of man's growth will depend on his ingenuity to harness his technical know-how, the material resources available, and his sense of togetherness. So man must share ideas, share material resources and share companionship -- such is communication.

As I see it, communication is an outpouring and sharing of goodness in community because goodness of its nature is communicable. This is exemplified in God who shares his goodness with men, not as a creator, but as a father, the Father of the community of man. Therefore, it would appear that communication and development are inseparable. We grow by sharing and we share in order to grow. When we understand this, distances created by our individuality, our uniqueness as human persons, our political systems, our different cultural backgrounds and indeed our basic physical distances, become not a source of division and conflict, but a tapestry of unity. Social Communications are personal. They speak to you as an individual or as a family. They reach you in your apartment, in your homestead, in your village. Radio and Press are unique in that they enable vital issues to be discussed while one is walking or travelling.

Social Communications are also democratic. They bring information, entertainment and education to all. So they endeavour to establish a measure of universal equality in which all men, whatever their place in society, can enjoy the delights of culture and leisure. (Social communication, Part II, Para. 20) What they can achieve is obvious (the meeting this week-end is a testimony). Means of Social Communication can bring information comparatively cheaply and yet swiftly, to hundreds of thousands of people. They can inform, entertain and educate. They are capable of bringing about an understanding and closer unity among men when they multiply contacts within society and so deepen social consciousness. But they can also effectively divide men when they are used as propaganda to further certain ideologies. Like other instruments of human advancement, social communications cannot play a genuine role in development until their use is handled by people who are part of the community. "You are obliged to take the facts, the events, the opinions, the current interest, the thought of the surrounding environment . ." (Pope Paul VI). All that machines are capable of doing cannot hide the communicator's ignorance and theoretical knowledge about people's aspirations, concerns, joys and fears.

I am afraid I cannot agree entirely with Marshall McLuhan when he says that "the medium is the message". Such a statement may unwittingly reveal the bankruptcy of the message. "The mass media are after all probably like prostitutes who sell their talents to the highest bidder". (Mass media, alienation and emancipation by Cees Hamelink -- WACC Journal). It is when the content of communication is rich that these means of communica-

tion will give you your money's worth. No matter how sophisticated the means of communication are, it is still the man who plays the most important part, whether it be the man behind the microphone, in front of the camera, the producer, the director, the film maker, the actor, the man with a pencil, the man who owns these means of communications, the man who makes the policy or whoever... That man must know his audience. What is communicated must be in an idiom authentic to their understanding. The program's content must reflect the community's life; i.e. What alienates and what emancipates man in that community.

As in development, communications must begin at the point where the people are and then continue at their speed. Just as it is naive to think that you can develop a community without involving the people themselves, it is a waste of time and in fact it is dangerous to think you can use social communications without involving the people themselves. This is where many developing countries have failed their people. Social Communications must not only tell communities what the government and other organisations are doing for the people: They should reflect the life of the people and articulate what the people themselves would like to have said. This is only possible when politicians, religious leaders and communicators are prepared to be re-educated in the life of the people. It cannot be assumed that because you belong to a community you are automatically communicative. Communication begins and ends where people are. This is where the school of a politician, communicator or any leader should be, for communication is a two-way process. Enthusiasm to tell, must be matched with a keen desire to listen, to be on the spot and able to observe. To do this means a revolution of the mind and many of us are not capable of doing just that. Why not?

I would now like to discuss the major difficulties facing a developing people. Firstly, from first-hand knowledge of the existential situation in some of the developing countries, I am inclined to think that an ideal arrangement would be that Social Communications, especially radio and television, be owned and operated by an independent body set up by statutory law. A corporation as in Nigeria and Ghana for instance. However, I am aware of many real problems concerning this kind of set-up. One of these is that Mass Media are a power and many of the developing people cannot afford to leave such a powerful means of communication to a relatively small representative group of people, especially when many of the developing people are faced with international conflicting camps, constantly wanting spheres of influence.

The alternative is that the state owns these media. We know what that means. They become instruments of "Politicizing", doing the work of development very unsatisfactorily. In quite a number of these countries the

media more often than not recounts the Government Ministers' and top Civil Servants' activities, such as the opening of institutions, the making of speeches and their world safaris. In some places these media are used to suppress political opponents. However when social communications are used for development, they are very effective indeed. In some countries, for instance India, radio is used to enable farmers to receive programmes containing information on the growing of high-yielding varieties of crops and increased farm production; Zambia also has had a very successful radio farms programme: nutrition, literacy, agriculture and similar fields have improved because of radio and television programmes and because of the press. The media must be rigorous in developing norms for itself so that its programmes will both make people aware of their problems and potential and also help to diffuse positively the social message to the masses of the people.

Secondly, when states assume ownership of these means of communications, it is taken for granted that the politician has the welfare of the people selflessly at heart, a very questionable assumption indeed. Time and again a conscientious communicator is at loggerheads with a Government or other powers that be because the communicator has articulated the peoples' aspirations and concern and consequently the 'power' feels threatened. So the professional communicator, for the sake of peace, loses enthusiasm and begins to keep to the letter of the law. After all, if he is seen in the office eight hours a working day, he is going to get his pay. He never goes out to the people. He begins to repeat his programmes. His comments of the programmes are cheap, empty and moralistic. If he works for radio he increases music programmes as he is able to go to record library to make his programmes. What does it all mean? It means a waste of money, a waste of time and man's life. A man trained for the most powerful instruments for development is now wasted.

This brings us to the third difficulty. The question of editorial practices and responsibility for these media. How can a communicator be said to be responsible for materials that he has no choice in selecting, accepting or refusing? Is he to edit or accept them as they are? To whom is he to be responsible? To the Government or to his audience? Of course, more often than not, this is the struggle between the security of the prescribed role and the liberty to decide what (a communicator) wants to do. (Mass media Alienation and Emancipation Cees Hamelink WAAC Journal) A communicator in order to take his job seriously and feel responsible must be trusted for his integrity. For the broadcaster's (Communicator's) aims are:

- (a) (i) to examine public issues from various angles based on responsible and reliable sources of information;

- (ii) to reflect responsible public opinion on matters of public interest, at the same time explaining the Government's policy on the issue, where such a policy exists, in a balanced statement of views;
 - (iii) to arouse public interest in and awareness of local public affairs;
 - (iv) to counteract, if necessary, irresponsible attack against any sector of society.
- (b) His prime responsibility is to the people he is broadcasting to; they must believe him, and if they believe him, they will believe in the Government he works for
 - (c) in order to meet this responsibility, he must be allowed to present the facts (all of them on any issue);
 - (d) notwithstanding (b) because he is a leader of public opinion, the broadcaster must exercise his right to treat issues which involve the security and well-being of the state, and therefore of his audience, with discretion;
 - (e) in order to achieve (a), (b) and (c) he must be in full possession of all the facts, must be fully in the confidence of his Government which must trust him to use the information he has responsibly, but independently at the same time. If he uses his information irresponsibly or carelessly, then his own head must be on the block ("Editorial practice and responsibility by Radio Hong Kong at the Ninth Commonwealth Broadcasting Conference in Kenya 1972.")

Fourthly, the inadequacy of trained and experienced staff is another headache for some of the developing people. For a man to be trusted with all these responsibilities mentioned above (third difficulty), he needs to be well trained and left in the same job for a long time. But that is not all. The choice of appropriate persons to be trained for this work is important: he/she must be someone really interested in social communications, not someone who has nothing else to do. The question of trained personnel must necessarily include training for management and this is often lacking. The lack of trained and experienced managers of social communication is further complicated by political appointments in management. Some of these appointees may know very little or nothing at all about communication. These people are appreciated because of who they are rather than because of what they can offer. But once they are appointed, it is assumed that they are capable of making right decisions and they themselves pontificate over decision-making; more often than not, this is without the consultation of people who know the business.

Just as the United Nations (F.A.O.) says that the key to rural development is the mobilization of the people, so the effectiveness of social

communications is the participation of the people. It is a slow way of achievement, but it is a sure way, based on human understanding, not on power from above. Margaret Mead observed that anyone over thirty is an immigrant in the New World, where perception and thought are so largely shaped by media. By definition most church leaders fall into that category.

Social Communications shape perception and thought. To be effective they must be immersed in the idiom of the people. And in South Africa? If Social Communications are to help to rebuild the humanity of men, women and children in this part of the world, then the going is going to be tough. This is the precise area where expression of the political, economic and social system has been designed to enslave the majority of the people and as a result has now enslaved the whole society. This is the medium through which black and white were initially taught to hate one another. When this proved most dangerous they were then taught that they were so vastly different from one another that integration was impossible. So black and white had to be apart: separate development; whites together but blacks apart – Zulus, Xhosas, Basuthos, Tswanas ... An absurd way of thinking. What has all this led up to? To a very dangerous alienation of the people from each other, antagonism and indeed, a feeling of apartness, a situation making even the architects feel very uncomfortable. This is where we are today and this is where the means of Social Communications should begin to rebuild and heal the wounds.

If South Africa is serious about the future and if she believes that Social Communications really imply communication among men for the betterment of man, she is well advised to undertake a massive programme of emancipation of all the people.

For the success of such a programme South Africa must humbly admit her mistakes and from there, take off to the new future where Social Communications will help to build a new humanity. A humanity that is complete and seeks the full development of the whole personality in every man. This programme of emancipation necessitates the training of new types of communicators, men and women, black and white. They must be trained not only in mass media but also in development. Nevertheless, until South Africa knows what she wants to do about the political future of her people, let the black communicators work for the black people and the white communicators work for the white people.

If the white community is serious about a new future for Southern Africa, then it must sit down and examine its way of life because this is largely built on the black man's sweat and partial loss of humanity. Mass media must play a key role in this, for they alone are capable of reaching the masses of the people. Let's have an end to the Uncle Toms so that black communicators can really help to build the black community. So the

Government must support the retraining of these people with the vision of a new Southern Africa where distances of colour, origin and other non-essential accidents will not be a source of pride and superiority, but the beauty of the new humanity.

This implies that the white community must abolish the discrimination laws which so debase the black community. Time is not on the white community's side. The modern world and the awakened black community will not wait its pace of evolution.

The task of this convention is, I take it, to accelerate the process of rebuilding the black community, a noble task indeed. So I end with a conviction I put before you earlier on: Communication is an outpouring and sharing of goodness in community because goodness of its nature is communicable. We grow by sharing and we share in order to grow. When we understand this, South Africa will be characterised by her multiplicity of communities and their ability to live together, to form a tapestry of unity.

8 — BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE BLACK CHURCH:

An Historical-Theological Interpretation

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SINCE THE RISE of Black Power and its multifarious expressions in Black life, it is no longer possible to ignore the once invisible Black minority in American society. The Black rebellions of the 1960's mean that the invisible has become visible, rendering as an untruth the assumption that America is an embodiment of one community with a common destiny for all. New voices are making themselves heard, and they are calling into question the *American Dream* — that rhetoric of brotherhood, equality, "the land of the free and the home of the brave." Black people are forcing this society to deal with the *New Black Man*, the persons of colour who have no intentions of integrating into the whiteness of this culture but are moving with *power* in the direction of a new humanity as defined by the forces of liberation in the oppressed Black community. My purpose is to examine this new Black expression, seeking to analyse the effect of blackness on the Black church and placing special emphasis on the theological implications of Black presence in America.

I. Black Consciousness:

A Definition — Perhaps the most appropriate description of this new black mood is the concept of Black Consciousness, which is to say that Black people are aware of the meaning of their blackness in the context of whiteness. They know that their colour must be the defining characteristic of their movement in the world because it is the controlling symbol of White limitations placed on Black existence. Black consciousness is recognising that the social, economic, and political status of Black people in America is determined by White people's inability to deal with the presence of colour.

Black consciousness is the Black man's self-awareness. To know blackness is to know self; and to know self is to be cognisant of other selves in relation to self. It is knowing the criterion of acceptance and rejection in human encounters. To be conscious of his colour means that the Black person knows that his blackness is the reason for his oppression. For there is no other way to account for the White racist brutality against the Black community, except by focusing it on the colour of the victim.

To know *why* one is the victim of inhumanity is only the first step toward self-awareness. The next step is the *limit* that a man sets on the encroachments against his humanity. To know self is to define self, and this means nothing less than telling the enemy that he can go so far but no farther. It is impossible to be human without fighting against the forces that seek to destroy humanity. In the Black context, this means that the Black man knows that the knowledge of his being places him in conflict with those who refuse to recognise his humanity. Black consciousness, therefore, is not only the knowledge of the source of Black oppression; it is the Black man's willingness to fight against that source. Black consciousness is Black Power, the power of the oppressed Black man to liberate himself from White enslavement by making blackness the primary datum of his humanity. It is the power to be Black in spite of whiteness, the courage to affirm being in the midst of non-being.

Black Consciousness and Black History – To understand the present impact of Black Consciousness on Black life, it is necessary to proceed in the direction of a definition that does not side-step past history. To know self is to know the historical-self, and for Black people this involves the investigation of other Black selves who lived in a similar historical setting. Our present being is being defined by the being of our fathers, what they said and did in a White racist society. It is only through asking, "What were the responses of our fathers to White strictures placed on their existence?" that we can come to know what our responses ought to be to White people who insist on defining the boundary of Black being. Oppressors are inclined to blot out all past events that are detrimental to their existence as rulers, giving the impression that their definition of humanity is the only legitimate movement of beings in the world. Black consciousness means rejecting the White oppressor's definition of being by recreating the historical Black being that is an antithesis of everything White. It is recognising that our feelings about America are not new but stem from past Black rebels who prepared the world for our presence. In the words of Earl Ofari, "Black radicals such as W E B DuBois, William Trotter, Marcus Garvey, Malcolm X, and Stokely Carmichael simply made modifications on the foundations which the earlier Black radicals laid."¹ The earlier Black radicals were Black people who could not reconcile themselves to slavery, and thus chose to risk death rather than accept the European definition of Man. Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey, and Gabriel Prosser are prominent examples. They put into practice Martin Delaney's comment "Every people should be the originators of their own designs, the projectors of their own schemes, and creators of the events that lead to their destiny – in the consummation of their desires."²

Black consciousness did not come into being with Stokely Carmichael and his articulation of Black Power in the spring of 1966. It began with the slave ships, the auction blocks, the insurrections. It began when White people decided that Blacks and their children should be slaves for the duration of their lives. It is not possible to enslave a people because of their blackness and expect them not to be conscious of colour.

Black Consciousness, however, is more than colour consciousness; it is using one's colour as a means of liberation. This is the meaning of every Black attempt to say yes to what Whites regard as evil and no to their definition of good. It is not enough to thank God for making us men, but as Delaney would say, we must thank him for making us Black men. This is what Black consciousness means as defined by the Black historical context.

2. Black Theology and Black Consciousness

What does Black consciousness have to do with theology? This question forces us to consider the relationship between Black self-identity and the Biblical faith. It is not surprising that White American theology has not inquired into this relationship since it has pursued the theological task from the perspective of White enslavers. White religious thinkers seem to have been blind to the theological significance of Black presence in America. But if we intend to speak about God and his involvement in world history and particularly in America, the Black experience is an indispensable symbol for discerning divine activity.

God and Liberation — The theological perspective that defines God as unquestionably identified with the liberation of the oppressed from earthly bondage arises out of the Biblical view of divine revelation. According to the Bible, the knowledge of God is not mystical communion nor abstract rational thought, rather, it is recognising through faith divine activity in human history. The Biblical God is the God who is involved in the historical process for the purpose of human liberation, and to know him is to know what he is doing in historical events as they are related to the liberation of the oppressed. To know God is to *encounter* him in the historical liberation process as experienced in the community of the oppressed.

In the Bible, revelation, history and faith are bound together. Revelation refers to God's self-disclosure; history is the arena of divine revelation, and faith is the perspective that enables the community to discern divine activity. To know God, then, is to have faith in him. Faith is the divine-human encounter in the historical situation of oppression, wherein the enslaved community recognises that its deliverance from bondage is the divine himself at work in history. To know God is to know the *actuality* of oppression and the *certainly* of liberation.

In the Old Testament, the liberation-theme stands at the center of the Hebrew view of God. Throughout Israelite history, God is known as he who acts in history for the purpose of Israel's liberation from oppression. This is the meaning of the Exodus from Egypt, the Covenant of Sinai, the Conquest and settlement of Palestine, the United Kingdom and its division, the rise of the great prophets and the second exodus from Babylon. And this is also why salvation in the Old Testament basically refers to "victory in battle" (I Sam. 14:45). "He who needs salvation is one who has been threatened or oppressed, and his salvation consists in deliverance from danger and tyranny or rescue from imminent peril (I Sam. 4:3, 7-8, 9:16). To save another is to communicate to him one's prevailing strength (Job 26:2), to give him the power to maintain the necessary strength."¹ Israel's Saviour is God himself whose sovereign rule is guiding the course of human history, liberating the oppressed from the oppressors.

The liberation-theme in the New Testament is present in the appearance of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate One who takes upon himself the oppressed condition so that all men may be what God created them to be. He is the Liberator par excellence who reveals not only who God is and what he is doing, but who we are and what we must do about human oppression. It is not possible to encounter this man and still remain content with human captivity. That is why Paul says, "For freedom Christ has set us free" (Gal. 5:1). The free man is the man who rebels against false authorities by reducing them to their proper status. The Christian Gospel is the good news of the liberation of the oppressed from earthly bondage.

Black Consciousness and the Christian Gospel — If the Gospel of Christ is pre-eminently the gospel of the liberation of the oppressed, then the theological assessment of divine presence in America must begin with the Black condition as its point of departure. It is only through an analysis of God as he is revealed in the struggle for Black liberation that we can come to know the God who made himself known through Jesus Christ. Any other knowledge of God is at best irrelevant and at worst blasphemy.

The presence of Black people in America then is the symbolic presence of God and his righteousness for *all* the oppressed of the land. To do theology is to take on the radical Black perspective wherein all religious and non-religious thought forms are redefined in the light of the liberation of the oppressed. Elsewhere, I have called this *Black Theology*.¹

What is Black Theology? Black Theology is that theology that arises out of the need to articulate the significance of Black presence in a White hostile world. It is Black people reflecting religiously on the Black experience, attempting to redefine the relevance of the Christian Gospel for their lives. It is a mood, a feeling that grips the soul of a people when they realise that

except perhaps a few preachers who use it to con oppressed people out of the little money they have. This critique of the Black Church is not for the purpose of writing off its significance in this new age of the emerging Black revolution. Some "ultra Blacks" discard the Black church, but I remind them that there can be no revolution without the masses, and the Black masses are in the churches. I do not believe that slavery is meant for man, and given the proper (and I am not sure what this would be, but we Blacks are working on it) ideological frame of reference and political circumstances, short of suicide, all enslaved people will take what belongs to them. The purpose of the church is to provide the religious dimension inherent in all struggles of freedom. Therefore, Black Theology's critique of the post-Civil war Black church is not a put-down but a facing of reality, in order that it may move in the direction laid down by the fathers.

The appearance of Garvey in the 20's, Black Muslims in the 30's Powell in the 40's, King in the 50's and Malcolm X in the 60's served as a reminder to the Black Church what its role in the society ought to be. Any church that fails to focus on Black liberation as the sole reason for its existence has denied the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and aligned itself with the anti-Christ. It is significant that Black people in White denominations are realising this, and Black people in so-called Black churches are beginning to make their leaders shape-up or cut-out. Both groups are making decisions about the world, about people, their desires and their needs, and they are determined to reshape existing institutions along the lines of Black liberation or destroy them.

The traditional Black churches are especially nervous at this point. They had thought of themselves as always being Black. How could we ever forget that in America? But what the Black Church is being made to realise is that blackness has new content, and it involves more than skin colour. It means sharing in the condition of those who are oppressed, and participating in their liberation. Unless the Black Church redefines its present existence in the light of the fathers who fought risking death to end slavery, the judgement of God will descend upon it in the persons of those who affirm with Brother Eldridge Cleaver: "We shall have our manhood. We shall have it or the earth will be levelled by our attempts to gain it."

NOTES:

- 1 "The roots of Black Radicalism", *Negro Digest* Johnson Publishing Co., Chicago August 1969 p 18
- 2 Quoted in *ibid* p 21
- 3 F. J. Taylor "Slave" in Alan Richardson (ed.), *A Theological Word Book of the Bible* (New York: MacMillan 1960) p 219
- 4 See my *Black Theology and Black Power* (New York: Seabury Press, 1969)
- 5 *Ibid.* p 117
- 6 Quoted in B.I. Mass, *The Negro's God* (New York: Atheneum 1968) p 42

DECLARATION

Section A

We, the Black people of South Africa, meeting at the Black Renaissance Convention in December 1974, declare that:

- (i) We condemn and so reject separate development policy and all its institutions.
- (ii) We reject all forms of racism and discrimination.

Section B

We dedicate ourselves towards striving for.

- (i) A totally united and democratic South Africa, free from all forms of oppression and exploitation.
- (ii) A society in which all people participate fully in the Government of the country through the medium of one man one vote.
- (iii) A society in which there is an equitable distribution of wealth.
- (iv) An anti-racist society.

Section C

We call upon our people and all their organizations to organise their efforts towards securing the release of all political prisoners, detainees and banned people.

Section D

RESOLUTIONS

This Convention:

1. Declares that legalised racism in South Africa is a threat to world peace and therefore calls upon all the countries of the world to withdraw all cultural, educational, economic, manpower and military support to the existing racist institutions
2. Expresses its shock and dismay at the expropriation of the Federal Theological Seminary in Alice and calls upon the Black Community to fight for the continued survival of this institution.
3. Acknowledges that it is not the first to convene a meeting of Black people and it states firmly that it wishes to continue with the efforts that have taken place in the past.

This Convention noting that

- (i) The great majority of Black people are workers;

- (ii) besides being discriminated against, the workers also suffer the most blatant forms of exploitation;
- (iii) the wage that workers receive is far below the bread-line and they are therefore frustrated in the attempt to use their bargaining power, therefore resolves that:
 - (a) the Government immediately recognise African Trade Unions;
 - (b) there is need for workers to organise themselves into trade unions free from Government interference.

One of the most dramatic highlights of the Convention was the vehement condemnation of the policy of separate development, its exponents and institutions. By an overwhelming vote, the delegates prevented a prominent homeland leader from addressing the Conference. This was nothing personal, but merely a symbolic gesture to show how totally they abhorred apartheid.

Black Renaissance Convention revealed some non-antagonistic contradictions, which is a healthy sign of a living community. The Black Renaissance Convention achieved the following results:

1. The Black Renaissance Convention was a nation-wide conference which consisted of many disparate ideologies and organisations and managed to get a consensus from the 300-odd delegates. Not a mean feat.
2. The highlight of the Convention was the passing of the Declaration and Resolutions.
3. Although Black organisations may differ about strategy and method, the Convention demonstrated beyond doubt that Black people are unanimous with regard to ultimate objectives. Blacks demand their FREEDOM NOW! They want their land; they want political and economic powers; and they want to be masters of their own destiny. Admittedly, there will always be a debate about the type of the hoped-for new society. Some will settle for reformism whilst others will stop at nothing short of a complete and radical change of the system.
4. Finally, the Convention provided a long-needed public platform whereon Black people could ventilate their grievances in an atmosphere of freedom. Even disagreements which do not lead to overnight solidarity are useful. They clarify positions and focus attention on fundamental issues.

Commenting on the outcome of the Black Renaissance Convention Mrs Fatima Meer had this to say: (*Sunday Tribune*, December 22, 1974):

“The importance of the Black Renaissance Convention does not lie in the agreements that were aired, but in the declaration that emerged

from it. It can never be over-emphasised that this was the first time in years that Blacks from throughout the country, all of whom held widely divergent views, came together to talk.

A weekend to iron out differences was much too short. White South Africans are after all, in continuous session in Parliament.

Important differences in strategy remain, but the Convention made it clear that all the delegates from church, student, academic, or sport bodies were unanimous in their abhorrence of apartheid, separate development, homelands, South African Indian Council and Coloured Representative Council”.

The *Star*, a very influential English newspaper, featured the Black Renaissance Convention prominently. In its leader, the *Star* observed:

“Black voices must be heard. The Day of the Covenant is traditionally one of White rhetoric, but this time there were some coincidental new voices which also deserve the closest attention. They come from the Black Renaissance Convention, organised by Black theologians and broadly related to themes of “Black Consciousness”. At the close of their discussions the 300-odd delegates condemned separate development and racial discrimination, called for an equal distribution of South Africa’s wealth and a non-racial society with one man one vote.

Predictable stuff? Perhaps — but it is important to note whence it comes. By and large these were neither angry young students (they tried to disrupt the meeting) nor Bantustan leaders (one of whom was prevented from speaking)

They were, if you like, a middle stratum of Black urban intellectuals. And yet they came out with a set of demands which might sound, in the eyes of most Whites, impossibly extreme.

These are the demands born of frustration and the sheer inadequacy of existing political institutions for Blacks. If the current phrases about equal citizenship mean any thing at all, White South Africa must take note of this rising mood among moderate Blacks and start doing something now, towards meeting it”

The Black Renaissance Action Committee wishes to thank all those without whose support, co-operation and encouragement the Conference would not have been so successful. Our special gratitude goes to the chairpersons, the secretarial and typing staff. Their efficiency and devotion to duty were most inspiring. We cannot end this introduction without a word of thanks to the Black Community, whose positive response went beyond the expectations of the organisers of that never-to-be-forgotten Black Renaissance Convention.

Dedicated to all our Black heroes, living and the dead