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TALK



DEATHS IN SOUTH WEST AFRICA

(Centre). The funeral of African victims of police shooting in Windhoek Location. (Left) The aged Chieg Hosea Kutako. (Right) A Herero woman mourns.

SOUTH WEST AFRICA: THE 14th YEAR

The Treason Trial and the Press

THE S.A. FOUNDATION: PURSE STRINGS BEFORE PRINCIPLES

All-Africa Trade Union

Unity: The New Federation

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THE S.A. FOUNDATION:

The South African Federation, established to whitewash the black deeds of the Nationalists so as to speed up the inflow of capital into the Union, has a rotten case but influential and powerful financial interests ready to try to argue it.

Between them the 25 Trustees of the Foundation control over 400 industrial, finance and mining companies. A list of their directorships and company chairmanships — and in some cases interlocking financial interests — makes illuminating reading.

Inevitably the Foundation is having effect in a number of fields: on the press, on coalition talk and prospects; and on the future of the Opposition, especially the Progressive Party.

The main aim of the Foundation is to try to build a new image of South Africa under the Nationalists. Moving spirit in the new body is Sir Francis de Guingand who has made frank and outspoken speeches on this aim as far back as June 1957, 30 months before the Foundation proper was launched.

"... I have been infuriated by biased and uninformed criticism... I have always done my best in conversation and speeches to explain our peculiar and unique problems... to try to remove misconceptions." "I was utterly shocked (after a visit to Great Britain) "by the attitude to be found in all quarters towards South Africa. The situation has reached a stage when something must be done. Official statements, Information Office publications and other such means can achieve little at this juncture."

So, enter the Foundation. It will try to play down the ugliness and the police terror, the conflicts and the tensions. It must inspire likely investors with confidence that their money is safe, and that conditions are not as bad as South Africa's critics would make out. It must argue that anti-Nationalists, who earn quick sympathy abroad as the Boycott South Africa Movement shows, have not a genuine case, but are "agitators" and "trouble-makers."

First: The Press

The press, and the local press first, is clearly one of the first spheres of operation of the Foundation. Local papers are read overseas, foreign correspondents lean heavily on the local press for their sources and news coverage, and as long as the Opposition press features Nationalist excesses, let alone being outspoken about them, this news is certain to trickle abroad.

The signs are, indeed, that the Foundation is clearing the decks for an undercover but steady onslaught on the press, with the aim of making the press handmaiden to the new cause of White Supremacy patriotism: "We are misrepresented abroad. All must unite to counter that."

The Foundation was formed over a fairly long period of time, and there is no doubt that the leading editors in the country knew at least six months ago that it was in the process of formation, but they curbed their twitching news noses and kept mum till the official communiques were released.

Editors and news editors are in no doubt that they will be handed new sets of instructions on news handling, if not delivered in one batch, then enforced over a period of time.

From the press comment on the Foundation it is plain that this body is one of the few institutions in the Union that the South African press — with very few exceptions — will not criticise. With the exception of the papers serving the Congress movement, CONTACT (close to the Liberal Party), and the Federal Party (which called the Foundation "the great betrayal that confirmed suspicion that the United Party was seeking to come to terms with the Nats and fuse with them"), the press has shouted loud hurrahs, with only a few polite murmurs here and there that the Foundation's public relations job will not be done as easily as all that.

The Foundation clearly chose its top 25 sponsors with a keen eye on the press. Among the 25 are:

Mr. G. H. R. Edmunds, chairman of S.A. Associated Newspapers (which owns the Sunday Times, the Rand Daily Mail, the Cape Times, the Friend, and took over the Evening Post of Port Elizabeth in the latter part of last year).

Mr. Adrian Berrill, chairman of the Central News Agency, largest publication distribution centre in the country. Also director of the Bantu News Agency.

Mr. Clive S. Corder, director of the Syfrets Trust, a finance house with wide influence and connections with S.A. Associated Newspapers.

Col. E. O'Connell Maggs, director of the Bantu Press.

Nationalist press interests are well-represented, naturally, though the Nationalist press needs little pushing by the Foundation. Dr. Geyer was once Berlin correspondent of Die Burger, and in 1924 became its editor, and in 1945 editor-in-chief of the Nasionale Pers. He is today still a director of the latter. Nationalist financier Dr. M. S. Louw numbers a directorship of

Pursestrings Before Principles

Dagbreek Pers among his long list of companies. Tobacco king Mr. A. E. Rupert is a director of Dagbreek Pers.

A new battle for the freedom of the press and the integrity of journalists must begin as editors try to decide how far they can go in doing the work of the Foundation, which will in turn do the work of the Nationalists. How many editors will withstand the new winds blowing from the direction of the Foundation? It has been an old Nationalist argument that South Africa has a bad name not because of her record but because the press has documented it. Inevitably this must become a Foundation stock-in-trade. How many publications will buckle under the argument that South Africa's interests are those of her mining and finance magnates, and that what is good for business and investment must be good for South Africa as a whole, even those millions languishing under the rule of the Nationalists?

Axe in Chamois Leather

Already there has been a suspicious similarity in the anti-boycott arguments adduced by South African papers. The boycott can only harm the African and Coloured people, is the cry used (by people who have never before shown the least twitch of sympathy for the plight of the Non-White people. This argument has made its appearance in too many editorial columns to avoid the impression that there has been some concerted pressure group at work on editors and leader writers here.

One of the first jobs the Foundation tackled was the appointment of a press and news man as head of its team of public relations officials. Three members of the team will sell South Africa abroad, in the United States, in Britain and Europe, and on the continent of Africa. Director of the team is to be Mr. A. M. Van Schoor, head of the South African Broadcasting Corporation News Department who has been seconded to the Foundation for a year — like a transfer from one government department to another!

Mr. Van Schoor who has been a working journalist on the staffs of the Burger, the Vaderland, Fleur and Huisgenoot, did spare time work for the Foundation for some months prior to its formation. This is yet another pointer to the suspicion that the government itself and the State Information Office, headed by Mr. Plet Meiring, had more

than a little to do with the early shapings of this body.

The State Information Office outpourings are distrusted because the Office grinds an ugly axe for the Nationalist Government. The Foundation will grind away at much the same thing, but the axe will be concealed in chamois leather. The Nationalists could not have wished for any better service than the one the Foundation offers.

Nationalist God-Fathers

Nationalist sponsors form a minority among the Foundation's twenty-five but its policies will clearly be dominated by them and their experience in trying to sell the Union abroad.

Mr. Charles Te Water was one of the earliest members of the Nationalist Party, was Union High Commissioner in London in 1929, and S.A.'s representative at the League of Nations. In 1948 when the Nationalists came to power he was appointed the Union's first Ambassador-at-Large to counter misrepresentation about the government's aims. He resigned as High Commissioner when the Union declared war on Germany in 1939.

Dr. William Nicol was a DRC Minister for 35 years and Transvaal administrator for ten years.

Dr. A. L. Geyer, close friend and confidant of Dr. Malan, was Union High Commissioner in London in 1950 and has always had the inner confidences of his party.

Dr. M. S. Louw is the recognised leader of Nationalist finance and business opinion, director of a good two dozen finance, mining and other companies.

Mr. A. E. Rupert, Dr. F. J. du Toit; Dr. F. Meyer (chairman of ISCOR) and Dr. M. H. de Kock (governor of the S.A. Reserve Bank) are four other influential Nationalists among the Foundation's trustees.

A Business Coalition

This strong merger of Nationalist and Opposition captains of finance and industry must inevitably cause an upsurge of coalition hopes in certain circles, even though the Prime Minister's announcement of a Referendum on the Republic takes coalition off the agenda for some time to come. The right wing of the United Party has revived hopes of coalition periodically as its chances of winning elections have become steadily gloomier. These overtures have been re-

peatedly rebuffed by the Nationalists for Dr. Verwoerd's government has been strong enough not to need coalition.

But a toenadering in the business field which undertakes to sell the Union abroad non-politically, and in so doing ignore the political crimes of the Nationalists, must delight Dr. Verwoerd's Cabinet.

Opposition Embarrassed

Both the United Party and the Progressives must be embarrassed by this Foundation.

The United Party sees some of its wealthiest backers pledged to promote international understanding of the "South African way of life," but a South African way of life a la Dr. Verwoerd. What price opposition, however half-hearted, in Parliament now, when every fight fought by the United Party has been damned by the Nationalists as un-South African . . . ?

After his sharp differences with De Villiers Graaff, Mr. Harry Oppenheimer financed the breakaway of the Progressives from the United Party, perhaps in the hope that a genuine Opposition in Parliament might curb the Nationalists.

Unfortunately for the Progressives the new party had hardly been born when Mr. Oppenheimer became a Foundation trustee, in this very act helping to create an atmosphere highly unfavourable for the flourishing of the Progressive Party.

This Party was established because the Opposition to the Nationalists has been too feeble. Yet the Foundation will tell the world that South Africa does not deserve her bad name, and that the Nationalist Government is not as bad as it seems. Then why worry about a strong Opposition?

Oppenheimer's one new baby seems to have half strangled the other at birth.

The dilemma of businessmen who have traditionally been supporters of the Opposition but are now Foundation sponsors is: How do you attack the government at home, and yet defend it abroad?

"My country right or wrong" might be a fine slogan for businessmen but it removes the ground from under the feet of the White Opposition groups. Have the Nationalists at last succeeded in forging this false South African patriotism that puts purse-strings before principles?

South West Africa: The 14th Year

"Thirteen years is a long period indeed. But my people are still confident and they are still entertaining hope that the United Nations will help them. But if they are let down, the next question they will ask themselves will naturally be,

what are we going to do now . . . ? Patience and good faith are not limitless and once they disappear the situation may become irrevocably critical." P. J. Kozonguizi, before the UNO Committee on South West Africa, May, 1959.

For thirteen years there has stood on the agenda of the United Nations Organisation the item: 'Question of South West Africa.' Through the years, delegates to the UN have canvassed the question back and forth in all its aspects, — the legal questions of whether the UN inherits the mandates of the old League of Nations; the formal questions of whether South Africa is required by mandate to submit reports on her administration; the fanciful questions of whether the country can be partitioned between South Africa and the UN; the constitutional questions of whether the UN can refer its dispute to the World Court — all these and many others have been chewed over till they are now old bones.

None of these questions really strike at the heart of the matter as it affects the people of South West Africa themselves. For them the issue at stake in the whole UN dispute with South Africa is the simple issue of their own emergence from subject status to independent nationhood. This is the essence of the matter, whether the UN sees it that way or not. Every other country in Africa which was a League of Nations Mandated territory during the second world war is now either already independent, or the date for its independence has been fixed and progress towards that date is being supervised by the UN. This is what the UN trusteeship has meant elsewhere. This is what has inspired the people of South West to carry on the fight for that trusteeship for thirteen years, in the face of tremendous opposition from the South African authorities.

Where Are They Getting?

It would be easy to dismiss these thirteen years of UN deliberations as completely ineffectual. On the surface, perhaps, UN debate has achieved nothing. South African governments, United Party and Nationalist, have proceeded as they like to draw South West Africa closer and more fully into the oppressive, restrictive and poverty-bound framework of the Union. After thirteen years, what is left of the UN's efforts? An advisory opinion from the World Court that South Africa should submit reports on its mandate to the UN (1950);

a report of a sub-committee describing the detailed tragedy which South African administration has created for the African inhabitants; a decision to persevere in its attempts to reach an agreement with the South African government. That is almost all the minute books will show.

By L. BERNSTEIN

But those thirteen years have made great changes in South West Africa — in the minds and outlook of the African people if not in the conditions of their daily lives. Thirteen years ago there were few bold enough to believe that their independence and nationhood was possible in their own lifetimes. Today, clearly, there are many, and their numbers grow rapidly. Thirteen years ago there were a few lone voices speaking out at UN in the name of the African inhabitants, but yet far ahead of their people in their political views. Today those few petitioners and spokesmen at UN, are leaders of public opinion in South West itself, and the accredited and recognised voice of the masses of their country. For these changes, UNO can claim the credit.

If South West Africa stands closer to independence and nationhood now than it did then, it is because the UN has inspired the people with hope and confidence in the future, shown them that they do not stand friendless and alone against the overwhelming strength of South African reaction.

The Point of Crisis

Can UN now take the matter further more effectively than it has? It seems that, after thirteen years, a crisis point has been reached. Every attempt at UN action has proved ineffectual. Every attempt to soften the hearts of the South African government has failed. There are now, it seems, only two ways ahead. Either UN proceeds to drastic action — sanctions against South Africa perhaps; or it seeks a face-saving formula whereby the honour and prestige of UN will be preserved, while the fact of South African control of the territory remains unimpaired. A realisation that this crisis point has been reached seems to have

been present at the recent UN session in New York.

"Almost as soon as debate opened this year it was apparent that the atmosphere had subtly changed," writes one correspondent. For the first time in many years, the South African government, represented by Mr. Eric Louw took part in the debate, breaking a long boycott of the debates on South West. Partly, no doubt, this sudden change was inspired by the fear that UN might this year come forth with a resolution "with teeth." But partly it was inspired by the feeling that a gesture of reasonableness and co-operation by the Union Government might, at this stage, forestall or postpone UN's shifting from pleas to drastic action."

Equally significant was the shift of India's delegate, Mr. Krishna Menon, from his former position. For thirteen years India has been amongst the most outspoken of critics of the South African government, and amongst the first to call for strong UN action. This year, faced with a resolution sponsored by the African States together with Pakistan and the Phillipines, which encouraged former members of the League of Nations to take legal action against South Africa in the International Court, India's delegate faltered. He pleaded for UN to accept only the other resolution, sponsored by India and twenty-three others, which once again asked South Africa to respect the mandate, and to negotiate with UN to place the territory under UN trusteeship. Mr. Menon pleaded for Mr. Louw's hand of "co-operation" to be taken seriously.

Equally new was the attitude of the United States whose delegates in the past ". . . pliously reiterated its position against sin in general and segregation in particular, and then abstained on resolutions expressing more than the gentlest of disapproval", as one reporter phrases it. This year the United States supported both resolutions. For them, too, this session marked the end of a thirteen-year tradition. In this new atmosphere the Union delegate took the new policy of appeasement further. The Union government, he promised, would take part in debates again next year; it would make information about South West Africa available to the UN; it would enter

PETITIONERS AT LAKE SUCCESS

For many years the Rev. Michael Scott was the only petitioner at the United Nations for the people of South West Africa. (Though he was prevented by South Africa from entering the Union or South West).

into discussions with "an appropriate UN ad hoc body that may be appointed after prior consultation with the Union government." Too little, and too late. In the end both resolutions were adopted, India — finally — voting for both.

From New York to Windhoek

And so we come to the fourteenth year. The UN crisis does not abate; it grows sharper. Before the year is out, further great parts of the African continent, formerly conquered colonies, formerly "trustees", will be independent, giving new spurs to the claims of the South West people. Steadily the centre of the struggle around the future of South West has been shifting from the UN to the territory itself. Steadily the centre has shifted from the well-meaning delegates of other countries to the spokesmen of South West Africa themselves — to Mburumba Kerina and Jariretundu Kozonguizi, petitioners from South West; to Chief Hosea Kutako of the Herero tribe, on whose behalf Reverend Michael Scott has spoken so long and so forcefully; to Hans Beukes, and others. Steadily, in South West Africa, the people have begun to organise their strength, to take up for themselves the fight which opened at Lake Success thirteen years ago.

It would be too much to claim that all this results from the work of UN. That has played a great part. But as the centre of the fight for South West's future shifts to the people themselves, new factors come into play. South West Africa moves towards the future under the inspiration of the world-wide wind of liberation which blows so fiercely through the old colonial world. It moves under the inspiration of the Pan-African Peoples Conference at Accra, and under the inspiration of the gathering national liberation alliance of the Union of South Africa itself. Already, in the violent clash at Windhoek, the people of South West have wrested the centre of world attention from the UN Committee to themselves, and shown that inside the territory too, the conflict of the South African government versus the people moves towards a crisis.

This is the beginning of the fourteenth year. Who can dare say where it will end?

In 1956 Scott was joined at U.N. by a young Herero, MBURUMBA KERINA, who had managed to get a passport to study in the United States. He was authorised by his people to speak for them at the United Nations.

The world body several times asked that certain South West Africans be allowed to leave their country to testify at Lake Success. Passports were invariably refused by South Africa.

In 1957 one was denied a Herero, FANUEL JARIRETUNDU KOZONGUIZI (who is the only South West African other than KERINA to have a university degree.) In 1959, however, KOZONGUIZI managed to leave South West and to make his way to the United Nations where he testified before the Committee on South West.

At the end-1959 session these two young Africans were joined by a third petitioner direct from South West, HANS BEUKES the young student refused a passport to take up a scholarship in Oslo, but who was smuggled abroad nevertheless.

STOWAWAY FROM SOUTH WEST

LEONARD GEBLIEL, a 27 year old contract labourer from South West Africa tried to represent the Ovambo people at U.N. He stowed away in a ship to the United States, and this statement was taken from him in the U.S. Immigration detention headquarters in November 1959.

I went to school with Toivo* at St. Mary's. I informed Toivo about my coming. He thought it was an excellent idea to have a member of the Ovamboland Peoples Organisation out of the country. First I worked in Ochiwarongo as a contract labourer. Then I went back to Ovamboland. Then I went to Omaruru from there and proceeded to Swakopmund and from there to Walvis Bay. I worked there about eight years in the hotels.

I came by myself to the harbour. I concealed myself in the cargo hold in the boat (of the Lykes Brothers Steamship Company). I remained inside there for six days and came out on the sixth day through the ventilation hole. When they saw me, they asked me where I came from. I told them. They kept me in a small cabin and tied my arms to a pole. During the daytime they allowed me to join the crew in painting the boat. At night and on Sunday I had to remain tied to the pole.

When we arrived in New Orleans they handed me over to other police (apparently the Danners Marine Guard Service). Those transferred me to a boat bound for Cape Town. I don't remember how many days I was there because they used to keep me tied on my bed. One day when the police left my cabin I took my belt and tied it to the ceiling of my cabin. I tied it around my

neck. One of the police came and rescued me. During that time I was on a hunger strike and they decided to send me (on October 20th) to a hospital in the city (Galveston, Texas).

The boat people told me that they were taking me back to Walvis Bay. I went on a second hunger strike. Then they decided to handcuff me on my legs and arms. I used to sleep handcuffed on my legs and arms. After that the immigration men informed me that they were taking me to New York on my way back to South Africa.

I couldn't flee because I didn't have the opportunity. I was always tied or in the handcuffs, but I did try to commit suicide rather than go back to South West Africa. I decided to commit suicide because I know that once I return to South West Africa I would be placed in prison indefinitely. If I were ever released, I would be taken back to Ovamboland never to come out again. Going back to Ovamboland is just like declaring yourself dead alive because there is no employment. You cannot get money to buy food or clothes. You are not allowed to meet with those who return from their contract labours, nor are you allowed to meet with anyone in a group of three. If you are seen in a group of three or four young men, you can be arrested by the Native Commissioner.

At the present time what I can say about South West Africa is this. It must be freed from the South Africans to make it a country worth living in for both white and black. My own brothers are as if they are in chains in South West Africa.

* A leader of the Ovamboland people who has been approved as a petitioner by the United Nations but who has never been permitted by the Union of South Africa to come to New York City to testify.

BACKWARDS TO BANTUSTANS

by G. MBEKI

Under the 'Bantustan' policy the Nationalist Government aims to force more and more Africans back into the over-populated Reserves.

How?

Africans are permitted to own only 12½ per cent of the country's land. The Government is not only blocking their acquisition of new released areas, but is reducing some of the present reserves by group areas proclamations like those affecting Peddie, Fort Beaufort, Victoria East, East London and Queenstown.

Economic conditions in the reserves have worsened and productivity has declined.

The Tomlinson Commission found that "nearly one-fifth of children born alive die before they reach their first birthday . . ." Average African life expectation is 36.4 years.

Life in the Reserves is one of dismal poverty.

What sort of 'development' scheme have the Nationalists in mind? It is based on four main pillars.

ONE: the reduction of the number of people dependent for their livelihood on small scale farming, and the creation of 'land barons'.

TWO: the fostering of a middle class of professional men and traders.

THREE: the creation of a ruling aristocracy of hireling chiefs.

FOUR: the removal from the land of all those who have no arable allotments, and their placing in settlements for the landless and the dispossessed.

'From A Few Small Fish . . .'

It has happened before, after all. From a few small fish four thousand people ate and were filled, and the remains still filled seven baskets. There is no need for more land, argue the Nationalists. All that is necessary is that the reserves should support an increased population.

The Nationalists propose to start by a revision of the practices governing the holding of arable land. According to the Tomlinson Commission Report an African family in the Reserves "requires, on the average, 52.5 morgen of land to make a gross annual income of £70. (In contrast it is estimated that 500 morgen is the minimum to enable a European to engage in grain production.) On the basis of this calculation the Reserves could carry about half of their present number.

So already the Nationalist Government has issued instructions that married men who have no arable allotments should not be granted residential sites in the farming areas of the reserves. In addition men who own stock and have no arable allotments are being denied opportunities to rear and graze stock on the communal pasturage.

The Government goes further and dispossesses some peasants of the arable allotments they hold if they have not adequate means to work the land. Their allotments are turned over to those who have sufficient means to work them. In this way the Government is hopeful that in time it will have developed a class of small scale farmers who will concentrate on farming. In time it expects to make a show piece of this class. This will be the answer to anyone who wants to know what progress apartheid has contributed in the development of the reserves.

The more enlightened and the comparatively well-to-do have not been slow

to see their chances of acquiring more land. And the Government has anticipated this human weakness for acquisition by demanding maximum collaboration from them, as it makes promises of increased crop yields from extensive lands (not yet obtained), and the creation of a closed market for the disposal of their farm products.

The Chiefs

The Chiefs, without whose participation the apartheid plan cannot work, are conscious of the importance of their role. And one of the first moves to get from the Government more than mere promises of "vast powers", has been to strive to get tangible material gains. A resolution taken at the 1958 session of the Transkei Territorial Authority reads thus:

"That a special extra allocation of arable land be made to each chief and headman, the better to enable him to provide hospitality which is expected from him by persons attending meetings called at his kraal for administrative purposes."

When the resolution was referred to a Select Committee it was amended so that finally it read as follows:—

"That a special extra allocation of arable land be made to each chief and headman in stabilised or reclaimed areas as a consideration for the additional responsibility and duties devolving upon them."

It will be observed how the Select Committee, which works under the guidance of a Native Commissioner, wants to make the granting of additional land dependent on the fulfilment of certain conditions. The main condition is that a chief or headman can only qualify for an extra allocation of arable land if he has seen to it that the residents of his location have accepted the soil reclamation measures.

The Government will clearly try to de-

fraud people with claims of economic progress. Any increase in output shown for the Reserves will be an increase per head of a considerably reduced population. As for the land barons who benefit from the scheme, these people, the Government calculates, will ally themselves with it to defend interests acquired as a privilege from a "benevolent" Government.

Settlements for the Landless

What is to happen to the millions of people who, according to this arrangement, are to be thrown out of the farming areas in the reserves? And what of the people the Government endorses out of the urban areas under influx control measures?

The Nationalists have announced with a fanfare of trumpets that the Government has earmarked certain sites for rural townships inside the reserves. The inhabitants of these townships will depend entirely on the earnings of the menfolk who are to work in the industries set up on the borders of the reserves.

In the original 1944 plan which was set out in a Government White Paper called — "The New Era" — the settlements were to be established near afforestation schemes to provide these with labour, and at convenient spots along railway lines to facilitate transport of labour to the mines and other enterprises which were to depend on this highly mobile labour. The chief weakness in these Smuts Government plans was that they did not offer any group of Africans a stake in the plans so that they would be actively interested in their development.

The Nationalist Government has dressed up this plan differently. It refers to these settlements as townships in which will reside workers who will supply the labour requirements of the small indus-

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tries to be established by the middle class, and of the industries on the borders of the reserves. Further, the Government will grant trading sites to Africans. Sinisterly though, a condition of the occupation rights will be that if a trader or his employee should be found to be associated with anti-Government political organisations, the trader will forfeit his right of occupation.

In its report the Tomlinson Commission estimates that an almost inexhaustible supply of labour will be available when these settlements have been set up to absorb the thousands of dispossessed peasants. To give an idea of the large numbers of people the Nationalist Government plans to remove we may cite a few instances. It is expected that mass removals will take place as follows:

| Area | Number of families |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Transkei | 113,000 |
| Olifants—Blyde River | 34,000 |
| Letaba | 24,800 |

In the Ciskei nearly a quarter million people may be displaced and dumped in these settlements after the Group Areas proposals for the area have been carried out.

Industries in the Reserves

The Nationalists say they are going to set up industries in the Reserves.

Granted that it would be in the interests of the landless and the dispossessed to have industries there, what would be the point in the Nationalist Government carrying out development schemes aimed at undermining the very foundations of the apartheid policy?

It is sufficient to study the nature of the industries proposed for the Reserves to realise how fraudulent the Government development schemes are. In all their pronouncements both Cabinet Ministers and their honey birds — the BAD officials — have been very careful to qualify their references to industrial development in the reserves. It is "small industries which the Bantu can manage themselves."

The type of industry the Nationalist Government envisages can be gauged from the raw materials they encouraged to be grown as a basis for this industrial development.

The Tomlinson Commission which embarked on an exhaustive study of the industrial potentialities of the reserves mentions forestry products, fruit and vegetable products, and fibre crops such as sisal as the main sources of raw materials. What industry can be established but the manufacture of cheap doors, household furniture and coffins of a quality within reach of the destitute survivors of those who die in poverty? Light rope industries for the processing of fibre from sisal are mentioned frequently by Government spokesmen. Rope not only to tether, but so that many who find life in the Bantustans intolerable, may hang themselves?

(Continued on page 16)

The Treason Trial, now in its fourth year is not only South Africa's marathon political trial, but also one of its most long-drawn-out news stories. How is the trial seen through the eyes of the press, English and Afrikaans? Remember that newspapers may not 'slant' reports of court proceedings, but how does the handling of the trial by the various dailies compare? What different impressions of the trial have been made on the minds of the readers of 'Die Transvaler', 'Die Vaderland', The 'Star' and 'The Cape Times'?

The trial proper (not counting the preparatory examination which continued for the greater part of thirteen months) lasted from August 1958 to the end of last year, with court adjournments from time to time as the legal argument on the indictment continued . . . and has again been resumed this month. For most of the time the case was kept in the public eye by the dailies of both languages — until Professor Murray, the Crown's expert witness, took the stand. In the days before the Professor gave evidence the trial got rather routine-sounding reports of 4 to 8 inches, 'news' developments in the trial earned 12 to 18 inches fairly frequently; sensational trial events got as much as 30 to 40 inches. This was quite good going when the long stretches of legal argument are remembered.

Back to the Beginning

In August 1958 there was the application by the Defence for the recusal of Mr. Justice Ludorf, followed by the Defence team's application to quash the first indictment. These events were big news and got appropriate treatment all round.

During the early stages of the trial the Afrikaans press (for example 'Die Vaderland' and 'Die Transvaler') made far more of the sensational developments than did their English counterparts in Johannesburg, 'The Star' and the 'Rand Daily Mail'. 'Die Vaderland' for instance during July and August 1958 featured photographs of the judges, crown counsel, defence counsel, personalities in court (including overseas observers). An issue of this paper (23/7/58) carried a large picture of Fr. Bochenski and a smaller

one of Professor Murray, in a story on the two crown experts on communism who were to be called as witnesses. At times this paper carried banner headlines, with type from one to six inches. As the days went by reports generally got shorter and the type smaller but the trial was still given prominence, despite the difficulty of making palatable the dry fare of legal argument which was often the only news. The lot of the court reporter was not as easy as during the stirring days of the preparatory examination when the evidence earned at least 12 to 18 inches daily in some weeks, with headlines fit to scare any sensible reader out of liberalistic tendencies. "We Will Burn the Whole Country" (Transvaler 22/8/57 on the alleged Cheesa-Cheesa army); "Whites in the Transkei Must Die" (Transvaler 9/8/57 front page); "Let us make an end of Mines and Factories" (Transvaler 7/8/57) to give a few examples.

Professor Murray got good space when cross-examined for one day during the preparatory examination — for example 40 inches in the 'Transvaler' (30/7/57) with banner headlines of half inch type. So it might have been expected that the Professor's evidence, so material to the crown case, would have been given equally thorough treatment in the trial, especially after the drab flow of miscellaneous documents.

The Expert Takes the Stand

The Professor was on the witness stand for six weeks. The English language newspapers did not increase their coverage except for the Cape Times which splashed the Professor's evidence, especially some days of the cross-examination (5/11/59 and 6/11/59) and gave in all 633 inches to the Professor. The Star gave him 252 inches including 45 inches of the cross-examination on 5/11/59. Most of the English-language papers in other towns carried regular though usually brief reports, though the Rand Daily Mail carried only two reports during the entire period, the two totalling only 24 inches in all. Some carried even less.

The reports in the Afrikaans press were even more scanty except for Die Burger which gave a total of 95 inches to the Professor's evidence and cross-examination. The Volksblad carried 14 inches, the Transvaler NIL, and the Vaderland 16 inches. To the readers of the later papers the trial virtually did not

exist from mid-October 1959. (During the same weeks the Transvaler ran a daily report averaging 60 inches on the Arlow proceedings, usually commencing on the front page).

The Afrikaans press therefore suffered a fairly complete news blackout just at a time when the reader might have been able to draw his own conclusions on the evidence of the Crown's expert under cross-examination. The Defence team tackled the expert's analysis of documents, his version of communist doctrine and terminology, the many factors in the South African political set-up (it was suggested) would inevitably cause Non-European resentment, and finally the cross-examination canvassed the question of the legality of extra-parliamentary methods of opposition to government policies.

A noteworthy difference between the treatment of the trial by the English and Afrikaans language newspapers is the complete absence in the latter of any breath of criticism of the conduct of the case by the government or the prosecution, even when bungling at some times became embarrassingly obvious. The English press, on the other hand, was outspoken at times as when the *Star* (21/4/59) headlined its main editorial 'STOP IT' and after the quashing of the indictment against 61 of the group of 91 accused then on trial wrote about "... the clumsy hamhanded methods that have cost the country heavily in money, goodwill and prestige."

Frolics of their own

Some sections of the press went off on little frolics of their own. Mr. L. Lee-Warden M.P. (since discharged from the trial) was faced with an application by the Crown to estreat his bail. The report in the *Transvaler* was alleged to be inaccurate when compared with the official record. Words never spoken, for example, were set out in inverted commas to denote verbatim reporting. The consequent action for damages was settled, the newspaper paying a sum for damages and publishing an apology.

Die Vaderland could not resist climbing in on to a police raid of the home of two other accused, Ruth and Joe Slovo, and publishing a story and photographs of a party to celebrate the withdrawal of the first indictment. The newspaper settled out of court the action of damages instituted after this 'scoop'. But perhaps the news splash of accused of all races holding a party together to some extent diverted the attention of readers from the bitter

government defeat implicit in the withdrawal of the indictment.

The outside world has been interested, critical, even hostile, to the trial but nothing of this seems to have penetrated the Afrikaans press. The Afrikaans reader does not seem to get much more than this sort of thing "British Press gives Little Space" (*Die Transvaler* 21/1/59), referring to reports on the opening day of the second trial, carried in *The Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, and *Manchester Guardian*, and carrying the final sentence "A short report also appeared in the *Yorkshire Post*". Must the reader infer that only these papers mentioned the start of the new trial, and what of the subsequent coverage and comment?

Conflict

The application for the recusal of the two judges was splashed in all the newspapers. There emerged the conflict between the Minister of Justice and Mr. Justice Rumpff on the manner of appointment of two of the judges, one of the reasons for the Defence recusal application. The Minister's version was set in heavy type in a box across five columns of the *Vaderland* (24/9/58). The statement by the presiding judge was not so displayed. What was this intended to convey to the reader?

The late Mr. Pirow withdrew the first indictment under sustained defence attacks. *Transvaler* (14/10/58) headlines went across only two columns and read "Adv. Pirow withdraws indictment against 91 persons. Charge of treason does not fall away. Attorney-General must decide." That evening *Vaderland* two-column headlines assured readers "Treason Trial will be resumed later". *Burger* and *Volksblad* items had similar headlines.

The English press makes frequent mention of the effect of various events relating to the nature of the trial on the accused persons and their dependants. No such expressions can be found in any Afrikaans newspaper. For example, in April 1958, doubt existed whether the 61 accused persons (in the later trial not yet commenced) had to assemble for formal remand from all over the country with consequent expense and inconvenience. The only positive reaction seems to be as in *Die Vaderland* (1/4/59) in a feature interview with prosecution counsel, giving their view and emphasising the rights and powers of the State. What of moral implications, of hardship, expense or other factors?

Easily Behind Bars?

Space is frequently given in the English newspapers to publicity on fund-raising functions for the Treason Fund. No mention is made, even as a news item for Afrikaans readers, of the art sales in Cape Town and Johannesburg which contained some valuable objects and pictures, raised considerable sums and were supported by many prominent artists and persons of influence overseas. However, space was given (and the English newspapers cannot compete) for a feature on the registration of the Treason Fund as a lawful recognised welfare organisation with (e.g. *Transvaler* 16/7/57) a detailed explanation.

The authority concerned under the law was compelled to register the Fund. An apologia?

One feature article on the length of the trial (which *Die Burger* headlined as a marathon) appeared in *Die Vaderland* (3/6/59), just before the Bloemfontein appeal. The headline "The Treason Trial: How much longer?" deals with the practical position regarding the continuation of the trial, and mentions "The costs of the case certainly run into some thousands of pounds. A heavy account lies ahead" — on the future hearings. That writer wonders if the public still read news reports of the trial. But his great discovery is the clear proof to the outside world that people in our land are assured of a just trial. "Overseas poison pens were too prone to speak of a police state where people end up easily behind bars. And now?"

And now?

D.A.L.



"No, no you fool — the swastika!"

The All-Africa Trade Union Movement

The ALL-AFRICA TRADE UNION FEDERATION will hold its Constituent Congress during May, in Casablanca, Morocco. More than half of Africa's 3 million organised workers were represented at the Preparatory Conference held at Accra in November. In this article, MICHAEL HARMEL analyses the background and prospects of what he considers "one of the most significant and far-reaching events of Africa Year, 1960."

Unity and co-operation of all African trade unions is not a new concept. It has long been the cherished dream of workers' leaders in many parts of our Continent.

That dream seemed close to realisation soon after the war, when the World Federation of Trade Unions convened an All-African conference at Dakar — attended on behalf of South Africa's workers by J. B. Marks and Dan Tloome. But that was in the happy, honeymoon period before the Cold War, and before the American and British trade union leaders, obedient to pressures from their Governments, broke away to form the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

The ICFTU at Work

The international split was reflected in Africa. The promising beginning made at Dakar was abandoned, and the ICFTU leaders set themselves might and main to "capture" African trade union federations and "win Africa for the West." A few centres defying imperialist pressures and ICFTU blandishments, clung loyally to the WFTU. But most of them either went their own way, losing, for the time being, contact with trade unionists beyond their borders, or else affiliated with ICFTU.

By July, 1958, the ICFTU could claim affiliated centres in no less than 21 African territories, comprising about a quarter of the total membership of trade unions on the Continent.

This would seem to be a fair measure of success. But in accounting for it, it should not be forgotten that, whereas WFTU representatives were barred and excluded everywhere, those of the ICFTU received willing co-operation and a free entrée from the imperialist authorities, especially in the British colonies, as well as assistance from American diplomatic and consular representa-

tives. These ICFTU representatives offered funds to subsidise African trade unions. Unfortunately this foreign aid had strings attached to it. It was dependent on the trade union leaders accepting ICFTU advice regarding their policy; advice which usually conflicted with the interests of the African workers.

Mischievous Meddling

We had an illustration of this in our own country last year, when ICFTU representatives informed SACTU that they intended to make a substantial sum of money available to help trade unions in this country. At the same time they took the opportunity to ask SACTU to sever its relations with the African National Congress. SACTU naturally rejected this unsolicited advice with contempt. The result has been that ICFTU aid will now go to the apartheid "FO-FATUSA" under Africanist and TUC leadership — an unholy alliance which finds common ground in opposition to Congress and belief in racial trade unionism.

More recently, an even more blatant example of mischievous meddling has occurred in Nigeria. According to Nigerian trade unionists Goodluck, Oduleye and Ifedira attending the November Conference in Accra, the ICFTU persuaded the Nigerian TUC leaders to reverse a conference decision not to affiliate to it, and even to play host to an ICFTU "regional conference" clearly meant as a counterblast to the formation of the All-Africa Trade Union Federation. The inducement was a handout of £200 a month to the Nigerian TUC.

ICFTU Stock Slumps

These questionable manoeuvres have not increased the popularity of ICFTU in Africa. Its "success" has proved very temporary and superficial. It came under heavy fire at the AATUF preparatory conference in Accra, for its subversive and splitting activities against African workers' unity. Ironically, many of those who denounced it most vigorously were graduates of its own "labour college" in Kampala. The ICFTU "regional conference" at Lagos was a flop, despite the presence of its "star" African, Mr. Tom Mboya — who chose to go there rather than to Accra, though the Kenya Federation was represented, and he himself was a party to the original decision to launch the AATUF.

ICFTU affiliation has fallen sharply in Africa: from 25 per cent. of Africa's trade unionists in July, 1958, to seven

per cent. in July, 1959. It retains affiliates only in Kenya, Nyasaland, N. Rhodesia, Somaliland and Tanganyika. It is notable that these are all British colonies. Not a single African labour movement in a state which has gained independence has retained its affiliation with the ICFTU.

Rumpus at Brussels

This debacle caused the bitter quarrel between British and American trade union leaders which broke out at, and dominated, the recent ICFTU Congress at Brussels. The leaders of the British TUC accused the boss of the American AFL-CIO, George Meany, of sabotaging the projected £2 million "international solidarity fund" set up to fight Communism in trade unions in the colonies. Only £500,000 was collected, the reason clearly being that the American trade unions disagree with ICFTU policy, and preferred to spend their own money themselves.

For example, Tom Mboya demanded that all funds allocated by the ICFTU for use in Africa should be channelled through him, with full autonomy and authority to say how the money should be spent. This demand was backed by Meany, but not by the TUC, who fear that the money would be used for political, and especially anti-colonial, activities. The Americans thereupon accused the British of "old-fashioned imperialism."

The Pot and the Kettle

The British retorted by exposing the way in which the American unions were acting as agencies of U.S. "new look" imperialism. In a letter to the New Statesman (January 2, 1960), Mr. Ian Mikardo, a well-known Labour Party leader, revealed that:

"Mr. George Meany's briefing at Brussels came not from officials of AFL-CIO but from officials of the State Department. It may well be that the money which the American unions have been dishing out unilaterally in Africa come from the same source. In fact the American unions are acting as the spearhead of United States foreign policy in Africa, which the Americans are hoping to 'mop up' by the methods they used in South-East Asia. The State Department's policy for Africa is based on two motivations: (1) Anti-Communism; and (2) anti-British imperialism, which is merely a cover for improving the position of American business in Africa against British competition."

(Continued on next page)

Obviously, the recriminations at Brussels merely reflected the rivalry between British and U.S. imperialism: a degrading exhibition of the zeal of these "workers' representatives" in serving the interests of their respective master-classes.

The African Revolution

In laying their plans to "buy" African trade unionism "for the West", the ICFTU leaders left the most vital and important factor out of their reckoning — the African Revolution. **The mood of Africa's workers is one of uncompromising struggle for their national liberation and independence.** They realise fully that their struggle for better conditions of life and work is bound up inseparably with the abolition of colonialism, which inevitably means economic backwardness and dependence, brutal repression and stark poverty.

The Western leaders of ICFTU have little understanding of or sympathy with the Africans' aspirations for freedom and independence. They are compromised by their own record of collaboration in the maintenance of imperialism, and their concept of trade unionism, which for the past half-century has been based upon relatively peaceful negotiations through legally-protected organisations, has little application or relevance amidst the harsh realities of colonial exploitation and terror.

The modern British or American trade union bureaucrats who come out to Africa to tell Africans how to run their unions have forgotten — if they ever knew it — the stormy beginnings of their own organisations, when every strike meant a pitched battle and every union man was a revolutionary. They tell African trade unionists to keep their noses out of politics and stick to sound bookkeeping and bread-and-butter issues. The fact is that the era of comparative class peace and conciliation in the metropolitan countries has been bought at the expense of grinding exploitation and bloody repression in the colonies — whence their ruling classes have drawn the colossal profits which enabled them to make concessions to "their own" workers.

Blunt Words

A clearer understanding of this truth might make the "Western" trade unionists less arrogant, paternalistic and condescending in their approach to workers' leaders in Africa. The matter was put bluntly in the above-mentioned statement by the Nigerian workers' representatives at the November conference in Accra:

"For many years the so-called saviours of African workers (ICFTU, CULT) have condoned the brutal economic exploitation of Africa and the African workers, while the tremendous profits accruing therefrom have enriched both their capitalist countries and have rapidly raised the living of the working class there. In their reckless drive to win the African workers for no other purpose than to domesticate them to become sheepishly docile, the ICFTU has used all means, fair or foul. It has depended on the colonial Powers for its main support. It has lavishly spent money to commission individuals in our trade union movements to carry out disruptive actions. It has been shouting Wolf! Wolf! Wolf! of "Communism" to scare off militant trade union leaders who maintain that political freedom must be buttressed with economic freedom and fundamental human rights."

Solidarity, Not Patronage

The whole tone and content of the preparatory conference at Accra was uncompromisingly one of opposition to colonialism and racial discrimination in any shape or form. **Unquestionably, the new African trade unionism rejects the "no-politics" idea (which amounts in practice to support for imperialism) and aligns itself wholeheartedly with the unconquerable movement for African freedom and unity which found expression in the All-African People's Conference.** It fiercely resents attempts by imperialist-minded trade union leaders abroad to make the African workers' movement the football in the game of power-politics and the cold war.

At the same time, however, it would be a great mistake to imagine that Africa's trade unions are "isolationist" or that they have any desire to cut themselves off from contact with the international labour movement. Acts of solidarity by European workers, such as the inspiring move to boycott South African goods in protest against apartheid and racial discrimination, call forth a warm response from the hearts of workers all over Africa.

The official communique of the preparatory conference notes that it was decided "to establish relations for co-operation and solidarity with all trade unions of the world, and authorised its secretariat to take all necessary measures in this direction." It is clear that once relations are placed on a basis of fraternal solidarity, not patronage and handouts, the formation of the AATUF will do much to create a healthy and genuine friendship between Africa's workers and those of other continents. **Indeed, it may not be too much to hope that AATUF may help to bridge the**

gulf which has for so long unhappily existed between unions in the socialist and most of the capitalist world.

There is no conflict between the idea of an All-Africa trade union unity and that of international unity; as the precedent of the Latin-American Confederation of Labour, for so long a pillar of the world labour movement, has demonstrated.

Significance for Africa

However the most immediate and significant impact of the Constituent Congress in May must be right here, in our own continent. There seems little doubt that the Congress will be a resounding success, for it already enjoys the support of the majority of Africa's 3 million organised workers. Trade union centres representing over 1,610,000 members sent delegates to the preparatory conference, and messages of support were received from bodies representing a further 288,000 members.

Dr. Nkrumah opened the conference, which was addressed by M. Abdoulaye Diallo, secretary-general of the All-African People's Conference. Among the 19-member preparatory committee are representatives of the formidable UGTAN (General Union of Workers of Black Africa, representing eight countries, and headed by President Sekou Touré of Guinea) and trade union organisations of Ghana, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria and our own SACTU.

Under such auspices, it would seem that the AATUF is headed for a great and brilliant future. The rapid growth of a strong and united trade union movement in Africa is fraught with incalculable consequences for the future of our Continent. Its immediate effect must be powerfully to stimulate and co-ordinate the general people's movement for freedom from colonialism and racial discrimination, North, South, East and West, and to win higher standards of life, labour and culture for Africa's teeming exploited millions.

Of even more profound importance for the future, such an organisation could play a tremendously vital part in enabling the African working class to play its rightful role as leader of the Free Africa of tomorrow, rapidly overcoming the heritage of backwardness, poverty and ignorance bequeathed by the colonialists, and leaping over the marsh of capitalism to establish socialism and mass democracy.

1960 — Africa Year — will be full of exciting and dramatic events. Perhaps the Constituent Congress of the All-Africa Federation of Trade Unions will be amongst the most significant and far reaching of them all.

“... Away Into Ancestral Fields?”

ZEKE MPHABLELE on AFRICAN POETS and the 'AFRICAN PERSONALITY'

In 1955 the first conference of the Society of African Culture met in Paris, its place of birth. Negro artists and writers came together then to discuss the various problems attending the concept of *negritude* — a word coined to embrace all Negro art, or the negro-ness of artistic activity. The term was created by the great Negro poet of Martinique (Caribbean), Aime Césaire, to denote a certain quality which is common to the thought and behaviour of Negroes. African and Afro-American Negroes were present at that conference. The Society was conceived by the men who publish the journal *Présence Africaine*.

One of the most important figures who inspired it was Leopold Sedar Senghor, the African from Senegal, poet and politician and President of Mali Federation (Senegal and Sudan). The editor of *Présence Africaine* is Alioune Diop, a most devoted apostle of *negritude* and a man with drive. The editorial board includes such other men as Thomas Diop and Jacques Rabemananjara, the poet who has been exiled from Madagascar.

The journal is devoted to putting across to a largely ignorant world the various aspects of African culture. It is significant that it is not the African in British-settled territories — a product of indirect rule and one that has been left in his cultural habitat — who readily reaches out for his traditional past. It is rather the assimilated African, who has absorbed French culture, who is now passionately wanting to recapture his past. In his poetry he extols his ancestors, ancestral masks, African wood carvings and bronze art and tries to recover the moorings of his oral literature; he clearly feels he has come to a dead-end in European culture, and is still not really accepted as an organic part of French society, for all the assimilation he has been through. As a result, French-speaking African nationalists have become a personification of this strong revulsion, even although some of them have married French women.

Says Leopold Sedar Senghor in his *Prayer to Masks* (masks carved out of wood or cast in bronze and used at African ceremonies):

You purify the air of eternity, here where I breathe the air of my fathers.

Masks of maskless faces, free from dimples and wrinkles.

Say, who else could return the memory of life to men with a torn hope?

In his beautiful poem *New York*, he con-

trasts Manhattan with Harlem, the negro quarter. Of the former, he says:

No mother's breast, but only nylon legs. Legs and breasts that have no sweat nor smell.

No tender word for there are no lips, only artificial hearts paid for in hard cash.

Nights of insomnia or nights of Manhattan! So agitated by flickering lights, while motor horns howl of empty hours

And while dark waters carry away hygienic loves, like rivers flooded with corpses of children.

Of Harlem?—

Harlem! Harlem! Harlem! Now I saw Harlem! A green breeze of corn springs up from the pavements ploughed by the naked feet of dancers,

Bottoms waves of slick and sword blade breasts, water-lily ballets and fabulous masks.

Manhattan women are just “scented crocodiles” to Senghor

Leon Damas, from French Guiana, writes in his *Black Dolls*:

Give me my black dolls to disperse the image of pallid wenches, vendors of love, going and coming on the boulevard of my boredom.

In *Balance Sheet*, Damas says:

I feel ridiculous in their shoes, in their dinner jackets, in their stiff shirts, their paper collars, with their monocles and their bowler hats

I feel ridiculous, with my toes that were not made to sweat from morning to evening in their swaddling clothes that weaken my limbs and deprive my body of its beauty.

Jacques Romain from Guinea (he died recently) writes in *When the Tam-tam Beats*:

Your heart trembles in the shadows like a face reflected in troubled waters.

An old picture rises from the tomb of the night,

You feel the sweet magic of yore; A river carries you away from the shore,

Carries you away into ancestral fields.

Much of the poetry is sheer romanticism, often it is mawkish. But it *does* show a revulsion on the part of these poets, most of whom live in France, Negro as they are.

Anthropology and Creepy-crawlies

Lately, *Présence Africaine* has, unfortunately, been too preoccupied with anthropological creepy-crawlies to devote enough attention to the problems of the

artist in his present predicament. It worried me a lot that such a useful institution did not seem to be aware of cultural cross-currents that characterise artistic expression in multi-racial societies. They seemed to think that the only culture worth exhibiting was traditional or indigenous. And so they concentrated on countries where interaction of streams of consciousness between Black and White has not taken place to any significant or obvious degree, or doesn't so much as touch the cultural subsoil. A number of these enthusiasts who were now staggering back in the glare of Paris lights even became apologetic about the Western elements in their own art. So on my way back to Nigeria from Britain last November I stopped in Paris to exchange ideas with the men of *Présence Africaine*. Where do we come in — we, who are detribalised and are producing a proletariat art? Has the Society of African Culture no room for us? This is what I wanted to know. Gerard Sekoto, the Pretoria painter, accompanied me. During the ten years that he has been in Paris, he has been trying to come to terms with himself about his art and jostling with no fewer than 4,000 French painters in Paris alone for attention. He still uses African themes, and, showing me his work, he told me that he has been trying to simplify his style and pointing up his rhythm more sharply. His “Mother and Child” works are to me the most fascinating things Sekoto has ever created. They exude, as do his other creations of the Paris period, a wonderful spirit of freedom. He himself is flourishing and shows an irrepressible gaiety.

Merging of Cultures

During our talk, I repeated what I had in a paper that was submitted in absentia to the second conference the Society held in Rome last Easter. Simply this: that our choral and jazz music, literature, dancing in South Africa have taken on a distinctive content and form which clearly indicate a merging of cultures. And we are not ashamed of it. Particularly is this so in our serious music. They couldn't understand why our classical music should not be purely indigenous (most probably a la Hugh Tracy). Rabemananjara argued that there could be no conscious merging of cultures until we had attained political independence in South Africa. But then the artist never waits for that kingdom to come: our

vernacular and English writers had been producing work long before organised political resistance took shape in 1912. And we in South Africa are poised between the two cultural currents. We have got to do something about it, as we indeed are doing, more than the Afrikaners with blinkers on are prepared to admit. That is why our music will always be more vital, vibrant and meaningful than boere-musiek, which is a monument to a dead past and a false posturing, hemmed in as it is by a frontier laager.

Seko'o backed me up, and after we had given an account of our social and political history, as best as we could in two hours, our French-speaking friends indicated that only then did they realise how both real and unreal the "African Personality" can be in terms of cultural expression. In fact it was already clear that the artist at work and the nationalist who blabbers all this political jargon are not one and the same person: something happens in his art which does not support, and is not supported, by his platform theories. They admitted that while we try to re-establish our past, such a function can only find proper focus if it is going to help us know ourselves better in the context of present-day cultural activity. When I am engaged in creative writing, for instance, my characters interest me as they are in a so-called mixed society. What they were and what they did before the white man came interests me only as far as it throws light on their present behaviour and human relationships. And then I don't want to depict African characters only.

As a token of solidarity, our French-speaking friends asked me to pass on the following message to our oppressed people in South Africa:

"We share the sufferings of our South African brothers: in every one of their struggles let them feel we are at their side . . . Our dearest wish is to see Africa freed from foreign domination and contribution, in independence and in her own unique way, to mankind's harmonious development."

Those who are interested in African and Afro-American writing, may have a journal devoted to this sent to them monthly. It is published at Ibadan, Nigeria, by a section of the Nigerian Education Department. It is edited by an independent group of persons here, and it is called **Black Orpheus**. It discusses all other cultural subjects. You may write to me if you wish to be put on the mailing list or to the Editor, **Black Orpheus**, at my address: Department of Extra-Mural Studies, University College, Ibadan, Nigeria. Z.M.

'Come Back Africa'

For an African who is accustomed to seeing films that present a stereotyped image of Africa — an Africa where every American or European tourist stands a fair chance of being cooked and served as choice steak for an evening meal to a bunch of "Native savages", working with film producer Lionel Rogosin was a rare and unforgettable experience, full of exciting moments.

In today's avant garde magazines one reads much of film directors, writers and producers who claim to be working "close to reality." The phrase itself has grown pallid. In time it may even be taken by the public to express no more than a snobbish desire by film makers to be considered serious artists of the medium.

Lionel Rogosin is one man who can claim not only to have worked "close to reality" while preparing "**Come Back Africa**", the controversial film which won the critics' award in Venice and a Canadian award this year, but to have become involved with that reality.

It's hard to work at anything truly creative in South Africa — to use the kind of material found in this country— without becoming involved in a very personal sense with the tremendous problems that affect all sections of the population.

Lionel Rogosin's choice of material involved the social problems that affect urban Africans in the major industrial city of Johannesburg. We all admired his brave attempts to explore the social fabric of a policy like Apartheid, a process which would not only need an understanding of the social organisation of peoples under apartheid, but would also necessitate a sorting out of confused and mixed human motives responsible for this kind of social organisation.

Before he could even collate a mass of confusing facts in which any stranger coming to South Africa immediately becomes bogged down, Lionel had to try and relate these facts to concrete life situations. That was precisely the problem: this effort to try and find a "seeable" relationship between a mass of statistics and the real life situations which they purport to interpret. How does one translate into visual terms the heinous effects of Bantu Education?

Getting out to see African life in the urban areas of South Africa presents a visitor with peculiar problems. For one thing, the Government's "Apartheid Curtain" immediately clamps down. For a White South African, let alone a visitor, to be able to enter a township he requires

a permit which must be endorsed by government officials. The visitor must explain the nature and purpose of his visit.

By
LEWIS NKOSI

Mr. Rogosin was presented with a ticklish problem since he was not in a position to explain the nature of his visit. He didn't even bother to obtain the permits for his nocturnal tours of the slums.

The problem was aggravated by the fact that Lionel had entered the country on a tourist visa and had not informed the South African Government of his intention to produce a film. "**Come Back Africa**" was haphazardly conceived in a sudden response to a social environment which Lionel found challenging to the camera.

In no time Lionel Rogosin found himself inadvertently treading on the sensitive toes of the South African Security Police. Perhaps this was good for him; after all, this was the reality he sought to incorporate into the film. Without his knowledge the Security Police had taken down the number of his car while he was looking for acting material at a busy bus terminus in Johannesburg. They traced him to a flat in Berea where they grilled him for about thirty minutes.

Lionel gave a lame excuse about his intention to produce a travelogue. His story was repeatedly told in high places during his battle to get an extension of time for his visa. There was a touch of humour to the whole cloak and dagger affair when an enterprising reporter nosed his way into the flat one evening hot on the trail of the story.

In an exclusive interview, Lionel told how he was shooting a "travelogue with a difference", while I and members of the film unit sat huddled in a spare room, wondering if the newsman would skilfully extract information from Lionel which we were so anxious to keep from the press. The following Sunday the newspaper "scooped" every other newspaper in town with the story that the young American producer was filming a "travelogue with a difference." In the interests of visual as well as social truth we hoped that "**Come Back Africa**" would be "a travelogue with a difference."

Our work on the film started in Sophiatown where most of the film was

ON MAKING A FILM

shot. Bloke Modisane and I helped in the writing of the script. In the evenings, whenever we had the time, we went into a huddle with Lionel, talking, arguing and collating facts on the life of the urban Africans. Lionel would cart his tape-recorder around to the townships where we listened to typical township characters talking in the sharply sensitised dialogue of the townships. It was in these small gatherings that people often revealed more poignantly their innermost fears, hopes and aspirations. It was also during this preparatory stage of the film that we found the work stimulating in a very creative sense.

While exploring this social area we often stumbled upon curious psychological insights. Whether the group consisted of ordinary workers or a number of articulate intellectuals, in that single moment of excited conversation, these people would fumble around with words that revealed an inner experience of which we had not been aware. We used these recorded conversations as rough guidance as to how to shape the ultimate movie story.

Some scenes of urban life that we used in the film sequence were conceived in the shady Sophiatown shebeens amidst a hubbub of talk, cigarette smoke, and that thick, bitterness-tinged laughter that was so peculiar to the groups with whom we got involved. They talked the movie into being.

As those who saw "On the Bowery", Rogosin's documentation of skid-row America will remember, Lionel's approach to filming has both limitations and tremendous possibilities. It is a method more suited to a documentation of a piece of life, a piece of experience, without the usual sophistication of acting techniques coming between the camera and the life on which the camera is trained. The problem here is to try and get the actors to re-live their experiences, to react to life situations that they are constantly demanded to respond to in their everyday life, just as genuinely and sincerely in front of the camera.

But this method also sacrifices a great amount of discipline. In certain instances trained actors might have been able to put across their lines much more ably with an economy of gesticulations and posturings.

Another thing, the group of more intellectually inclined young people we used, people who were aware of the pro-

paganda message implicit in the film were more inclined to take advantage of the elasticity of the script. They tried to put across a message. I know I was amongst them and after seeing the film I am convinced that this part lacks the power of the scenes shot with the semi-illiterate Africans.

In South Africa a film producer has to watch out, first and foremost, against the temptation to overlay his picture. The material lends itself so readily to the kind of propaganda that tends to defeat the very purpose of the film, not so much because he distorts the truth, but because there is too much of it! I mean truth that is **social fact** rather than aesthetic.

The mine shots, for instance, are staggering as mine workers crawl about with lanterns in the dark night so that you can only see blobs of light. They present a scene almost poetic in its visual images.

Briefly, the story of "Come Back Africa" is the story of a man who is driven from the land by starvation and the aridity of the soil to the big city of Johannesburg. The camera follows him around Johannesburg as his wife joins him and shows how he becomes the victim of the harsh and repressive laws like influx control, pass regulations and permit raids. His wife is killed in Sophiatown one night by a tsotsi with whom he has quarrelled while the man is in jail for some pass offence.

The film is not great by any standard. There are too many technical weaknesses in the development of the story. However, with all these faults the story emerges as a powerful document of social truth such as no other producer's camera has unfolded in this country. Some local newspapers have published silly and ill-informed criticism of this film, contending that it was biased, exaggerated, and distorted. They have argued that it should have featured Meadowlands as a model township. These are stupid criticisms! The film sets out to tell the story of what happens to a man when he leaves the reserves for the big city! It does not pretend to be a documentary on the housing problem in the Union nor was the producer obliged to vindicate the Government.

As for exaggeration, I don't know if it is still possible to exaggerate about such a grossly misgoverned, misinformed and misdirected country. In any case to give the lie to this accusation, any one who sees the film will hear a scathing criticism of certain liberals. I personally made a vicious attack on Alan Paton's "Kumalo" in the film although I am an admirer of Mr. Paton as a very compassionate writer.

KATHE KOLLWITZ



DEATH (lithograph completed 1897).

Kathe Kollwitz, whose etching, lithographs and woodcuts were recently exhibited in Cape Town's National Gallery wrote: "I have to work when in these times people are so desperately in need of advice and help."

For her subject matter she drew from her peoples' history of social struggle. Included in the exhibition was a series of prints "A Revolt of the Weavers", inspired by Hauptmann's naturalistic play "The Weavers", which deals with the uprising of Silesian workers in 1844 when the introduction of mechanisation into weaving reduced already depressed wages. This is a set of six prints which follow a dramatic pattern depicting Poverty, Death, Conspiracy March of Weavers, and ending tragically with the Death by Soldier's Rifle in the Weaver's Home. Similarly historical is the narrative series "The Peasants War" which consists of seven prints on the peasant revolt in southern and central Germany in 1525 fought for human rights and the reduction of taxes.

Perhaps the most impressive of her exhibited works were five woodcuts entitled: "The Volunteers", "The Parents", "The Widow", "The Mothers" and "The People" which belong to the series, "War", inspired by the social repercussions of the years 1914-1918. Here she represents the reaction of woman as wife and mother to war.

Kathe Kollwitz said she tried the series first as etchings, then as lithographs and finally found their most satisfactory interpretation was in woodcut.

Kathe Kollwitz has been dead for fifteen years yet her art is dateless, for it contains that element in which the present is experienced in historical projection. In the words of Romain Rolland: "The work of Kathe Kollwitz is Germany's greatest poetry of our time, which reflects the justification for the suffering of the humble and the simple-hearted. This woman with her powerful heart has with melancholy and loving sympathy taken them into her eyes and her motherly arms. She is the voice of the silence of sacrificed peoples."

A. Wannenburg.

OLD AFRICA REDISCOVERED

by G. FASULO

Mayibuye Afrika! we cry and of course people who do cannot believe that old Africa was as "savage" and backward as it has been painted. However, we do not all give this matter as much importance as the Salisbury African of whom Cyril Dunn wrote in *Central African Witness*. This man told Dunn with really intense feeling: "If you want to do us a service, find out that Zimbabwe was built by Africans." This left Dunn rather nonplussed, he relates. "I had just come from the Union, where rather more up-to-the-minute affairs engaged the attention of visiting newspaper correspondents."

Pressing as our political problems are, however, we ought also to be able to take an interest in our past. The fact is that the archaeologists, Dr. Randall MacIver in 1905 and Dr. G. Caton Thompson in 1929 proved beyond any possibility of doubt that Zimbabwe, the many other similar ruins and the historical state of Monomotapa in which these towns flourished were built by Africans. However, the continued ignorance of most South Africans, the large amount of new information recently discovered and the great interest of Africa's past combine to make any book on the subject very valuable.

Africa's Iron Age Cultures

Basil Davidson's book is excellent. Davidson summarises in a very readable way the main results of the slowly rising tide of scholarship. The main emphasis is on more recent African pre-history and history. Very little attention is devoted to the results of physical anthropologists' work on human evolution in Africa or to the results of archaeologists working on early stone age times in Africa. Most of the book is about iron age culture in Africa south of the Sahara.

The simplest way to indicate the scope of the book is to outline the subjects dealt with in the different chapters. Chapter one is on the peopling of ancient Africa. Chapter two and three deal with the old Sudan, which means the entire grassland area immediately to the South of the Sahara from West Africa to the Nile and beyond. Chapter four is about the civilisations of West Africa. Chapters five to eleven concern East and Southern Africa. They deal with the origins of the cultures of the African people, with their trade links with the

other lands on the shores of the Indian Ocean, with the Axumite and Azanian cultures which originated in the Ethiopian area, and finally with the nature of the Monomotapa-Zimbabwe culture of Southern Africa and its decline and fall.

Old Africa Rediscovered should be read by everyone interested in Africa past or present.

Why the Decline and Fall?

Davidson points to the isolation of the Monomotapa-Zimbabwe culture from the fertilising influence of contact with the civilisations of North Africa, Europe and Asia as a factor limiting its development. He points out that the internecine strife between the several centres of power in the Monomotapan state together with Portuguese intrigue weakened the state. Then the weakened local areas fell an easy prey to the invasions and migrations set in motion by the expanding, military power of the Zulus under Chaka. All this is true and important. However, it is a mistake to discuss the Monomotapa-Zimbabwe culture as though the existence of abandoned proto-cities and a vanished state were something unusual in the tropical and sub-tropical world. This approach leads Davidson to overlook a basic factor behind the failure of the Monomotapa-Zimbabwe culture.

Abandoned Cities

Abandoned cities are to be found in tropical areas all round the world. For example, a famous abandoned city in Asia is Ankor Wat in Siam. One-third of the Maya cities in Central America had already been abandoned, lost and forgotten when the Spanish conquerors arrived. These are not isolated examples. There are large numbers of abandoned cities and proto-cities all over South America, Africa and tropical Asia. What is the common factor in all cases? It is the tropical location. An underlying cause is the limited productivity of the tropical agriculture at the basis of each of the societies concerned.

Shifting Cultivation

There are two characteristic patterns of agriculture in the pre-capitalist world. In the temperate zone of the old world the pattern is of strip fields and plough cultivation. The crops are typically

cereals and the domestic animals are milkgiving herd animals. In the tropical world the pattern is of square plots cleared by the slash-and-burn method and cultivated by hoes. Root crops are generally cultivated: yams, cassava and potatoes but also important in tropical Africa are plantains and bananas. The characteristically tropical domesticated animals are small household animals: dogs, guinea pigs and pigs.^(1 2)

Owing, among other things, to the very heavy rainfall, the soil in cleared plots in the tropics is rapidly leached of its plant foods. Tropical hoe cultivation is therefore shifting cultivation and not settled farming. Shifted hoe cultivation is frequently carried over into the areas near the tropical rain forests. Such was the case in the areas which are now the Rhodesias and the Union. With such methods of farming the carrying capacity of the land is small and permanently limited. Describing the Rhodesias Gluckman writes⁽³⁾

"The agricultural systems of the region mostly involve wide shifting, but they are varied in complexity. The Serenje Lala practised the simplest form of the ash planting or 'citimene' system: they felled a large area of woodland, piled the branches for burning in numerous small circles, and planted millet in the ash seed-bed which they used for only a single season. This system could carry in perpetuity only about six people per square mile . . . The Bemba method of land use had a higher carrying capacity than that of the Lala, possibly of the order of ten or twelve people per square mile."

Gluckman then discusses the special system of riverside gardens renewed annually by the silt from floods which were cultivated by the Lezi. "But since the gardens consisted of fertile pockets interspersed with large areas of uncultivable soil, they could not support dense populations. All these peoples therefore were thinly spread over the land, producing even in a good year little beyond what they and their families could consume."

This seems to have been nearly universal throughout the tropical and sub-tropical world. If there is no reliable, large surplus of food produced by the rural population clearly no town population of any size can exist. Without a

- 1 E. C. Curwen. *Plough and Pasture*. Published by Cobbet, London 1946.
- 2 C. O. Sauer. *Agricultural Origins and Dispersals*.
- 3 Max Gluckman. *Human Problems in British Central Africa*.

city population specialised techniques, division of labour and class divisions cannot develop. Hence society cannot evolve beyond a certain point. (It is no accident that city and civilisation come from the same root word.) For example, it is fairly clear that the Maya cities were abandoned when the soil round about had become exhausted and the peasant population had therefore moved away.

To Feed a Town . . .

Consider now the case of Africa. Assume that the system of cultivation employed in the Monomotapa state would carry ten people per square mile and that each ten peasant farmers could produce to feed one urban person. (This is a very optimistic assumption). Then to feed a town of 30,000 people would require the land for 100 miles in all directions to be worked by the best hoe cultivation method found in use by Gluckman and his co-workers. Such a town would lead a very precarious existence considering the poor transport and storage facilities available then and the prevalence of drought and invasions.

Are these ideas mere guess work? It is known in the one case, that of the Nierkerk ruins which lie about 60 miles north of Umtali in Southern Rhodesia, that the inhabitants practised shifting cultivation. Davidson writes of the people who built these ruins (page 228) that "They built many forts. Their grain stores appear to have had a military guard: in any case they were placed in situations that were easy to defend. How many were they? At first sight it must seem that only dense population could have lifted and piled all these myriad stones; yet Summers concluded in 1951 that the hillsides had in fact been terraced little by little according to the needs of a shifting agriculture, and by a relatively small population." Here we have a picture of a typical people dependent on shifting cultivation. Despite the impressive ruins which they built they were few in numbers, insecure and unable to support a specialised population.

Hence the social evolution of the peoples of the Monomotapa-Zimbabwe civilisation culture may well have been doomed never to rise above a certain level. They may have been doomed by a fact that seems to have halted the development of many tropical peoples all over the world. That fact is that shifting hoe cultivation cannot produce enough food in any area to support dense populations and permanent cities.

OLD AFRICA REDISCOVERED.
By Basil Davidson. Published by Gollancz. Price: 29s.6d.

THE MONCKTON COMMISSION ON CENTRAL AFRICAN FEDERATION

(from DISSENT No. 14. Published in Salisbury)

On two main counts the Monckton Commission has failed before it has started. Intended as a "no-party" approach to the problem of the review of the Federation's Constitution it has failed to gain co-operation from the Labour Party in Britain. Intended also as something to which evidence could be given by all shades of opinion in Central Africa it has earned an official boycott from the vigorous Malawi Party in Nyasaland (which is the banned Congress under another name) and has come in for strong criticism from African leaders in the other two territories. Certainly it will not receive the evidence it ought to have.

This Commission was at first supposed to be "fact-finding", in preparation for the 1960 talks in which the five governments — United Kingdom, Federal, Southern Rhodesian, Northern Rhodesian and Nyasaland — would take part. But it emerged some time ago that it would go beyond the finding of facts: it was clearly to be policy-suggesting. Nothing could eventually obscure the purpose of the Commission's work: when it had finished making its suggestions it would obviously not be easy for the 1960 Talkers to throw those suggestions over. Put more bluntly, there was a real danger that the whole issue of the future of the Federation would be more than half-decided out of court, decided by the Commission.

In the House of Commons the Labour leaders pressed Mr. Macmillan for a clear answer to the question of whether the Commission could, inside the terms of reference, recommend if necessary that the secession of any of the territories might be allowed. Mr. Macmillan's evasive tactics in his answer drew criticism from the Guardian, and rightly so. For it is obvious that towering above all the decisions which have to be made at the 1960 talks is that of the future status of Nyasaland. It might be of interest to record that, according to our correspondents in Nyasaland, village talk is providing abundant evidence of the truth that unless Nyasaland is given the right to secede from the Federation in 1960 (not in the "foreseeable future" but within a fixed time) then the consequences could be catastrophic. In the circumstances how can it be right to have a policy-suggesting Commission sitting with its hands tied in any way? The Labour Party has undoubtedly been right to refuse to associate with a Commission whose terms of reference were surrounded by a smoke-screen of political dodging. This is far too serious a time for anything but clarity — and sincerity — to exist in these matters.

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Backwards to Bantustans

(Continued from page 6)

At best it is in four out of twenty African areas that the Tomlinson Report regards the circumstances as "sufficiently favourable" for an initiation of industrial development. These are the Transkei Block around Umtata; the Letaba-Shingwedzi Block in the vicinity of Sibasa; the Umzimkulu-Harding Block at some suitable site along the railway and the Olifants-Blyde Block also at some suitable site along the railway.

Throughout the Government makes no mention of the development of power and communications — two vital factors in industrial production — and the distribution of the finished product.

The Transkei, which is the Government show piece, has very poor rail facilities. Four rail lines terminate either just inside the border, or about 100 miles into the heart of the area. The railheads have served as funnels to drain off labour from the reserves. Poorly developed roads have acted as tributaries along which labour flows to railway sidings into the main stream.

Chiefs over Middle Men

The aristocratic group of Chiefs and headmen, entrusted with power to allocate land and trading licenses, are ever conscious of their position as representatives of the mighty government. They

the more ambitious, financially able land barons and traders do not use their positions of comparative ease to try to acquire social and political equality with the White man. This class will in turn only be tolerated by the Government as long as it uses its influence to quieten the masses of dispossessed Africans in the rural settlements. And through the representatives of the territorial authorities and the Chiefs in the urban areas the government hopes to wave the big stick there too. This role of policeman is the price the privileged group is expected to pay.

The Nationalists are confident that if they have a firm grip on the chiefs who, in turn, can threateningly swing a club over the heads of the middle class, they will be left free to exploit and trample under foot the vast masses of the working people. They evidently argue that only a few people are granted sufficient intelligence to lead the masses in the struggle for liberation. Without the guidance and leadership of such people the Nationalists think that the people are helpless and cannot save themselves.

For the people the Bantustans are a death trap.

Even for the land baron the position is made no better for his offspring. Only the eldest son succeeds to the occupational rights of the original holder of the land and the rest will be condemned to life in the settlements.

For the commercial section there is no security because failure to satisfy a

corrupt chief, or false information by an informer may be enough to result in the cancellation of a trading licence. And thereafter it is a short step to the settlements.

For the emergent middleclass too, there is no future in the Bantustans. Their salvation in the long run is bound up with that of the vast masses of the people who in their interests, must fight against the establishment of Bantustans.

NEXT ISSUE: Using the Reserves for an Afrikaner Economic Empire; and the Bantu Investment Corporation.

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