

SOBUKWE

OF

AZANIA

The Fears of

The Whites

(from the South African
Hansard, June 1968.)

MINISTER OF JUSTICE: I move
~~that the Bill~~ be now read
a second time... Clause 4
has already been popularly
called the Sobukwe Clause.
We have already debated
this principle on many
occasions in this House. I
have given my reasons for
detaining him at that time.
I just want to say that
there has been no change in
the position since the time
I detained him. We must re-

member that in this case we had to deal with the leader of the P.A.C., the father of the offspring Poqo, an organisation which sowed death and destruction while it existed, but an organisation which has now, fortunately, been destroyed. But he was the leader of that organisation, an educated man, a man who made no secret of his attitude and still makes no secret of it today, and his attitude is that if he is released he will carry on from where he left off. Hon. members can accept my word for it that that is his attitude. I have checked that over and over again.

In view of the circumstances which I have outlined, and in view of what we must expect, I am not prepared to release this man to carry on from where he left off. I do not think it is expected of me to say more than that. We have already debated this matter. If there is any hon. member who wants to suggest that circumstances have changed since this man was detained, we must discuss it. But until such time as I have heard that argument, I shall let what I have said suffice.

HUGHES: Clause 4 empowers the Minister to detain persons who have served sentences for offences under other laws. I will deal with the details after but the Minister referred to this as the Sobukwe Clause. The Minister deals with this clause as though it affects one man only and that is Sobukwe.

The Minister: He is the only one that has been detained.

HUGHES: Sobukwe is the only man whom the Minister has detained in the years during which this clause has been in force, and in justifying this clause the Minister says that Sobukwe has not changed his habits; that he has not changed his intentions. The Minister justifies this clause as though it applies to only one man. I would like to remind him that this clause empowers the Minister to detain any person who has served a sentence for an offence under "any other law", the Public Safety Act, the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1953, the Ridous Assemblies Act, Section 21 of the General Law Amendment Act, which is a very wide provision, and to confine him to ~~any~~ in any area.

NEL: Has it been done in any other case since this clause came into operation?

HUGHES: The hon. member wants to know whether it has ever been done. Surely the point is not whether it has ever

.....3/been done.

been done. The point is that the Minister is taking the power to do it. On the reasoning of the hon. member this clause should not be dropped because there is no necessity for it.

NEL: There is still the one man.

HUGHES: Sir, if they wish to deal with Sobukwe only they can deal with him under an old provision of the Native Administration Act, because Sobukwe is an African. They do not need this measure to banish him to any particular place and to keep him in prison. What happened to Luthuli; where is he? The Government did not need a measure of this nature to banish Luthuli. I hope that the hon. the Minister will bear that in mind. I say therefore that if the Minister is going to deal only with Sobukwe, let him pass a special law if he likes or let him deal with him under the many laws under which he can deal with him. The Minister has not shown us that there is any necessity for it except in the case of one man and I submit that he should take other steps to deal with this one man instead of asking us to give him this general power to detain people, who have served sentences for offences under all these other laws. We must not only look at this clause only as a clause dealing with Sobukwe; we must bear in mind all its implications.

Mrs. SUZMAN: I want to say a few words about this so-called Sobukwe clause, although I agree that this is not really a clause that applies to one man only. It so happens that up till now the clause has only been implemented in respect of one man. We certainly have a guarantee in the future that that is going to continue to be the position, and indeed judging by the general trend of events in this country, I predict that Sobukwe will not be the only person to whom this clause is going to apply.

Sobukwe received a sentence for three years for inciting against the pass laws. That that incitement led to the tragic events of Sharpeville and Langa, surely cannot be laid at Sobukwe's door. It was not the people who were protesting against the passes who fired shots into the Sharpeville crowd and the Langa crowd, but quite the opposite, the authorities. However, let us leave that aside. This man was sentenced to three years imprisonment. He has now served five years. According to the hon. the Minister he can stay there for the rest of his life if this Government remains in power and if this Minister is still the Minister of Justice. The Minister says that he has evidence that this man has not changed his mind in any way.

The MINISTER: I am absolutely certain.

Mrs. SUZMAN: The Minister may well be right, I do not know, but I know that the man asked for an exit permit last year, did he not? Was that not public knowledge?

The MINISTER: No.

Mrs. SUZMAN: Sir, if I am not much mistaken I put a question to the hon. Minister myself on the Order Paper last year.....

The MINISTER: There was talk of it but it was never carried further.

Mrs. SUZMAN: But he applied for it.

The MINISTER: Only to a certain extent.

Mrs SUZMAN: Sir, I do not know how you can apply for an exit permit to a certain extent. Let me put it to the hon. the Minister this way: Supposing Sobukwe applied for an exit permit, would the Minister be prepared to consider it?

The MINISTER: Frankly, as the position stands now, no.

Mrs SUZMAN: So whether the man changes his mind or not, if he wants to leave this country and sever all connections with South Africa, the hon. the Minister is not prepared to give him an exit permit.

The MINISTER: That is just the point; he will not give up his connections with South Africa; he will carry on with his activities from outside.

Mrs SUZMAN: What could he do outside if he is sitting thousands of miles away?

The MINISTER: You would be surprised.

MOORE: I feel very unhappy about this clause. I think most members of this House do, and certainly most people in the country. I am encouraged to intervene in this discussion because of the attitude of the Minister in the second reading. He also does not like it. He feels he is called upon to enforce this law, but he made it clear that he was unhappy about it. I should like him to release this man. There are many laws in South Africa that people regard as contrary to the rule of law, but one can offer an explanation to people in other countries and explain our special circumstances, but one cannot justify detaining a man after he has served his sentence.

CHAIRMAN: Order! That principle has been accepted in the second reading. The hon. member must resume his seat.

HUGHES: We oppose this clause. We opposed it when it was originally introduced three years ago, and I will say to the credit of the Minister that he then viewed the matter so seriously that he made provision for that clause to be renewed every year. In order to renew this clause every year, it is necessary for the Minister to justify it. What justification do we get from the Minister? He has justified it this year in the same way as he did last year, by referring to one person whom he had detained. This clause does not only deal with one person; it is applicable to any person who commits certain offences under the Suppression of Communism Act.

We suggest that in view of the fact that he has powers to deal with this particular person, and that it has not been necessary to use the provision for anyone else, it is not necessary to keep it on the Statute Book. The Minister said in reply that he had to keep this particular person in gaol. I submit that it is not necessary to keep him in gaol. The Minister of Bantu Administration and Development has dealt with other members of the Bantu race whom he has to banish, also for political reasons. He has also found it necessary to banish certain Bantu from one part of the country and confine them to a certain area. There is the very well-known case of Luthuli, who was head of the ANC and who has been confined to a particular area, with very great success.

The MINISTER: You cannot compare the two.

HUGHES: I do not know why the Minister says you cannot compare the two. Luthuli must have been considered a dangerous character otherwise he would not have been confined to a particular area.

The MINISTER: Compared with Sobukwe, Luthuli is a lightweight.

HUGHES: Surely it is not beyond the wit of the Minister and his department to find a way of confining Sobukwe; surely it is not necessary to confine him in gaol. After all, if he carries on with these nefarious ways of the past once he is out of gaol, if he should escape from a place of safety.....

The MINISTER: Do you want him to be freed?

HUGHES: I do not want him to be freed; I have never suggested to the Minister that he should be freed.

The MINISTER: In respect of this matter too I should like to say for the sake of the record that we have made a great deal of progress. The only difference now between the hon. member for the Transkeian Territories (Mr. Hughes) and myself is that he agrees with me now, on behalf of the opposition -- and he must tell me if I am putting the position wrongly -- that Sobukwe should be detained somewhere. I asked him whether he wanted Sobukwe to be released, and he said "No". In other words, we agree that he should not be released; we only differ in respect of the place where he should be detained, and I think that when it comes to the place of detention, the hon. member should rather leave the matter to me, not because I am better able to judge, but because I have more information at my disposal than the hon. member has. By and large, this is the difference. Not only is it my responsibility to detain him but I also have information in regard to where he will be safe, and this is information which, from the nature of the case, the hon. member does not have. And so I leave the matter at that.

As far as the hon. member of Houghton (Mrs. Suzman) is concerned, she did of course put her traditional point of view in this connection and I have noted it for the umpteenth time.

Mrs SUZMAN: I think it is time to remind this House that this will be the ninth year that Sobukwe will be held, for only three years of which period he in fact was serving the sentence imposed upon him by a court of law. I think it is time to remind the House what Sobukwe was sentenced for. He was not sentenced for subversion, sabotage, terrorism, conspiring against the state, treason, or any of these major crimes against the State. Sobukwe was sent to gaol by a Judge for incitement against the pass laws. He was sentenced to three years imprisonment. The Judge who sentenced him therefore took a **reasonably** light view of his offence. Three years in South Africa is not considered a very long term of imprisonment. He was sentenced, as I say, not for a serious crime of committing an offence against the State, but for incitement against the pass laws. He is still paying for the tragedy of Sharpeville, although it was not he and the people who were protesting against the pass laws who opened fire, resulting in the death of a large number of people and the wounding of very

many more, but indeed the authorities. The commission of enquiry which set on the Sharpeville tragedy, established that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Is the hon. member not going too far now?

Mrs. SUZMAN: I am trying to establish why it is that this man is considered so dangerous.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, but the hon. member is going too far. She is introducing all sorts of extraneous matters into this debate. We are only dealing with this one clause.

The MINISTER: As far as Sobukwe is concerned, it is a matter of principle. I duly considered everything and asked myself; What is in the best interests of the country: that one man be detained under favourable circumstances or that the safety of the country be threatened by his being released? That is all that is involved. We can talk here about this matter for days and we shall not make any progress at all.

Mr. MITCHELL: This, in principle, is not the sort of provision we deserve to have on our Statute Book. With all the powers it has, one is very surprised that the Government feels it necessary now for the sixth time to ask for the renewal of this clause to detain, apparently, one person only. That person could be dealt with in terms of the powers of banishment that the Government has under the Native Administration Act of 1927, and the powers that there are under the Suppression of Communism Act to restrict such a person and make him report to the police daily or twice daily. We have a magnificent Security Police Force.

Mr. FRONEMAN: Let us realise what the dangers are, and as long as those dangers exist, we will necessarily have to continue with this legislation, and we will necessarily have to renew it as required by the circumstances. But in the present circumstances and in view of the seriousness of the situation today, with the terrorists, of whom he is acknowledged leader, coming from the north, we cannot permit the non-extension of this provision and the termination of Sobukwe's detention.

Mrs. SUZMAN: It is a very serious thing to send a man to gaol every year in this way.

The MINISTER: Yes, it is a very serious matter. I have said that I considered it very carefully, after that facts had been placed before me when it was reported to me that he was still of the same opinion. He would incite people and he would further the aims of communism. He would advocate it as well but he would not advocate it as an ordinary person, because he is a leader. That we must realise. He is a leader, a man who had the entire country in turmoil within the space of a few months. At this stage they are quarreling amongst one another to determine who the leader will be and they all swore allegiance to Sobukwe. You can appreciate what would happen if we were to set him free at this stage, while I believe, it is also my information, that he is still of the same opinion. I simply cannot do it.

Mr. FRONEMAN: I want to say that last year the Minister made it possible for us to interview Sobukwe. We also had

a look at his bookshelves, and we saw what literature he was interested in. Among other were books written by Marx and Lenin, and I asked him whether he was interested in them. He said he liked to read Marxist literature. I asked him whether it was his ideology, and he said yes. I then asked: Have you ever considered changing your ideology? He said "Not until the day of resurrection"...When there is no more danger from abroad, or when the "day of resurrection" has come, when he is no longer a communist, this section may no longer be necessary.

The MINISTER: The powers that are seeking our downfall are gathering their forces to destroy us, and are this moment assiduously looking for a star to give lustre to their nefarious schemes. And the man concerned here would, if he were given the opportunity, I believe, not hesitate to do everything in his power to make up and regain what he has lost during his time of detention, because in his life and aspirations he has in no way changed his attitude or aims.

Can it now reasonably be expected of me, willingly and with the knowledge at my disposal, to play into their hands and to give them the opportunity to rally around the man who, they believe, can mobilise them and bring about the unity among them which will eventually lead to our downfall?

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"The Sobukwe Clause came into force on the very day Sobukwe was due to be released from a three-year term of imprisonment. Told of this act of unmitigated barbarism directed at him, Sobukwe's brief comment was, 'If you believe in freedom, you must suffer for it'. No hysterical recriminations or futile indulgence in self-pity. At the time of the Sharpeville shootings, Sobukwe set the pace of the revolution in South Africa. From his prison cell he is now setting the tone for the coming struggle. He is driving the point home that it is going to be a hard and bitter struggle and that personal sacrifices on an unprecedented scale will be demanded".

- The Black Star.
September, 1963.

The above commentary, written a few months after Sobukwe had started his indefinite detention on Robben Island, is as fresh with truth and meaning and exuberant with Sobukwe's courage and determination today as the day it was written. The South African fascist Government, reflecting from the above debate, is now trudging through the sands of fear, to the quagmire of revolution, created by the continued detention of Sobukwe.

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Quentin Crewe, a "Sunday Mirror" columnist, in a commentary on the black-man's lot in South Africa.

For he can never be it.

"To infringe any of these regulations can mean arrest and imprisonment.

"Jimmy (an African) tells me of his aspirations. To be something or other --- anything. I need not trouble you what Jimmy wants to be.

"I have not told you about job reservation. A law which keeps most skilled jobs for whites, all the best jobs for whites.

"I have not told you about it being illegal for Africans to strike. African Unions have not statutory recognition.

"I have not even bothered to speak about the doors Jimmy may not go through, the lifts he may not stand in, the cinema's he may not enter, the benches he may not sit on, the buses and trains he may not ride on.

"All these things are familiar. Each one a daily insult. Each one a provocation which makes each African each day hate the white man a little more.

".....What would he feel in his heart?

"I know what I would feel in mine. I would have murder in my heart".

- Sunday Mirror.
London. 7/7/68.

EDUCATION IN THE GREAT
PROLETARIAN CULTURAL
REVOLUTION

In the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution a most important task is to transform the old educational system and the old principles and methods of teaching.

Guided by Chairman Mao's teaching that there can be no construction without destruction, and that there is construction within destruction, they are shattering all the old conventions, systems, subject-matter and regulations not keeping with Chairman Mao's thinking and education. In the process, they are boldly creating new things and putting them into practice, to produce a totally new, proletarian educational system.

With the help of the Peoples Liberation Army, the proletarian revolutionaries are doing the following: a) In a Peking Middle School classes have been set up for the study of Chairman Mao's works. Each month there is a meeting between classes to exchange experiences in applying Chairman Mao's works; b) In Peking Normal College, some of the schools revolutionaries have broken through the old curriculum in these subjects and begun to combine algebra, geometry and trigonometry into a single course based on problems met with in actual production; At China Medical College with an eight-year medical Course revolutionary students and teachers are determined to cut drastically the period of schooling, particularly with a view to shifting the emphasis of medical and health work to the countryside.

Classes are conducted in various ways one of which is the following. Following Chairman Mao's teaching "You can't solve a problem? Well, get down and investigate the present facts and its past history! when you have investigated the problem thoroughly you will know how to solve it", the students, instructors and workers in a sequence called the "dragon chain" combine and take part together in teaching.

In the entire educational process, the principle "from practice to knowledge and then back to practice" is applied. Teaching takes place in the production unit, followed by discussion and analysis in the classroom where the perceptual knowledge gained is raised to the level of rational knowledge and then back to practice to test its validity
... basis for summing up and preparing the plan