

This general observation throws some light on the political issues which have been developing recently in South Africa. Three points should first be established.

Firstly, Black education reflects the general point only obliquely and in a somewhat crooked fashion. The Bantu Education system explicitly did not promise upward social mobility — at least not in the urban areas. It was for this reason long resisted by Black parents. Yet they eventually acquiesced in the system because (presumably) of the calculation that an inferior education was preferable to no education. This calculation extended presumably also to the use made of separate Black universities which were in part designed to form the administrative and technical infrastructure for the homelands' governments.

Secondly, this acquiescence — or relative acquiescence — there were many scuffles in the Black schools and universities before 1976 — reflected a real improvement in the job opportunities of Blacks with some education. The development of private financing of schools, as through The Star's Teach scheme, is evidence of the demand for schooling by Blacks and the feeling even among conservative Whites that this demand should be met.

The shift in the economic climate redounded powerfully on this situation. Here it should be stressed that conditions in rural areas are very significant. One of the conditions for relative stability in urban areas lay in the stratification of opportunities between urban-dwellers and rural Blacks. (Parenthetically it should be added that

the term stability simply means that the level of force required to maintain control does not escalate sharply.) That is to say, it could be expected that the possibility of stability rested in part on there being relatively low pressure on jobs in urban areas, and that these should become available to people with fairly high educational qualifications in preference to rural people (educational opportunities are inferior in most rural areas.)

One of the most important symptoms of the general economic crisis during the last two years has been massive decline of work opportunities in rural areas as well as unemployment in industrial areas.

While it is possible that government and industrial concerns can ensure some measure of stratification, through influx controls and other methods, the likelihood is that one way or another the mutual concatenation of rural and urban unemployment is likely to have an impact on a wide range of issues — on wage levels for instance. These effects are difficult to calculate without a better command of the relevant material.

They are in any case merely illustrative of the trauma which is precipitated in a society which has developed and centralised its industrial capacity without developing equivalent political machinery for resolving directly the endemic conflicts between the major classes brought into existence. The method of smothering such conflicts by combining Draconian repression with the manipulation of elites which cannot be disposed of is not likely to work much longer.

THE Black Sash mourns the death of MR ROBERT SINCLAIR. This was a man in a million — warm, friendly, charming, with twinkling eyes, a delightful sense of humour, and a deep and abiding strength and integrity. He enjoyed the well-merited love and respect of everyone who was privileged to know him.

His role in the Black Sash was a vital one, though he often jokingly suggested that we did not recognise it. We did! Without his constant and unfailing support it is unlikely that his wife, Jean, our National President for 14 years, could have functioned as effectively as she did and I think that he knew that, and knew that she and we knew it too. Certainly he must have known that we all loved him.

We shall miss his smiling presence at all our functions. We shall miss him greatly. We extend our deepest sympathy to our dear Jean, to his daughter, Sheena Duncan — our National President — and to all the members of his family.

Joyce Harris