

2. The party should make more public statements on international issues. Given its inability to contest sensibly even a single seat in the general election, should it not be devoting more attention to its educative task? It is clear that events in the world at large, and especially, of course, in other parts of Africa, are making a great impact on the minds of White South Africans. Should not the Liberal party be continually commenting, praising, excusing, and condemning, so that the public has a clearer image of what it stands for? Can we honestly say we are doing enough to make people face the realities of their age? And doesn't the drift away from liberalism in this country show that even liberals are liable to desert the fold out of a sense of disillusionment brought about by an initial political naïveté that we have failed to dispel, and that we have sometimes been guilty of encouraging? This is not the same as collaborating with African nationalism, but it might at least create a climate in which African nationalism, and consequently the Liberal party, would be less feared.

3. The party should as soon as possible (and I realize that for some time it will be out of the question) elect an African leader. I am not suggesting that at present Africans are being discriminated against: I am simply suggesting that where there are no really good grounds against it (such as incompetence or illiberalism), they should be brought in greater numbers into the policy-making bodies of the party; and that eventually we should aim at having an African national leader. No doubt this suggestion will elicit protests of "inverted racialism" or "discrimination in reverse". And clearly, under normal conditions, one should simply elect the best man for the job, irrespective of race. But in the present circumstances the best man for this particular job **will be an African**. For such a choice would have three extremely beneficial effects. First, it would result in increased African membership. Second, it would bring publicity

for a moderate, liberal African, whose declarations might help to allay White fears, and would, in any case, make it more difficult for White to portray all Africans as racialists (and their difficulty would increase in proportion to the increase in party membership). And, third, it would put Liberals in a stronger position vis-à-vis other left-wing groups when the day of reckoning comes.

"THE NEW TOWNSMEN"

A PAMPHLET ALL SHOULD READ

"Two-thirds of the people of South Africa—the Republic's 12,000,000 African citizens—have no secure right to live and work in the industrialised and developed parts of their own country.

"Any security of residence or employment they may enjoy outside the Reserves is dependent on administrative discretion.

"This, in the starkest and clearest possible terms, is the central fact about South Africa's legislation controlling the lives and movements of Africans."

Thus begins **The New Townsman**, a pamphlet setting out the legal position of Africans in the White areas today, written by Dr. O. D. Wollheim, M.P.C., and published by the Civil Rights League (P.O. Box 3807, Cape Town). The booklet is cheap (it costs ten cents), and it is brief (the front cover tells us that the reading time is twenty minutes). It is something that all South Africans should read. All reasonably alert people are aware that in the last two or three years the laws

governing the lives of urban Africans have become stricter and fiercer; but most people, and indeed most of those who are victims of the new legislation, would be unable to say exactly what the latest law says, what its meaning is, and how its provisions differ from the provisions of previous laws. In other words, most South Africans, even liberally-minded ones, are somewhat ignorant of the gigantic scheme of injustice and inhumanity that the Government is now vigorously and monstrously putting into action. The main areas of this ignorance Dr. Wollheim's pamphlet effectively removes.

I do not, of course, propose to reproduce the pamphlet in this brief notice. What I shall indicate are the main points that Dr. Wollheim covers.

CRUEL ELABORATION

He shows that the recent legislation—finally consolidated in the Bantu Labour Act, No. 67 of 1964—is a cruel elaboration of the principle underlying Section 10 of the Natives Urban Areas Act of 1952, namely, that no African may remain lawfully in any urban area for more than 72 hours. When that Section was introduced, various sorts of persons were exempted: those that could prove that they were born in urban areas, or that they had worked for some specified time in the urban area in question, or that they were wives, unmarried daughters or sons under 18 years who had lawfully entered the urban area and ordinarily lived in the same premises as the husband or father, or that they had received permission to remain from a labour officer. This was a very harsh law, and even when Africans were exempted they often found it extremely difficult to **prove** their rights.

But the new law is infinitely harsher:

"It makes the principle [of the old Section 10] applicable to **all** White areas, which are now called prescribed areas.

"It tightens up the provisions with regard to the residence of wives and children and makes it incalculably harder for families to live together.

"It takes away the **right** of exempted persons to remain in the prescribed areas, and gives officials discretion to apply these exemptions.

"It gives wide powers to officials to declare persons 'idle' or 'undesirable' and therefore to remove them from prescribed areas.

"It makes it much more difficult for 'foreign-born' Africans, even if they have been in an urban area for very many years and have married and brought up families there, to remain in South Africa.

"It sets up labour centres to which certain classes of persons may be referred and from which they may be directed to go to any place specified by the officials."

Dr. Wollheim goes on to show the precise significance, in the terms of the law, of such words as "redundant", "idle" and "undesirable"; and he details some of the effects that the new legislation will have, and has already begun to have, (a) on the labour force, (b) on family life, (c) on foreign Africans, (d) on those qualified to remain in the towns and (e) on the sick, crippled and handicapped. Under heading (b), to take a sample, we read this:

"Previously wives and children were allowed to be with their men if there was sufficient accommodation. Now women are only to be admitted if their labour is required in the urban area. [Note: the law denies the very fact and concept, let alone the sanctity, of marriage.]

"To get into town, a woman must get the written permission of her guardian if she is under 21 years of age, a certificate of approval

from the Native Commissioner of her home area, a permit from the urban labour officer, and a certificate from the local authority that there is accommodation available. The permission to work is then endorsed in her reference book, which also states the contract of service.

"In 1963, 2,331 women were endorsed out of Cape Town, and 4,851 out of Johannesburg."

MR. FRONEMAN'S PRINCIPLE

Other sections of the pamphlet deal with the labour centres (which the Act dishonestly describes as "aid centres"); with the relationship between the apartheid laws and South Africa's economic and social life; and with the ideological theory which underlies the whole legislation. The latter was summed up by Mr. S. F. Froneman, the Nationalist M.P. for Heilbron, when he said that "the Bill contains only one single principle throughout, namely, that the Bantu in the White area constitute only a temporary labour force and not a permanent part of the population of the White area". By way of comment on Mr. Froneman's principle, Dr. Wollheim points to four unanswerable facts:

"1. Two-thirds of South Africa's African population live and work outside the Reserves—in what Mr. Froneman calls the 'White' area.

"2. Many hundreds of thousands of these Africans were born in the urban areas or have spent most of their lives working there; they form a stable, permanently-settled part of the population of the urban areas.

"3. Whites are outnumbered by non-Whites—in most areas by Africans alone—in what is described as the 'White' area; that is, 87 per cent. of the land area of South Africa.

"4. The industrial labour force of the country is almost 70 per cent. African and industry cannot exist without this labour.

The last sentence of the pamphlet is this: "Does South Africa realise what has happened and what the effects of this legislation are?"

Hardly any of the people who have the vote in South Africa realise—or even care. What can be done by those people who do realise or partly realise, and who do care?

A number of things **can** be done. The first of them is to buy this pamphlet, read it, and spread the information that it contains in every possible way.