

the money for them must come from sources that would consider facilitation for black organisations "too hot". It is no use filling a magazine with nice liberal and radical writings if, by doing this, you are diverting money which is desperately needed for more important work elsewhere.

- 4) Feeding schemes and relief organisations. These must only be supported where they can create centres for organisation (for which, obviously, they *could* be very useful, though they hardly tend in this direction at present.)
- 5) "Sterile" research. I use the "loaded" word "sterile" in reference to research which cannot be processed to give the focal action groups extra leverage, extra power. The Poverty Datum Line in the mouths of workers can even convince the white public to grudgingly accept that the workers are paid too little. If the "sterile" researchers produce the goods for whites to fall asleep over, then liberals and radicals must process this in terms of the needs of the "proletariat" for information.

With reference to the above five points, let me make it quite clear that I am not saying that it is a *bad* thing for e.g. starving black children to be given milk. I *am* saying that liberals and radicals must leave hand-out operations to *other* groups, for their role in terms of the needs of our society is very different.

Whites who are providing a facilitating service by paying salaries of black organizers will quite rightly want to be sure that their money is going towards rapid social change and not towards rapid intoxication of a syndicate of swindlers. But, in fact, their money can be directed as they wish with very little difficulty — an executive committee with representatives drawn from the groups under one particular organiser could be linked to a central accounting office which could furnish reports to "investors" at regular intervals. Obviously, should certain groups or organisers become the object of overmuch secret police attention, (and this is likely) a more personal contact between benefactor and organiser would become necessary.

Such a system is open to all sorts of sabotage and manipulation from the whites — e.g. Benefactor: "I'm not sure I like your methods therefore I withdraw by subsidy" — but one is in fact presuming that before whites *start* giving money they will come to some agreement about *how* it should be used and that parties will both abide by that contract.

Naturally, although such a focal action group programme would concentrate on *legal* means of effecting improvements, e.g. among factory workers, how to get your sick pay, unemployment insurance, etc., and how to start a trade union, much harassment can be expected and this could prove almost impossible to counter unless the proliferation of groups is reasonably rapid. The Government has its own grass-roots action programme going great guns already: Firstly, Radio Bantu, which warns Africans daily to report any "terrorists" (read: "strangers") to the nearest police-station immediately for they have come to kill children and steal everything; and secondly, the battalion of S.B. agents and spies (who must pocket much of our security and defence budgets). But it must be remembered that this is the *normal* background to blacks' lives. Blacks simply have to cope with this, and the fact that it is the economic factor, not the fear of harassment that hinders aware blacks from working for change more openly, as also the ready availability of organisers for focal action programmes, if the financial support is available, indicates that the *courage* is there in abundance. It is up to liberals and radicals to facilitate its application.

Am I saying that financial assistance is the only facilitative avenue open to white liberals and radicals? Certainly not, for whites' professional skills (legal, medical, accounting, etc) will be invaluable to groups that are seeking to create the ripple effect by producing rapid results. But what can the "academics" do, those skilled in "white consciousness"? Firstly work out ways of continuing "white consciousness" cheaply. The motto must be "more results for much less cash." If their efforts to help *must* involve large amounts of money, then either this money must be drawn from sources which would *not* support the focal-action groups or they must withdraw completely from this well-meant sabotage. The priorities must be constantly kept in mind.□

MIGRATORY LABOUR

by Anthony Barker

(Text of a speech given by Dr. Barker in Durban and Pietermaritzburg on April 9)

If you have, as we have in South Africa, a divided nation with divided standards and divided expectations, it becomes inevitable that one group exploits another group for their own ends. This happens repeatedly, and at many levels. The rich exploit the poor; the white exploit the black; the manufacturer exploits the customer. Not that this is in all cases intentional, but the needs and aspirations of the exploited are often insufficiently understood by the more dominant group.

They used to say in former days and in England that it was of no use to build good houses for the working men, because they would put coal in the bath. They even held that the fox enjoyed the hunt as much as anyone: that brisk run over the autumn fields with the hounds behind him was music to Reynard. Well as it turned out there is no recorded case of anyone who did keep the coals in the bath, and I suppose we never shall know the sentiments of the fox. But the idea was and is common

among haves that have not's live by different standards and have different goals which even if they were comprehensible, are not very important.

So it is not entirely out of cruelty, nor out of pure greed, that the powerful exploit the powerless. It is in part at least a phenomenon of insensitivity. Unfortunately, even if we understand it never so well, the exploitation remains a bitter experience for the weaker party, so that he cries out, from time to time that this cup should pass. Our reaction to his requests — which initially are made in the most courteous manner imaginable — is that he is getting too big for his boots, or that the requests are only made because of agitators stirring up trouble among perfectly contented workers who, after all, get free beer and sports facilities for which they don't have to pay. Later, the requests are not so courteous and strikes may occur which again are attributed to agitators, for the people by themselves are held to be inarticulate and ignorant of their true needs.

Government has long been aware of the exploiting nature of white attitudes. Perhaps because, until recently, the political power has been in the hands of the group that has the least say in industry and trade (I hasten to say this is changing very fast), it has been easy for the politicians to spot the grosser exploitations of the black man by the white. Over the strikes there has been some unseemly glee in government circles that these should have occurred in predominantly English-speaking Durban and in firms controlled by other than the ruling group. And government has tried to counter this exploitation by the doctrine of separate development. In theory this removes the white man from the black scene (though not the reverse, things being what they are), so that traders and lawyers and doctors and nurses and plumbers in homeland areas should be black and of the people. Any exploitation that survives this move is at least not racial in its nature which seems to me a real improvement: something good which can be said about Apartheid but racial exploitation is not at an end. Within the white sector of the country and we shall recall that this is the lion's share of land, wealth and resources — the black man holds an irreplaceable position. He it is that keeps the wheels of industry turning for the Industrialist, be that industrialist Englishmen, Jew or Afrikaner. He is the hewer of the nation's wealth in the mine; his hands drive the plough, strip the maize stalks. The black man builds and creates, even at the low level of toil to which he is pinned by the white rulers of his destiny. His potential is endless; his imprisoned capacity one of the most grievous aspects of white rule.

And here is where the theory of separate development gets all snarled up. Here is where one is bound to have to say some things which are not so good about Apartheid. For, though we can accept that homeland development releases the blacks in their own little areas from white dominion, we see in the use of black labour without the according of settled existence the biggest exploitation of all. For Apartheid has said to the black man: you may work in my white factory and earn my white money, but you may not consider yourself a part of my white city, nor live in stable manner here among us, who claim this as our own. We want your hands, but, quite frankly we don't want to know about your wife and we don't want to know about your kids, because, surely, they are doing fine back there in the homeland you come from.

Now I live in one of these homelands. I have done so for 28 years, though we used to call the place a Reserve for the first couple of decades or so. Changing its name to the more cosy one of Homeland made no difference, though, and I wouldn't have you suppose it did. Rather the story has been one of declining fertility and advancing poverty which I believe could be paralleled throughout the black parts of our land. The reasons for our decay are many and complex, some discreditable to the blacks, some disgraceful to the whites, and all felt in the depths of human suffering which alone is real.

The Nqutu district of Zululand is characteristic. It is a beautiful place, with a decent rainfall — 800 mm a year if you can work this out — and three battlefields (at Rorkes Drift, Isandlwana and Blood River) to enhance its interest for the tourist. In area about 700 square miles, the countryside consists of plains which are mainly cultivated, and deep valleys, dramatic hills and fitful rivers which run red after rain. Here are living some 80 000 people in the manner of their fathers. It was not always so. There were 32 000 in 1945 when we went there, and by 1960 census, still only 46 000. So it is in the last decade that the population has burgeoned, throwing an intolerable strain on our restricted acres. Population density stands now, over the whole area at a little above 100/1 sq. ml. In arable parts — not counting, that is, the rocks — the average density is almost 500 in the same area.

Now plainly the old peasant agriculture cannot operate under these conditions of land occupancy. There is simply not enough room, and still the population explodes, still the babies are born, and nowadays, thanks in part at least to our successful maternity department, the little ones stay in life to grow, who knows, into great people or leaders of the nation? They certainly need feeding, and clothing and educating and doctoring, these potential heroes of the new age, and here is where the push is felt on the working man and woman to drive him outward, to the cities and industries.

To be fair, it is in government's mind, to the relief of this problem, to build border industries and homeland industries to absorb the growing population and to stabilise the lives of our people. We all know and sympathise with the immense time it takes to do anything like this, and we accept at full value the concern of government over the establishment of such employment opportunities near to people's homes. But they and we, the inhabitants of these areas, know well enough that there is in reality little or nothing for our people. I came recently to realise that I am Nqutu's homeland industry, for at the hospital we employ 450 people, the vast majority black, and that is a big factory, a large labour force. Otherwise there is little or nothing. In agriculture, yields tend to rise and fall with the seasons, but are at all times low. They tend to fall with the increasing over-use of the land which gets no season of rest, no time for recovery. Cattle have greatly increased in value, and are a source of income, but the idea of former times that every underpaid worker had behind him fat cattle and waving fields of corn in which his smiling wives toiled, is no longer a credible idyll. Few can live on the crops they produce for more than 5 months, and we in Nqutu are well aware that man does not live on maize alone. To survive, our people must gain some sort of monetary relief from outside. Without the transmitted sendings of the migrant labourer it is impossible for existence to be maintained.

Indeed it has now become true to say that a Homeland is a place where no man can stay for longer than a few months together if he is to survive and his children be properly developed. The wages of migrants are — as Professor Hilston Watts has pointed out, — largely used in keeping him alive in the city, and only around 20% of his earnings find themselves back in the homelands. For many of our women, married to migrants and living deprived lives, the monthly envelope sent through the local trading store contains R10, sometimes R20. On this she must manage with families that work out around 5 or 6 people, children and the aged and the incapable. There are others whose men are unemployed who are even worse off, and Mr. David Russell has taught whites (the blacks needed no teaching) the exceeding smallness of disability relief at R5,50 per mensem.

I paint a picture of poverty and deprivation in the homelands, because I think this is a true picture, of a life lived by thousands of people. To get out of this, to enter a more exciting world, one where the sweets are more obvious and the boredom less intense, is the wish of all young people. Older folk are driven out by economic necessity, and the net result is a drive out of our district, which is curbed only by the regulations placed on free movement which apply to all black workers. This is the *push* towards migratory labour. What of the *pull*? Here, at the receiving end, is the economic need of the divided society. Here are the mines, here the industrialists at the doors of their mills. Between stands government, determined to give the black man no abiding city, no stake in the white sector. To government this man who comes and returns again is a temporary sojourner, a unit of labour who lately has been noticed to have a soul also.

So our men, and to a lesser extent but still significantly, our women, must go up and down from homeland to city, forever mobile, forever unsettled. It is high policy that this should be so. 'Labour must be kept mobile' said our former deputy minister for Bantu Affairs who even now is basking happily in the glow of realisation that, should black and white play games together, the sky over the Free State does not fall in.

The reason for the mobility has been to ensure that every man knew his place in the society: the white man in his city, the black man in his homeland. Migrant labour has ensured the docility of workers, since only stable groups can organise themselves into effective bargaining units and control their own destiny. Migrant labour is a scheme thought out by whites for the benefit of whites, and there are big forces to keep things this way. All of us are in minor ways involved; else we should have to do our own washing up and clean our own car. In a sense, the prompt abolition of the scandal of migratory labour would produce alarming unemployment among men who at present welcome even these limited opportunities as a way of supporting their families.

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So, however deeply we hate this social phenomenon, we must also be thinking of alternatives and realistically planning for new terms of employment, new opportunities for workers and for management. Yet I think we are insufficiently roused as yet to see the destructive nature

of migratory labour on the lives and happiness of the most of our people. We need to use our imaginations a bit more, be a little less clinical in our thinking. We must project ourselves into the migrant's life, sleep in his grey blanket, in his stuffy dormitory, eat his dull dinner and know the deep loneliness of his night. Can we, too, who are so mightily privileged, not come to see the exceeding evil of this system that destroys his marriage, robs him of the society of his children, makes mockery of his manhood? And seeing it clearly, can we not cry out 'Enough! This must and shall stop', if we have to phase it out, or work it out, or fight it out? That we have not done so already is astonishing to us now, and will be beyond the comprehension of those that come after us, like we say of the ordinary German as we talk of the days of Adolf Hitler. I think it takes time for our ears to become accustomed to new sounds. We do not hear the cry of men wronged for far too long. But one day we do hear, and we sadly see that there are with us injustices and griefs that are too terrible to be borne. It must have been so with slavery which had its pious advocates and its opportunists, no doubt, as well as those who honestly wondered if the time was right for change?

I'd feel worse about our national outlook if the only forces we could bring to unseat migratory labour were moral forces. I have no doubt that we who hate this vicious form of employment are morally right a dozen times over, even if our understanding illuminates our hypocrisy, for are we not all part of the system? Yet moral forces are apt to be weak forces to bring to the slaying of the larger dragons. So I'm glad, too of the understanding we have that migratory labour is inefficient, of low productivity and, above all, costly. Keeping men mobile keeps them at a brutish level of labour. By definition the migrant may not acquire skills to the relief of the nation's dangerous shortage of artisans. In his own area, says government, the sky is the limit; for any man trade or profession are available. But it won't do: it is right in the heart of the white citadel that we need skilled men now, and it is increasingly plain that these will have to be black. We may be very certain that this change will come about, because it is economically necessary that it does and this is the stoutest motive of all. I shouldn't wonder if the government finds out that this is what Separate Development meant all along, and it was only the English press which misrepresented it to produce the opposite impression.

But for such a beneficent and radical change to occur, the white public must be given a new level of awareness. In particular the politicians must understand, and the industrialists have faith in their vision. Students, who will one day have positions of high responsibility, are key people. The understandings they acquire now will shape the policies they follow later. Society really cannot start too soon to understand.

We want for each man, work. We want for each man shelter. We want for each man such happiness as is just. We want for each man hope again where presently is despair. All this is today denied him, but they will become his when he is permitted to settle down. We must make this happen. We must make it happen soon.□