

line. The residents committee collected the names and essential details of pensioners whose payment was still being made at their previous homes. These both they and the Grahamstown group (Glenmore Action Group) forwarded to the relevant commissioner. They made a work-seekers register to augment that of the Manager when administrators spread a story that rations were making them work-shy. They organised two hundred children under 5 years old to come to be weighed and measured and arranged that those grossly malnourished should be taken to the clinic. They assisted people in putting their requests to the commissioner in writing, so that the record of petitions could be kept straight. They encouraged people to grow what they for more land to cultivate. They encouraged the development of the basket weaving at which some were highly skilled but unable to get the right grasses at Glenmore. The Parent-Teachers Association formed around the seven teachers and 500 children was described by the regional inspector as being the best in his region.

The vigour and initiative shown by the committee might seem remarkable in a community of "discarded people" but to those of us involved it made good sociological and spiritual sense. First, by obtaining resources and distributing them, the leaders gained credibility in the community, and with credibility, authority. They rose from being brokers between their followers and the power holders into patrons in command of resources. Second, the people received vitamin and protein in their rations — inadequate perhaps, but enough to save them from the inertia of exhaustion. Third, the people believed — with evidence — that their friends in Grahamstown might really move the authorities who governed their lives, so that they were sustained by hope. Finally, they were aware of a vigorous spiritual concern — the prayers and efforts of committed Christians in various parts of South Africa.

But the essential problems remained — poverty and hunger. Until the grandiose scheme was abandoned, the Administration Board employed about 40 people full-time at R70 — R100 per month, 160 people part-time at not more than R40 per month and some migrants as night-watchmen in Port Elizabeth. Up to 70 women were employed picking brussel sprouts at 2c per kilo — providing them with a mid-day meal of samp and bean soup and a cash income of between 40c and R1,80 per ten hour back-breaking day in the wet fields. Some 200 people received pensions and grants of R49 every two months.

OFFICIAL REACTION

From the outset the Glenmore Action Group kept the various officials fully informed and made the needs of the community known to them. The officials of the Administration Board were unhelpful and in some cases positively hostile as they spread stories calculated to minimise the worthiness of the people's cause — that adequate food was available; that the people were work-shy because of the feeding scheme; that they had moved voluntarily because they knew they would be better off at Glenmore; that they were all unemployed and destitute before going to Glenmore. Countering the mis-information which was flowing up to the Chief Commissioner and to the Department of Co-operation and Development demanded much time and energy on the part of the Action Group, but through the timely assistance of strategically placed friends, it was done.

By the end of August 1979 the Chief Commissioner had instituted a rationally based feeding programme to replace the system whereby each individual had to make a case for each ration, was then given a warrant which was exchanged for a ration at the nearest shop, and had to re-apply at the end of the month when the food was exhausted. It was agreed that an estimate would be made for the community as a whole, the food bought in bulk and distributed more efficiently on the basis of established need.

THE END OF THE STORY?

The final fate of the 3,000 residents remained unclear. It was suggested that they might be shifted once more — to Peddie or into the Ciskei. It was suggested that the farm be developed for labour intensive irrigated agriculture, that a peppermint farm and distillery be established, that a prickly pear liqueur become the Glenmore industry.

Whatever happens, we hope and pray that Glenmore will mark the turn of the tide in South African geo-politics — that from now on people will be treated as human beings and not as labour units and superfluous appendages. The implications of such a shift of perspective in the highest councils of the land are almost beyond our imagination. As far as possible we shall continue to monitor the history of Glenmore, just as others will monitor the history of Crossroads and its people. Vigilance must, and will, remain our watchword. □

THE ROLE OF FUBA IN THE COUNTRY:

by Siphosiphiso Sepamla

FUBA (The Federated Union of Black Arts) came into being on the 29th October 1978. Artists in the field of music, drama, creative writing, visual arts and photography called into existence this very useful organisation. The overwhelming cry then was for the righting of wrongs done to the artist. What bothered the artist was the rampant exploitation of his services without due regard to his talents. It seemed there was an undisguised, an unashamedly calculated agreement among all promoters and sponsors to get out of the artist something without putting anything back into his being. The cry was simply this: ENOUGH!

The constitution of FUBA lays down as objectives, among others, these points:

1) to amalgamate artists or groups under one umbrella;

- 2) to develop the talents of artists;
- 3) to promote and protect the interests of artists;
- 4) to foster public interest in the arts and
- 5) to establish art centres throughout the country for the promotion of the artist and his work. Admittedly these are ambitious objectives but they are so basic to the continued existence of the artist's work that we are agreed to work toward their attainment. Given our South African situation we've had to work out our priorities in a realistic fashion.

The artist has accepted the discriminatory nature of the S.A. Society. This has meant the path to his goals would be harder. And yet nothing is impossible given the energy and will to survive. Basic to our complaint against the country's

system was the idea of being led, being thought for at every turn. Over the years this has meant a distortion of our personality. FUBA believes it can contribute something toward the return, to the artist, of his sense of self-awareness. We think once the artist is aware of his skills and shortcomings, strengths and weaknesses he will be a long way toward the elimination of self-destruction; He will know what exploitation is and how to deal with it under its different guises. We believe the artist needs encouragement so that he can step out positively on the road to self-fulfilment or actualization. It has to be remembered that the black man has been bombarded with all sorts of self-demeaning suggestions over the years. To stand tall he needs to eradicate these influences and we believe we can help him achieve this by having him take decisions in the direction and course of his artistic development. It is for this reason FUBA is run by a management council which is all black. Bearing in mind certain pressures resulting from the S.A. condition other committees which contribute a lot to the success of the organisation are mixed. This love and hate arrangement is not so much a reflection on the black people's dilemma but on the sick society of this country. As human beings we hope there'll come a time when the present structure will not be dictated by expedience but mere merit.

One would have thought FUBA entered the scene in a blazing fire of welcome. For a short while it did but it soon ran between two red-hot cauldrons. On the one side was dissatisfaction with the mixed nature of its Trustees while on the other the security police put it under microscopic scrutiny. We have welcomed this baptismal by-fire. We have nothing to fear, nothing to hide. We think we're on the only realistic path given the circumstances that govern our lives. We mean to succeed. Not by hook or crook but guided by a deep sense of purposefulness and honesty.

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In the meantime we find our problems are those common to a young organisation like ours. We lack money and material to forge ahead. There is a lot of interest in what we are doing from both black and white members of our society. We are gratified by this. But man can't live by bread alone,

so goes the saying. We need rete assistance. We went about looking for donations. Where to look if not first at home? That meant going to whitey. We are being criticised for taking money from those willing to give it without strings attached. We've found this cynicism a little distressing. It seems illogical for people who depend, through circumstances not of their choice, on whitey to criticise others for taking money from him. We are told we give credibility to the exploiter. When we ask for alternative sources of funding mouths clamp. Meantime we have to buy pencils, brushes, paint, paper, musical instruments and other items. Moral support does not win the businessmen's goods but hard cash does. So much for that.

While we operate in Johannesburg only at the moment, the intention is to have FUBA become a national body. But because the arts are a cash-intense body, we cannot be expected to go national overnight. What we have been doing in the meantime was to make contact with artists in the various centres. It seems the better strategy is to encourage artists in the various centres, to forge links with one another and try to attend to priorities according to local dictates. We hope to be able to funnel funds to other centres as soon as this becomes feasible. Modest beginnings seem to have the greater chance of success. We may look like tortoises but we are confident to get to the winning post. FUBA wishes to establish an endowment fund together with a risk fund. The one will guarantee long life for the organisation and provide seeding funds for groups affiliated to the organisation. It is suggested that the risk fund could be available to affiliates needing sponsorship.

We are acutely aware that we may be dream-walking. But life is made of stuff such as dreams. We do not want to resign ourselves to despair. People are living here, we think, and it is the duty of those with some talent to share it with the others. FUBA is the embodiment of the new spirit in the arts. Gone are the days of the Black Creator pandering to the tastes of others. We need to stamp our true personality on what is created. And that has to be done without apology or excuse. FUBA exists to monitor and give encouragement to all that is worthy in the life of the artist.

AMEN. □

For further information contact FUBA, P.O. Box 4202, Johannesburg 2000.

REVIEW OF ALLAN BOESAK: DIE VINGER VAN GOD. PREKE OOR GELOOF EN DIE POLITIEK

(JOHANNESBURG: RAVAN PRESS, 1979, 83pp.)

by Martin Prozesky

For the time being anyway, Afrikaans is the language of the main political power in South Africa. But, so far as I am aware, it has hitherto not been a language of sustained prophetic power in governing circles, though that is not the fault of the prophets. In the hearing of the mighty it has thus not yet developed its promise as the instrument of a southern Nathan or Amos, measuring society with the yardstick of Yahweh's blazing justice. Nor, for that matter, of a latter-day platteland carpenter who sees love in the grain of things and leaves cedar and oak to reshape human lives.

Perhaps the South African rescue package will consist mainly in this little-used but highly potent remedy: a sustained Afrikaans prophetic word. We have already heard it a few times. And now in Allan Boesak's little book of Afrikaans sermons we hear it again, strongly, bluntly, clearly.

Such is the broad context I would see for Dr. Boesak's preaching, with its theme that a sermon is not a litany of unctuous pieties but a direct application of Christ's saving message to the concrete realities of South African life, above all apartheid. And in a sinful situation, a saving message must mean judgement or it cannot mean renewal. That is the essence of prophetic religion.

Dr. Boesak's theme is made clear in the essay under the title "Relevant Preaching in a black situation" with which the collection begins. In it the author declares Christian preaching to be in a crisis caused by various factors, notably the rejection by oppressed people of pietistic, pie-in-the-sky religion but also the anxiety of preachers to speak out. To preach relevantly in South Africa is to walk blindfolded through a minefield" writes Dr Boesak. And yet the preacher