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EDITORIALS

SKOP, SKOP, SKOP.

In the last few years it has become common in liberal and radical circles to doubt the value of resounding statements of opposition to Nationalist oppression, and to prefer specific activities designed to alter, in however small a way, the unjust structure of South African society. The general movement, then, is (to quote the title of an article published in our last issue) "from protest to action". There can be no doubt that the new tendency is a healthy one. Reiterated protest can eventually become arid; there is indeed some danger that it may grow into a mere habit and that it may bolster the self-esteem of the protester instead of having some effect upon the stubbornness of the status quo.

But for all this, protest can never cease while an oppressive regime is in power. For one thing, each new arbitrary act needs to be analysed, exposed and denounced. Then of course the potentially aware and open-minded section of the white population must be continually alerted and re-alerted: whatever unfortunate effect protesting too much may sometimes have upon the protester, undoubtedly protesting too *little* dulls opposition and cheers the Government. And political and social activities of a truly constructive sort can take place only against a background of strenuous thought and articulation on the part of those who oppose the Nationalist regime.

Besides – and quite simply – how can one *not* protest in the face of outrageous actions?

ITS SOLE AIM

In recent months the Government has been throwing its weight around in a remarkable and rather frightening way. It seems to have made up its mind to show, once and for all, that its sole aim is the perpetuation of total white domination, and that nothing will obstruct it in this aim – neither the courts, nor a sense of fair play, nor reasonableness, nor even a concern for its own "image".

Some recent bannings have been depressingly significant. Banning is always a shameful device, of course: it repre-

sents so pointed a refusal to make use of the due process of the law that one is bound to conclude that a banned person, so far from being guilty of any offence, is indeed wholly innocent. And this fact becomes especially clear at a time when the Government is obviously keen to secure as many convictions for political offences as possible, nor can it be said to have been reluctant to provide itself with legislation designed to facilitate the obtaining of convictions.

But Father Cosmas Desmond was clearly penalised simply for telling the truth. The Government was especially angered by him because the truths that he both told and published – truths about the many black people who have been dumped and discarded – were ones that it had hoped as far as possible to keep to itself. Indeed it had probably never dreamed that any man would pursue such half-hidden truths so boldly and relentlessly. Thus it found itself awarding its own grimly inverted version of the Nobel Peace Prize. Embarrassed, however, at its own largesse-in-reverse, it has steadfastly refused to give any reasons for the banning – even to Father Desmond himself, who has a "legal" right to "know" what his "offence" has been.

Then there have been the bannings of the Reverend Basil Moore and Mr. Sabelo Ntwasa of the University Christian Movement. The striking feature of these is that

they occurred very shortly after the Government's appointment of a parliamentary select committee to investigate the University Christian Movement (as well as three other organisations). It is difficult to imagine a governmental act of more transparent cynicism or (to look at it from another angle) of more grotesque naivety. Perhaps it can most accurately be described as an instance of gangster tactics: you tell a man that you are going to give him a chance to explain his case and that you will attend to what he has to say as impartially as you can, and then, as he raises his head to the ceiling (wondering, perhaps, how he is to make his point-of-view clear to a somewhat obtuse investigator), you fetch him a blow under the jaw, watch him fall unconscious to the ground, gag him, and then — bending down to him with a sympathetic smile on your face and a notebook in your hand — you prepare to listen to his story.

The Government has recently performed many acts of this calibre — the banning of Mr. Mewa Ramgobin, who in reviving the (perfectly legal) Natal Indian Congress had begun to show something of the real feelings of thoughtful Indians; the banning of Mr. Dempsey Noel, the Natal regional chairman of the Labour Party, a party brought into being as a result of the Government's grand offer to allow Coloured people freely to control their own affairs; the expulsion from the University of the North of Mr. A.R. Tiro, who in speaking at a graduation ceremony shocked certain important white people by telling a few home truths (this expulsion was the handiwork of the Turfloop authorities, but these authorities, as a subsequent statement by the Prime Minister made clear, are mere extensions of the Government); the unexplained expulsion of a number of prominent Anglicans, including the Bishop of Damaraland, from South-West Africa at the very moment when the Secretary-General of the United Nations was about to visit the territory; the arbitrary removal of passports from officials of NUSAS, another of the organisations to be studied by the parliamentary select committee. . .

All these vicious and mad acts of the Government's REALITY condemns and despises.

RUGBY

Can it do more than that, however? It can analyse a little.

What it finds is that essentially the Nationalist Government's attitude is that of a heavy, tough, not very intelligent rugby player.

The sacredness of rugby in Nationalist circles is of course a well-known fact. It is no coincidence, for example, that summit meetings between Mr. Vorster and Mr. Smith usually take place on Test Match holy days. And indeed it might be said that just as the British parliamentary system has often been thought to resemble some aspects of the game of cricket, the South African Government's way of dealing with awkward and delicate situations seems to have been based quite specifically upon the philosophy of ruthless scrummaging and "kicking for touch". Certainly the Government's recent actions and attitudes could be distilled into five simple words: push hard and kick hard.

Two things are to be noted, however. First, rugby players, even unintelligent ones, can afford to try to be a little imaginative — to throw the ball around a bit, to "give it some air" — when things are going their way, when they feel that they are on form and in control. It is when they are in danger of losing the game that they put most of their energy into pushing and kicking. The implication seems obvious.

Second, and of course far more important, pushing and kicking are permitted on the rugby field. In the realm of government and of human intercourse they are intolerable.

P.S. A further instance of the role of rugby in South African political life has been provided, in the midst of recent baton charges upon students, in a remarkable reference to the defeat of the Springbok team made by the suddenly-famous policeman, Colonel P.A. Crous: "Many of my men have been on edge since the rugby match". □

VIOLENCE IN CHURCH & STATE

On Friday, June 2nd, 1972, a detachment of the South African Police, armed with rubber batons, marched to St. George's Cathedral, Cape Town, where university students were demonstrating quietly in favour of a call by NUSAS for free and compulsory education for all up to Junior Certificate. The police were not summoned to quell any disturbance. They had practised baton charges on the lawns behind Parliament before marching to the Cathedral.

It would appear that, whether the police were ready and willing to use violence or not, there was no excuse for doing so, however trifling, until one of the students, using a loud-hailer, transformed the legal demonstration into an illegal public meeting. He was ordered to desist and to hand over the loud-hailer. How long he delayed is not accurately known, but according to reports it was not for long. This therefore brief delay served as the pretext for one of the most shocking events in our recent history. The police were ordered to charge.

The police then lost all control of themselves. They struck left and right with their batons, at students, reporters, passers-by, even, ironically enough, at some of their own colleagues dressed in leather-jacket mufti. When students fled into the cathedral, the police pursued them, shouting out obscenities, calling women bloody bitches, even striking them in the face with their batons. Many people had to be treated for injuries, varying from slight to substantial.

It must be reported that Colonel Crous, second in command, asserts that he was assaulted from behind before the order to charge was given. This order was apparently given by Brigadier Lamprecht. But no one knows who the assailant was. Furthermore, the reporter from the "Natal Mercury" asserts categorically that if any assault took place, it must have been after the order was given.

NEWS OF THE ASSAULT

News of the assault quickly reached the other university centres, profoundly disturbing the English-speaking campuses. The effect on the Afrikaans-speaking campuses was considerably smaller. The effect on Indian, African, and Coloured campuses was also small, largely because each of them was already involved in demonstrations following mass expulsions at the African University of the North. The news also profoundly disturbed English-speaking people throughout South Africa, with the exception of that miserable minority led by the Warings and the Horwoods,

who pick up the crumbs from their white master's table. Its effect on Afrikaans-speaking people, on Indian, African and Coloured people was also decidedly less marked, many of the first group being in favour of the police action, the other groups being largely preoccupied or indifferent.

That is the reason why the event has been so shocking. It has demonstrated the lack of common interest and purpose, not only between white and black, but also between Afrikaans- and English-speaking, for whether we like it or not, the Cape Town assault was by policemen overwhelmingly Afrikaans-speaking on students overwhelmingly English-speaking. The assault was furthermore approved by the Prime Minister and the Ministers of Justice and Police, all Afrikaans-speaking. There are reasons to believe that it was not only approved but also premeditated.

In almost every society the rapport between police and students is not great. Policemen are trained to obey, students to enquire and question. Therefore apart from any differences in temperament, there are differences in aim, and these can add up to a complete incompatibility unless the authorities — that is the Government — understand both aims and sympathise with them. There is absolutely no sign that our Government understands the aims of students who enquire and question. They expect students to obey. They expect students to behave like junior policemen. They expect students to accept the kind of society that Afrikaner Nationalism has created.

QUESTIONS

Very sombre questions are raised by these events. Was the boerehaat campaign at Oudtshoorn not an election gimmick at all, but rather an expression of Afrikaner Nationalist hatred of others that suddenly came to the boil? And what brought it to the boil?

One must not look for simple explanations. The situation is too menacing, too disturbing for that. Though luckily not characterised by the loss of life that set Sharpeville as an event apart, it has elements in common. One of course is that it is another shocking example of police reaction to protest. But there is also one tremendous difference. There is good reason to believe that the police panicked at Sharpeville. There is no reason to believe that they panicked in Cape Town.

Is this then to be a deliberate policy of Government, decided by the whole Cabinet in session, dictated by or consented to by the Broederbond, supported to the hilt by the S.A.B.C., approved of by the heads of BOSS, the Security Police, and the ordinary police, that protest, however peaceful, is to be everywhere dealt with by force, by charges, truncheons, teargas, and dogs? If so, these are grave days we are living through.

REASONS

And what can be the reasons for it. One is forced to the conclusion either that Afrikaner Nationalism has reached a crisis of such a magnitude that its actions have become totally irrational, like those of people who jump from sixtieth storey windows to escape the fire that rages within. The truth is that the policies of racial separation of the Nationalists are not working. Their racial universities

(except so far their own) are turning against them. Their political creations (except their own) are proving difficult to handle. They are being spoken to by black leaders in a way which must make them inwardly and sometimes outwardly grind their teeth with rage. We have heard so much claptrap from them of how peaceful the progress of separate development will be that it must be galling to them to realise that it isn't going to be peaceful at all.

Things fall apart, that's the trouble. And there's only one way to put them together again, and that's with the truncheon, the teargas, and the dogs. If ideas are recalcitrant, then break the heads of those who hold them.

Afrikaner Nationalist politics is essentially a crisis-politics. But the crisis is becoming unbearable. Then reason leaves the scene. What men like the Honourable Theo Gerdener must feel in these circumstances one does not know, but his own private thoughts must be anguished.

When reason leaves the scene, when irrationality rules the stage, many things are possible. Will the Government be prepared to yield for ever its outward policy? Will the New Zealanders and the Australians swallow all this student-beating and continue to play games with us? Will the Englishmen swallow any insult to do the same? Will dialogue with African states be foregone? Will the Government run the danger of starting a fifth column inside its own defence forces? Will young English-speaking soldiers swallow the identification of militarism and religion that is made by Major Shylock Mulder of the Defence Force, a self-confessed admirer of Hitler?

DANGER

In other words, the Government has embarked — or appears to be embarking — on a course of great danger. Will reason, even belatedly come to the rescue? If the Government continues, the end of Afrikanerdom will become more certain. But lots of us will get hurt.

We all have our duties. We as liberals will try to carry out ours. But there are others who either do not recognise their duties or who approach them with too much fear and too much caution. Students at the Afrikaner Universities, you have a duty to stop thinking with your blood, and to start thinking with your minds. Do you believe all this intellectual muck about communism, liberalism, socialism, humanism, internationalism? Do you believe this muck about the dark powers? There are dark powers all right, but they are here, in ourselves, in you, in this Government that rules without compassion.

And Sir de Villiers Graaff, on you and your United Party there also rests a tremendous responsibility. You are in grave danger of exalting law and order above righteousness and justice. Your luke-warmness to students won't rally young voters to your standard. If you must tell us that you don't like all the things they do, then tell us. But for God's sake, praise them unequivocally for their stand for morality and justice in our public life. □

THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS, 1972

by F.M. Meer

The opposition to the Government on the part of Indian South Africans since 1894 was spearheaded by the Natal Indian Congress (N.I.C.) and later by the South African Indian Congress. However this rich heritage of opposition was silenced in the last decade leaving Indians very much a voiceless people. In its place was created the South African Indian Council with nominated members to speak for the Indian people. In this way the Government has attempted to make Indians accept its policies through persuasion, compulsion and intimidation. In spite of these attempts the spirit of the Indian was not completely vanquished and in October 1971 the N.I.C. was formally revived at a convention held appropriately at Phoenix, Natal. The tremendous significance of this revival is the fact that the N.I.C. has become the only surviving wing of a once powerful alliance dedicated to the creation of a United Democratic South Africa. All the activities of the N.I.C. flow from its deep-rooted belief that humanity is one man and each man is mankind; what is valid for one is valid for all.

The belief held by the Ad Hoc Committee that the time was ripe for the revival of the N.I.C. was borne out by the tremendous political awareness and identification shown by the people at the October Convention, at subsequent mass meetings and by the controversy in the Press.

In the 10 years preceding the N.I.C. revival, South Africa passed through an extremely repressive phase largely as a result of apartheid legislations and a systematic dislocation of long established bonds among the Black peoples. For this reason the new Congress cannot depend wholly on previously formulated policies, methodology and organisational machinery. It was the need to adapt to this changed set of circumstances that has led to much of the seemingly irreconcilable conflict within the "new" Congress.

CONFERENCE

The first conference of the revived Congress was held at the end of April 1972. Congress once again proved that it is the only Black political organisation in existence with an open and fearless voice, quite unlike the Government sponsored bodies such as The South African Indian Council and the Local Affairs Committees which prefer to hold their deliberations in camera. Reports on Economics, Education, Trade Unions, sport and culture, housing and health were tabled. These reports do not constitute Congress policy as such but are working documents from which Congress policy will emanate. Apart from this, three important policy matters were debated:-

- 1) The Congress attitude to Black consciousness.
- 2) Congress opening its membership to all Racial groups.
- 3) Congress participation in the South African Indian Council.

1.) BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS:

The recurring theme of Black Consciousness has involved the members of the Natal Indian Congress in a great deal of discussion and argument. We can now discern a consistent pattern emerging from the various viewpoints and this may well determine our policy towards this concept.

We believe that in the course of the long, sad history of colonialism the White man developed a sense of White superiority. The rejected, alienated and frustrated Black was consigned to a nothingness and a negation of human values. The rise of the Black man from this limbo of non-being, his assertion of his true worth, and his freedom from

years of painful bondage, are essentials in the make-up of Black consciousness. It is in plain terms a reaction to White oppression.

RE-DEFINE

Black consciousness seeks to re-define the Black man in fresh terms. It explores new avenues in relating all aspects of life to the Black man. It rejects all established White values. Our ideas in the N.I.C. differ. We cannot agree that education can be re-orientated to Black values. Education needs to train young minds to think clearly and analytically. If education in South Africa fails to do this for the Blacks it is a subtle strategy of the Nationalists. All that needs to be done is to make our education as enlightened and objective as possible – geared to the needs of a Non-racial South Africa. It is not "Black Education" we want but true education.

Similarly we can see no reason for the creation of "Black Theology". If Christianity as practised in South Africa has racist overtones it is not the fault of the religion but of the "White Christians". The object therefore is the spread of Christianity as taught by Christ and not "Black" Christianity.

Our fundamental difference with the proponents of Black consciousness is our view of the relation of culture and consciousness to freedom. We believe that these two determinants of life reflect the socio-economic circumstances of a people. We believe you cannot talk to the discredited and deprived of culture and consciousness when socio-economic circumstances remain unchanged. These facets of life will reach their rightful position in society after and during the struggle for liberation. True culture is related both to the socio-economic circumstances of a people and its search for freedom. We believe it is less related to peripheral issues like racial affinity and a common religion. We have pointed out time and again that the history of groups fired with a narrow and parochial ideal is the history of political opportunism. There is a genuine danger of Black consciousness leading to Black racism. The safeguards against this eventuality seem to us to be very tenuous.

Black consciousness has failed in Africa. Leopold Sedhar Senghor – The father of Negritude – illustrates our viewpoint that this concept serves a limited purpose in trying to realise a national awakening. It fails once independence is achieved. Black consciousness is not sufficient as a political programme.

2) CONGRESS OPENING ITS MEMBERSHIP TO ALL RACIAL GROUPS.

There was a strong feeling amongst delegates that Congress should have an open non-racial membership. In their view if Gandhi was alive to-day he would have definitely identified the Indian people with all the oppressed groups in South Africa. It was felt that by going non-racial a new National conscience would be created to resist the evils of apartheid, and above all it would give verity to its underlying principle of non-racialism and its belief in a common society.

The majority view prevailed that it was not practical for Congress to open its membership to all races. The implementation of the Group Areas Act has resulted in residential separation and social contact between the various racial groups has been virtually non-existent. This could create practical obstacles in the creation of a non-racial body. It was felt that just as Mr. Knowledge Guzana in the Transkei was challenging apartheid and Mr. Sonny Lion and his Coloured Labour party were doing the same, the Natal Indian Congress could effectively mobilise the Indian people towards the goal of a common society. In the interim period Congress should forge an alliance with any body dedicated to the cause of a United democratic South Africa. The recent past reveals that non-racial organisations do not enjoy mass support. By far the most significant and most powerful of the liberatory movements in South Africa was the Congress Alliance. It was this alliance, consisting of organisations of the African, Coloured, European and Indian people that was able to move masses of people of all races into action.

LOSE FOLLOWING

There was also the fear that if Congress went non-racial not only would it fail to win a broad membership but that it would lose as well its Indian following. The Indian community would once again be without the type of leadership that Congress itself was trying to provide and instead would be represented by the un-representative South African Indian Council, an organisation whose hallmark thus far has been inept leadership, representative of the Government and certainly not the Indian viewpoint. The Natal Indian Congress therefore, though open only to Indian membership, remains wedded to the ideal of a non-racial united democratic South Africa, prepared to work in close alliance with all persons or organisations believing in this ideal. It views its present racial character as a temporary arrangement dictated by practical considerations.

3) PARTICIPATION IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN COUNCIL:

Three viewpoints emerged

- (a) A wait-and-see attitude; the proponents of which felt that as all the facts surrounding the election of members were as yet unavailable and since in any case the South African Indian Council elections were not due till 1974 it would be wiser to take a decision at the appropriate time.
- (b) Those who felt that Congress ought to participate in the S.A.I.C. made it quite clear that association with an apartheid institution did not necessarily imply acceptance of apartheid. It was felt that by using an apartheid institution to attack apartheid itself a certain degree of immunity from intimidation might be gained and that rather than allow "stooges" to represent the community elected Congress officials could, within the Council, clearly expand its policies of Non-racialism. Mr. Sonny Leon's Labour Party had adopted such a stance; and even Buthelezi has not been afraid to state clearly that the Bantustan Policy is not one of his own choice.
- (c) The third viewpoint which was accepted by Conference, was that the Indian Council was a creature of apartheid and was intended to entrench the economic and political power of the ruling class. It was designed to maintain the status quo and was a mirage which would divert the energies and stultify the political aspirations of the people. In any event, the South African Indian Council was ineffective and had no powers of any kind. The main objection to the Indian Council was that it was a body established on a principle which was completely contrary to the basis on which Congress was established — a non-racial democracy. It was argued that immediately one compromised with one's principles, and if these principles were basic to one's existence, then the entire fabric would be destroyed. One would be submerged in the "baasskap" system, resulting in the Black people being forever subservient.

If Congress found the policy of separate Development abhorrent, how could it flirt with this policy?

This viewpoint prevailed and at the moment is the official Congress policy vis-a-vis the South African Indian Council. □



“A TRAGIC MISUNDERSTANDING”

A reply to Mrs. Fatima Meer's critique of the the SPRO-CAS Social Commission report: *Towards Social Change*; and some observations on the approach to change in South Africa.

by Lawrence Schlemmer
Secretary of the SPRO-CAS Social Commission

From the point of view of anyone who sincerely desires a change toward a less unjust society in South Africa, the situation at present must appear very grave. There is little encouragement or even consolation to be found in most of the trends occurring among Whites and in White politics. No firm evidence is available to suggest that the ranks of those Whites who support even a qualified franchise for Blacks are becoming significantly enlarged. The slight changes in race relations which have occurred have been mere tokens very largely, and thus far improvements in the occupational position of Blacks have not afforded them any greater power or influence. These discouraging features exist despite the fact that spokesmen for Blacks, the English-language press and White liberals have persisted doggedly in their eloquent pleas and demands for a "change of heart" among Whites. Racial injustice in South Africa has been forcefully condemned time and again by the most prestigious local and international bodies and individuals. Very broadly, the effect of all this appears to have been to force the rulers of South Africa into formulating more subtle and sometimes more plausible justifications for present policies, but very little else. While we may be determined to persist in our public stand for racial justice, I doubt whether many of us are optimistic about the prospect for significant changes in the meaningfully near future, if things continue as they are.

Precisely for these reasons it seems critically necessary for everyone sincerely desiring change in South Africa to make an open-minded appraisal of all serious attempts to formulate more effective strategies for change, and of the analyses on which such strategies might be based. It would seem that Mrs. Meer has not given the SPRO-CAS Report, *Towards Social Change* its due in this regard.

Reactions like those of Mrs. Meer are not unexpected. In some ways the report deviates significantly from what has almost become a tradition of liberal thinking and protest in South Africa. Such new features, however, stemmed from the determination of the Commissioners to find a basis for

constructive and practical strategies for change, and were not guided by undue caution or by any intention to compromise. Mrs. Meer's critique deserves careful attention because, in some ways, it is probably fairly typical of the reactions of some others. In order to understand Mrs. Meer's obvious hostility to the report, one has to look carefully at the assumptions on which her critique is based.

MORAL TERMS

Firstly, one of Mrs. Meer's assumptions appears to be that the actions of Whites in South Africa have to be understood in moral terms and that any report which does not have the

clear ring of moral condemnation of White motives interwoven with the analysis makes of the authors "apologists", persons seeking to vindicate White guilt and White responsibility for the existing 'immoral', 'un-Christian' South African Society" (Mrs. Meer p.5 2nd Column). The members of the Social Commission undertook the work primarily because they abhor and detest the injustice and immorality of the situation in South Africa. While this was their guiding motive, they considered it necessary, as social scientists, to retain objectivity in their analysis of the situation. The members of the Commission considered that a dispassionate analysis would best serve their motives, which, I am sure, are identical with those of Mrs. Meer. The renowned American political scientist, Seymour Martin Lipset, writing with Earl Raab, in a definitive analysis of extremist right-wing racist movements in America, arrives at the following penetrating conclusion – "The critical ranks in extremist movements are not composed of evil-structured types called 'extremists', but rather of ordinary people caught in certain kinds of stress" (*The Politics of Unreason*, Heinemann, 1971, p. 484). Our conclusion in regard to White South Africans, while not exactly similar in content, is similar in moral tone. Would Mrs. Meer have wished us to sacrifice what was at least an attempt at an honest analysis of what we clearly proclaimed to be an immoral situation in order to overstate our moral credentials? As Mrs. Meer concedes, the report provides a full documentation of the objective facts of inequality and injustice in the South African situation.

A second and related assumption which appears from the critique, is that the first and fundamental task of the Social Commission was to state the ideals of justice and proclaim the nature of a just society – in Mrs. Meer's own words, to "propose change . . ." There were times when all the members of the Social Commission probably wished that they could dispense with their task so lightly.

It requires no great insight to realise that Blacks in South Africa need the vote. Universal franchise would transform South African society. So, probably, would trade-union rights for Africans. It would have taken the Social Commission no more than one or two brief meetings to agree at least that Blacks should have elected representatives in parliament, and that such representation should be proportionate to the numbers represented in all groups. Once having stated this, the Social Commission would have achieved no more (or less) than to state a fact which many people know but which very few accept. Speaking for myself, if I had felt that stating the ideal of Universal franchise would encourage more than an insignificant number of Whites to change their intentions, I would have pressed for its being given greater prominence in the report. As it stands, the report states quite clearly that a universal franchise for Blacks could probably be effective in safeguarding justice in South Africa (p. 48). The gist of the discussion in the report is that Universal Franchise would be an *essential* but possibly not a sufficient condition for the safeguarding of justice in South Africa.

If this was not given greater prominence it was only because merely stating it would not have been central to the purpose of the Social Commission. The Commission was aware of the problem that Whites are unlikely, of themselves, to concede franchise and Trade Union rights to Africans and other Blacks. Furthermore, Blacks for a variety of reasons external to themselves, are in no position to press effectively for these rights. The Commission saw its purpose as being to analyse precisely this "impasse", as a basis for strategies to help overcome these problems. It was felt that it was at this level that the Social Commission could provide most useful insights.

UNIVERSAL FRANCHISE

In the context of South Africa, the granting of Universal Franchise will mark a significant victory for justice. It is not the means whereby this victory will be gained. In view of the repressive and intolerant political climate, franchise reforms will probably only be won when Blacks are able to bargain effectively with Whites for a share of legal and material privilege. Our task lies in working for the pre-conditions of this type of influence and bargaining power. To state the undoubtedly important goal of an unqualified Universal Franchise was, for our purposes, in the nature of a side issue.

A third assumption in the critique, and one that is distressingly prevalent in South African thinking on the race issue, is that race discrimination somehow explains itself. In Mrs. Meer's words the South African situation is to be understood mainly in terms of a "peculiar race prejudice" (p. 6 Column 2). Not only is the word "peculiar" so general as to be meaningless, but the implication of this is that the problem of the South African Whites is primarily that of a deviant and prejudiced average personality structure. This is a most inadequate explanation since there is no particular reason why Whites in South Africa should be abnormal people "by nature" – unless, of course, one moves to the ultimate futility of offering a racist explanation.

OBVIOUS CONCLUSION

These considerations, and others, led the Commission to the rather obvious conclusion that factors in the social structure of our society and in group processes give racial differences the particular connotation which they have in South Africa (and most places elsewhere, for that matter). The Commission's findings do not by any means represent a final statement on the nature of South African society. A great deal of careful analysis yet remains to be done, particularly in the area of values and concepts of identity among Whites. However, the report does analyse and present two very important factors which, operating in conjunction with perceptions of racial and cultural differences, relate to the inter-group tensions and discrimination against Blacks in South Africa. One factor is that of White fears of loss of identity and loss of status if Blacks were to achieve power. The other factor is stated in two alternative ways – a process of *class-conflict*, on the one hand, or as a process typical of the *pluralism* found in exploitative colonial societies, on the other. Essentially, what we set out to show in the analysis, was that the patterns of race discrimination in South Africa accord well with and are constantly and in myriad ways reinforced by the material interests of Whites and their leaders. Whites have an obvious interest in maintaining their abnormally high levels of material wealth and can only do so by means of the systematic exploitation of Black labour and by the repressive control of Black political and labour organisation. Class is seen as a *process* which necessitates the maintenance of colour-discrimination, including the discriminatory treatment of members of the Black middle status groups.

Mrs. Meer's difficulties with our class model are of her own making, I'm afraid. She does not see class conflict as a process interwoven with other processes, which can change in form and nuance. She sees it more statically as referring to two distinct social groups and then encounters the obvious difficulty of not knowing where to put the well-educated and more prosperous Blacks. She also appears to confuse class and social status or social prestige, despite the fact that the distinction is clearly stated in the report. When she says that social class is "respectable" in the eyes of most people she is referring to the gradations of prestige or status

honour found in all societies. An explanation of South African society in these terms possibly would be white-washing the system. This could hardly be true of an explanation in terms of the process of marked class exploitation, of which people all over the Western world have very recent and bitter memories.

BLACKS' RESPONSE

In parenthesis, let me add a personal comment to the effect that it is entirely appropriate that Blacks should respond to *their own* situation in South Africa in racial terms, since a rigid pattern of caste-like colour distinctions has been the outcome of the various processes which maintain inequality in the society. As a basis for action the Black actors' definition of the situation as they experience it, is valid. Therefore, Black consciousness movements can be a totally authentic expression of a shared awareness of racial discrimination. A rationale for such movements based purely on race differences would not, however, suffice as an explanation of the *total* situation in South Africa.

Many other points made by Mrs. Meer are debatable, but one in particular deserves close scrutiny. She asserts that the members of the Social Commission concluded that Blacks are incapable of participating in a common democracy (p. 7 Final Paragraph). This is either a tragic misunderstanding or deliberate misrepresentation. The Social Commission makes it quite clear that the Blacks are atomised and ill-organised, relative to the requirements of the situation, precisely because of the repressive political climate and because of other factors relating, not to their "nature" as Blacks, but to the social, political and economic circumstances under which they are forced to live. Mrs. Meer concedes this by stating (p. 6, 1st Column) that ". Blacks have never had the organisational strength in the past, and are not likely to muster one in the foreseeable future to overthrow White power". It is the potential organisational strength of Blacks which the Social Commission identifies as one of the crucial factors for change in South Africa. The attention given to the present lack of coherence and organisation

among Blacks is aimed at providing a basis for a consideration of ways and means of improving the situation. Speaking personally, how anyone could put a racist interpretation on this analysis is beyond me.

CHANGING ATTITUDES

Mrs. Meer's comment about the impossibility of organised bargaining by Blacks in the foreseeable future amounts to a statement of utter despair. She appears to place all her hope in the possibility of changing White attitudes. Here she has much in common with many other opponents of the present system. While Mrs. Meer's views might very well be different, there is a great deal of thinking which would have it that activities for change should mainly consist of trenchant, morally-based protests aimed at making Whites feel so guilty as to change their evil ways. This approach might have paid dividends in other societies where Whites had less to lose, but in many ways is a waste of talent in South Africa.

The Social Commission report as a whole certainly does not overlook action aimed at Whites and their attitudes. To a very large extent the analysis in Chapter 1 of the report is focused on providing the insights which are necessary as a basis for practical action among Whites which stands some chance of succeeding. Also, flowing from the analysis in the first chapter, a later section of the report concentrates to a large extent on those areas of White-controlled activity where changes can occur which are likely to result in an improvement in the morale of Blacks and which may open opportunities for organised action among Blacks.

Its focus is an analysis, not so much of the goals for a just society, but of factors relevant to social change in South Africa, as a basis for strategic practical action. I would hope that others will read the report carefully and without prejudice. □

DURBAN 5/5/72

THE RICH GET RICHER— FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

By John Kane-Berman

Since the war, South African real Gross Domestic Product per capita has increased on average by 2,5% per annum. According to the South African Reserve Bank, this indicates a "substantial rise" in the population's standard of living, although over the past decade the rate of increase was higher in at least ten other countries. South Africa's relatively high rate of population increase is the main reason for our relatively low real per capita growth rate.¹ Per capita statistics can be misleading, however, because they do not take account of the distribution of national income. Since the war the racial income gap has been maintained and even widened:

INCOME RATIOS BY OFFICIAL RACE GROUP²

Year	White/African	White/Asiatic	White/Coloured
1946/47	12,1 to 1	4,7 to 1	6,9 to 1
1967	13,8 to 1	4,9 to 1	6,9 to 1

According to the *Financial Mail* average white income is about R95 per month, while average African income is about R7 per month.³ Whites, who form 19% of the population, possess 69% of the purchasing power, while Africans, comprising 68% of the population, possess 23% of purchasing power.⁴

In both the mining and the manufacturing sector the white/black wage gap has been widening.⁵ However, not only has the relative economic position of Africans declined, but their absolute position also appears to have worsened. One study concludes that African real income per capita declined by about 1.7% per annum in 1958-70⁶, while a recent United Nations study concludes that "African real earnings in urban areas are declining substantially."⁷

A survey conducted by the Non-Europeans Affairs Department in Johannesburg indicated that the proportion of families below the poverty datum line remained stable during the 1960's, at about 68%⁸. A study by a Cape Town economist showed that African real wages in mining have not risen since 1911.⁹

These figures all go to show that claims that black standards of living are rising must be treated with extreme caution. If the past is anything to go by, it is clear that economic growth

alone will not make significant inroads into black poverty in this country.

Foreign capital has played an important role in South Africa's economic development. Horwitz has remarked that it was "crucial" to mining development, and "strategic" to manufacturing development¹⁰, while the South African Reserve Bank has written that "in the long run South Africa has to a large extent been dependent on foreign capital for development purposes", and that "it is still highly dependent on foreign capital, particularly risk capital, to achieve a relatively high rate of growth".¹¹

The growth rate is of course largely dependent on the rate of investment, including investment by foreigners. Domestic investment is financed by personal and corporate savings, depreciation allowances, current government surplus, and foreign capital. However, domestic savings in South Africa have been too low to finance this investment, and the shortfall has been met by an inflow of capital from abroad and by depleting the gold and foreign exchange reserves.

In the years immediately after the war, 26% of gross domestic investment was financed by an inflow of foreign capital.¹² Following the Sharpeville killings and South Africa's departure from the Commonwealth, large sums of foreign capital left the country, and it was not until 1965 that the balance of payments again registered a net inflow of capital. The role of foreign capital in the economic expansion of the 1960's is evident from the fact that net capital inflow from abroad contributed an average of 11% to gross domestic investment in 1965 – 70. The year by year breakdown is:

1. South African Reserve Bank (SARB), *Quarterly Bulletin*, Pretoria, September 1971, pp. 13 – 14.

2. Report of the Sprocas Economics Commission (forthcoming).

3. *Financial Mail*, 18 April 1969.

4. *South African Financial Gazette*, 24 October 1969.

5. Horrell, Horner and Kane-Berman: A Survey of Race Relations in South Africa, 1971, pp. 179 -80.

6. *The Times*, London, 26 April 1971.

7. Barbara Rogers: The Standard of Living of Africans in South Africa, United Nations, November 1971.

8. Muriel Horrell: A Survey of Race Relations in South Africa, 1967, pp. 105 – 6.

9. *Financial Mail*, 10 May 1968.

10. Ralph Horwitz: The Political Economy of South Africa, London, 1967, pp. 366-7

11. S.A.R.B. *Quarterly Bulletin*, September 1971, pp. 27 and 29.

12. S.A.R.B., *Quarterly Bulletin*, September 1971, p. 22.

Year	Net inflow of capital from the rest of the world (R millions)	Gross domestic investment (R millions)	Ratio ¹³ a/b
1965	225	2 198	12%
1966	141	2 104	7%
1967	162	2 691	6%
1968	459	2 339	20%
1969	180	2 945	6%
1970	557	3 642	15%

Although there was a substantial increase in gross domestic investment in 1970/71, gross domestic savings declined, owing to high personal consumption expenditure. The shortfall of over R1 000 000 000 in funds to finance domestic investment was met by utilising R359 000 000 of gold and foreign reserves, and by a net inflow of foreign capital of R725 000 000, an all-time record. ¹⁴ According to more recent Reserve Bank figures the net inflow of capital into South Africa rose to R763 000 000 last year. ¹⁵

According to the Reserve Bank, these unusually large inflows of capital were in large part due to uncertainties in the international monetary field. Longer-term factors contributing to an inflow of foreign capital are the apparent political and economic stability of South Africa, the country's growth potential, and the relatively high yields on investment. ¹⁶

The relatively high growth rate of the years 1967-70 was associated with an increase in the importance of foreign funds in financing domestic investment. Over these three years the annual rate of increase of South Africa's foreign liabilities (i.e. the total amount of investment in the country belonging to foreigners) more than quadrupled: between 1956 and 1967 our foreign liabilities increased at an average annual rate of 3,4%, but from the end of 1967 to the end of 1970 the rate of annual increase jumped to 14,2%. ¹⁷ Not all new foreign investment is in the form of capital inflows, however, for a substantial part of it is in the form of earnings of foreigners in South Africa which are reinvested here.

Turning from the question of capital *flows* to that of foreign *assets* in South Africa we find that at the end of 1970 total foreign investment in South Africa was R5 818 000 000. ¹⁸ Of this total, 58% represented investment by the sterling area, 17% by the dollar area, 24% by Western Europe, and 1% by other countries. Figures on

the investment of particular countries are no longer published by the Reserve Bank but it appears that the British share was declining steadily through the 1960's, while the American share was rising. The share of European holdings appears to have been rising rapidly. In 1966 the investment of France, Switzerland, West Germany, Belgium, and Luxembourg constituted less than 14% of the total, ¹⁹ whereas in 1970 the holding of Western Europe was 24%.

Private sector investment (both direct and indirect) constituted 86% of the total at the end of 1970, and the central government and the banking sector the remaining 14%. ²⁰ Direct investment (in the private as well as in the government and banking sectors) amounted to 73,6 per cent of the total, direct investment being defined as investment in South African enterprises in which foreign investors have such a degree of control that they can have a material influence on company policy. ²¹

The United Kingdom and the United States are the two largest foreign investors in South Africa, with the British holding being about twice the size of the American, and constituting a very much larger proportion of total overseas holdings.

Although the British share of foreign investment in South Africa is declining, British private direct investment in South Africa is increasing as a proportion of world British investment. The book value of United Kingdom private direct investment in South Africa was £585 600 000 (R1 001 400 000) at the end of 1968 (latest published figures), which constituted 10,5% of all U.K. overseas investment. This holding was fourth only to British holdings in Australia, Canada, and the United States. ²²

That British investment in South Africa is relatively very profitable is evident from comparisons with other countries.

Over the period 1963-65, while British investment in South Africa constituted an annual average of 9% of the total value of British private direct investment overseas, earnings on South African investments were 15% of total overseas earnings. ²³

Over the period 1960-65, the average earnings (measured as a percentage of the book value of the investment) on British private direct investment overseas were as follows:

13. Own calculations, based on S.A.R.B., *Quarterly Bulletin*, December 1971, p S – 75.

14. S.A.R.B., Annual Economic Report, Pretoria, 1971, p. 12.

15. *The Star*, 4 April 1972.

16. S.A.R.B., *Quarterly Bulletin*, December 1971, p 17.

17. (ibid)

18. S.A.R.B., *Quarterly Bulletin*, December 1971, p S – 63.

19. S.A.R.B., *Quarterly Bulletin*, December 1967.

20. Own calculations, based on S.A.R.B., *Quarterly Bulletin*, December 1971, p. S – 63.

21. S.A.R.B., Annual Economic Report, 1971.

22. Own calculations, based on *Board of Trade Journal*, London, 23 September 1970.

23. *Board of Trade Journal*, 26 January 1968, and 18 July 1968.

South Africa	12,1%
United States	8,9%
Australia	6,6%
Canada	5,1%
India	7,7%
Malaysia	15,9%
Kenya	7,3%
Ghana	12,3%
Nigeria	5,1%
Overseas sterling area	8,9%
World	8,0% ²⁴

A relatively high rate of profitability is also indicated by the most recent statistics published in Whitehall. Figures on British overseas earnings are published annually, the most recent ones being for 1970, but statistics on the book value of overseas investment appear only every three years, the most recent set being for 1968. Taking earnings as a percentage of book value over the period 1965-68, the following picture emerges:

	1965	1966	1967	1968
South Africa	14,6	14,0	11,8	12,97
Australia	8,56	7,23	6,94	7,87
Developing countries in the overseas sterling area	10,4	10,7	8,33	9,31
European Economic Community	4,85	5,61	4,54	10,3
United States	12,6	16,1	13,7	14,3
Canada	6,97	7,29	6,20	7,28
World	9,5	9,75	8,44	10,2 ²⁵

The total book value of United States investment overseas was \$78 090 000 000 at the end of 1970, with 1,1% of this amount (\$864 000 000 or R617 000 000) invested in South Africa. ²⁶ This represented 15,8% of direct foreign investment in South Africa.

In 1959-68 United States investment in South Africa constituted 1,04% of all United States private direct investment overseas, while over the period 1960-68 United States direct investment earnings in South Africa averages 1,8% of all U.S. direct investment earnings overseas. ²⁷

Over the same period, the average rate of return on U.S. direct investment in South Africa was 19,1%, compared to

an average of 14,2% for Africa as a whole, and 10,9% for the world. ²⁸

These figures indicate the relatively high rate of profitability of U.S. direct investment in South Africa, as does the following table, where earnings during 1970 are calculated as a percentage of the book value of U.S. private direct investment in the area concerned at the end of 1969:

South Africa	18,6
World	12,3
Developed countries	9,6
Developing countries	18,4
Latin American republics	10,3
Africa (excluding South Africa and Libya)	9,4
Libya	70,8
Japan	18,2
Canada	7,7
United Kingdom	8,3
European Economic Community	12,5
Other Western Europe	11,6 ²⁹

A breakdown of U.S. earnings by sector shows that investment in manufacturing brings a return of 16%, mining 46% while "other industries" bring in a return of 31%. ³⁰ One explanation of the very high rate of profitability for mining might be that earnings in the petroleum industry, which appear to be high, are not listed separately in the *Survey of Current Business* but are "combined in other industries". The book value of petroleum investments is listed separately, however. ³¹ Nevertheless, it would appear that U.S. mining investments in South Africa are very profitable.

It is clear from South Africa's Economic Development Programme for 1970-75 that foreign capital is expected to continue playing an important role in this country. The Programme postulates a growth rate of 5,5% per annum in real Gross Domestic Product, which will necessitate a rate of growth of gross domestic investment of 6,9% per annum, with gross domestic investment rising to a share of 24,37% of G D P in 1975. This target will require large inflows of foreign capital. ³²

While foreign capital has played an historically important role in South Africa's growth, its importance in pure economic terms should not be overestimated. According to Stephen Enke in the *South African Journal of Economics* ³³, the contribution to growth of each R100 000 000 of foreign capital a year is 0,28 of 1% extra increase in gross domestic output. Further, Enke calculates that perhaps two-thirds of this output would accrue to foreigners for the use of their money. Commenting on Enke's conclusions, J. de V. Graaff ³⁴ writes that when a

24. Own calculations, based on *Board of Trade Journal*, 26 January 1968.

25. Own calculations, based on *Board of Trade Journal*, 23 September 1970; and *Trade and Industry*, London, 23 March 1972.

26. U.S. Department of Commerce: *Survey of Current Business*, Washington, October 1971.

27. *Survey of Current Business*, passim.

28. *ibid.*

29. Own calculations, based on *Survey of Current Business*, October 1971.

30. *ibid.*

31. See Dudley Horner: *United States Corporate Investment and Social Change in South Africa*, S.A. Institute of Race Relations, 1971.

32. Department of Planning: *Economic Development Programme for the Republic of South Africa*, Government Printer, 1970, pp. 17 -- 18.

33. Stephen Enke: *South African Growth: A Macro-Economic Analysis*, *South African Journal of Economics*, March 1962, pp. 34 -- 43.

34. J. de V. Graaff: *Alternative Models of South African Growth*, *South African Journal of Economics*, March 1962, pp. 44 -- 49

country's capital stock is already large the additions that could be made to it by even quite substantial capital inflows are so small as to have an almost insignificant effect on growth. However, Graaff says that it would be "superficial" to conclude that capital inflows have an unimportant role to play in South Africa's economic growth, as the transfer of skill and technical knowledge from Western Europe is to a certain extent linked to the flow of capital.

Enke also deals with the contribution foreign capital makes to the incomes of South African residents. Taking R100 000 000 of foreign capital for the purposes of his model, he calculates that if 10% of principal is paid out annually by the economy to non-resident owners, the contribution to resident annual gross incomes will be 0,1% a year.

Foreign capital does not, of course, play only a narrow economic role in South Africa. It also has important political implications in that it gives foreign capitalists an interest in political developments in South Africa and in their own country's policies towards South Africa. It is doubtful whether this interest can be evenly matched by influence, but such influence as foreign capitalists are able to exert is far more likely to be directed at their own governments' policies towards the South African government than at the policies of the South African government. The obviously more sympathetic approach of the Nixon and Heath

governments towards South African policies is, in some measure at least, due to the efforts of pro-South African lobbyists. The United Kingdom in particular has a large number of such lobbyists, some of whom are in a position to exert pressure within the Conservative Party.

Far from constituting a force for gradual social change in South Africa, the role of foreign-owned companies is largely status quo orientated. This is not to deny that (along with many South African companies) they may wish to see the removal or relaxation of artificial rigidities in the labour market, but this does not mean that they would wish also to see the dismantling of the country's labour-repressive political and economic system. Indeed, the very opposite is expected of them; in the words of Dr. Diederichs: "Ons voel verder dat ons kan verwag dat plaaslike filiale van oorsese firmas mettertyd sover mootlik 'n meer Suid-Afrikaanse karakter moet aanneem, soos byvoorbeeld deur die aanstelling van Suid-Afrikaners in die Raad van Direkteure."³⁵

It would be extremely difficult to quantify the contribution made by various factors to the high rate of return on foreign investment in South Africa, but it would be fair to assume that low black wages is one important such factor. It is most unlikely that significant improvements in the economic position of black workers can come about without major changes in political and economic relationships in South Africa. Such changes are conceivably among the last things foreign investors would wish to promote. □

35. Address by Dr. the Hon. N. Diederichs, Minister of Finance, at Gardner-Denver Company Africa (Pty) Ltd., Kempton Park, 5 November 1971; Department of Information, Pretoria.

TEXTILE WORKERS WANT A LIVING WAGE

By David Hemson

Textile workers in the industrial centres of South Africa are anxiously awaiting the results of arbitration between their union and employers. Evidence has been presented by both parties to the Industrial Tribunal which is the highest industrial court in the country and the arbitration results are now awaited.

Workers and managers were forced to go to arbitration after negotiations broke down on 22 March 1972. The Textile Manufacturers' Association offered an increase of R1,84 for the lowest grade spread over three years, and then, under pressure from the Textile Workers' Industrial Union, offered a further five per cent increase. The union asked for a 60 per cent increase spread over three years, while they were offered a 20 per cent increase for the same period.

At the end of three years at the rate demanded by the union, the lowest grade workers would still not be earning a wage equivalent to the poverty datum line which defines the minimum income sufficient to maintain family life, which is about R76 a month.

The employers' proposals for women workers are actually retrograde.

Women textile workers are currently paid 20 per cent less than the men, and the managers proposed to pay them 25 per cent less in the future.

UNACCEPTABLE

These wages and working conditions were totally unacceptable to the union and negotiations broke down.

At a report back meeting in March held at the Clairwood Tamil Institute Hall. Mr. Norman Daniels, head of the union negotiating team told the workers: 'If we had even thought of accepting these pitiful proposals I am sure you would have lynched us. You would have said we had sold you down the river and you would have been right'. He said the union would present a watertight case during arbitration. The union would demand:

- * A 60 per cent increase in wages over three years
- * An increase in production bonus rates
- * Three weeks paid holiday
- * All public holidays to be paid holidays
- * An increase in overtime rates
- * A 42 hour week
- * The removal of wage discrimination against women.

Apart from the wage demands, textile workers are most interested in reducing the ordinary hours of work from the present 46 to 42 hours a week. The textile industry is one of the few remaining organised industries working a 46 hour week which is the maximum permitted under the Factories Act. Since some shifts start late in the night

and others finish early in the morning, workers feel the 46 hour week is unreasonable. Many textile workers who were originally living close to the factories have now been moved many miles from their places of employment, losing much more time away from home. In most industrialised countries there are 40 hours of work over a 5 day week.

NO INCREASES

The manufacturers' association has not provided any increases in wages during a time of unprecedented rises in the cost of living. The low wages in the industry have led to frustration, and many experienced workers are leaving for better jobs elsewhere. In a recent study made on the wages of black workers in the Jacobs and Mobeni industrial areas the average wages paid by the textile factories ranked 15th out of 17 industries in the area. Only the processed food industry and petty trade paid lower wages than the textile industry.

The low level of wages in comparison with other industries results in a high turnover of labour. A study made by the Natal Chamber of Industries in 1969 established a direct relationship between low wages and a high labour turnover. Workers are not likely to want to stay in the textile industry if there are better wages in other industries, and there is evidence that labour turnover is increasing in the industrial centres and border areas. In Hammarsdale a textile factory recorded a shocking labour turnover of 900 per cent in 1969.

The textile workers have been represented by the Textile Workers' Industrial Union which has branches in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Johannesburg, and Durban, since the mid-1950s when it took its seat on the National Industrial Council. The industrial council is composed of equal representation of workers and employers.

The Union has had severe difficulties in representing workers effectively on the industrial council. The Union is only permitted to represent Coloured and Indian workers under industrial legislation. But apart from the racial limitations, the union has only been able to include workers in the heavy section (basically woollen as opposed to cotton) of the textile industry under the control of the industrial council. These are only a small minority of all textile workers, and their proportion is declining as the following table shows.

	Nos covered	Total employment	Proportion
December	65 10 322	64 400	16%
December	70 11 284	84 900	13%

In the Cape the union has been able to extend the effect of industrial council control through a series of factory agreements in the cotton section, but again this is only a small proportion of cotton workers.

INVESTIGATION REFUSED

In 1962 the union tried to include other sections of the industry under the control of the industrial council, but met fierce opposition from the manufacturers' association. What is worse is that an application by the union for a wage investigation into the sections of the industry not covered was refused by the Minister of Labour on the grounds that most of these workers were employed in the border areas. Under the Wage Act specific provision is made for regulating the wages of workers not covered by industrial councils, but the employers are free to pay

what they like in the light section of the industry. The Minister refused to act despite the fact that the Wage Board has investigated wages of workers in other industries situated in the border areas.

A comparison with the clothing industry is valuable. After the last industrial council agreement in the clothing industry, the union applied to the Minister of Labour for a Wage Board investigation into the clothing industry in border areas. Wage rates in these areas are adjusted upwards after each new industrial council agreement, and even although these wages are extremely low, at least a minimum wage does exist.

In the textile industry it seems as though the Frame Group has monopoly control. During negotiations the Union which by circumstances represents a minority of workers in the industry is faced by the disciplined employers' association in which the Frame Group carries most weight in terms of employment and production. The Consolidated Textile Mills Corporation, (CTM) owned by the Frame Group, is the third largest private employer in South Africa (22 000 workers) of labour according to a recent survey. It is also worth mentioning that Mr. Philip Frame, (Director of CTM, Chairman of the National Textile Manufacturers' Association, and owner of 34 textile mills), is also a member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council. He is an extremely powerful man and a person whose word is taken seriously by the government.

Because only a minority of workers are covered by the industrial council agreement and the Minister of Labour has refused to order a Wage Board investigation, disgraceful wages are being paid to the majority of workers. Since male workers who have the right to urban residence can get better wages in other industries, factories in sections of the industry not covered by the industrial council employ women workers from rural areas. It is only migrant women workers who are prepared to work for the low wages offered.

MALPRACTICES

Severe malpractices came to light in a recent investigation of textile factories in Pinetown. The migrant women are enticed by recruiters offering R7 a week and accommodation. They sign a 12 month contract and are transported to Pinetown. On arrival they find they are earning between R3,66 and R4,95 a week and have to pay R3 to R4 a month to sleep two to a bed. Many are forced to sleep in shifts in makeshift rooms without lights, water, or toilets. Although the Frame Group, which employs 8,000 workers in the area, denies the women are paid R4,95 a week a spokesman could not say what they were paid. All of the women interviewed by various newspapers said they earned between R3,66 and R4,95 which is only a little more than half of the unskilled minimum wage for Pinetown. There are three shifts at the Frame Group factory in Pinetown each of 8 hours: 6 a.m. to 2 p.m.; 2 p.m. to 10 p.m.; and 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. which run 6 days a week. When the workers' shifts overlap they sleep two to a bed. These are the conditions that the Minister of Labour has refused to have investigated by the Wage Board.

After these conditions were publicised by two Durban newspapers the Bantu Affairs Commissioner for the area ordered that a Frame Group requisition for 100 workers should not be granted.

While in the clothing industry the diversified capital structure has made possible some kind of alignment

between the wage rates in areas controlled by the industrial council and those lacking control, in the textile industry the monopoly capital represented by the employers' association extends to both areas. While in the clothing industry urban employers are concerned with low wages in border areas because their products are undercut, in the textile industry where the Frame Group employs most of its workers outside the controlled areas and does not have to pay as high urban wages as in the clothing industry, a similar impulse to action on the part of employers in the urban areas does not exist.

LITTLE PROGRESS

While the conditions in the areas not under the control of the industrial council are desperate it seems that there will be little progress until the wages of urban workers are brought up to the poverty datum line at least. With higher urban wages there will be greater incentive to improve the wages in the border areas; a process known in union circles as 'leap-frogging'. If there are higher wages and better working conditions in one area then that area is likely

to insist on the same conditions in other areas to avoid price undercutting.

Over the last decade (1962 — 1972) there have been several wage increases for workers in the areas controlled by the industrial council, but despite these increases wages today have declined in terms of the rising cost of living. Even with the increases, wages in 1972 are not what they were worth in 1962. The union's demands for a 60 per cent increase over three years will just regain the loss in value over the past decade.

The union which is putting these claims to the employers enjoys the widespread support of all workers in the industry including those who are not permitted to join. In Durban workers staged a slow-down in production in the Afritex and Wentex textile factories, and in Cape Town the workers' rejection of the employers' proposals led almost to a strike. Workers are particularly incensed by the proposal to widen the wage gap between men and women workers.

If the modest demands of the union are not met, the workers will be in no mood for further discussion. □

GRAHAMSTOWN'S FINGO VILLAGE: FROM POVERTY TO PARADISE?

By J. Blumenfeld and M. Nuttall.

Refugee Mfengu (Fingos) from a Shaka-dominated Natal came into the Transkei in the 1820s, and in 1835 Sir Benjamin D'Urban settled 17,000 of them on the colonial side of the Cape frontier. Some of these, twenty years later, became freeholders in a 'Fingo Village' at Grahamstown, with title granted by Sir George Grey "in the name and on behalf of Her Majesty Victoria . . . , with full power and authority henceforth to possess the same in perpetuity".

Oral tradition holds that these land grants were a recognition of Fingo service on the colonial side in the frontier wars of 1846-47 and 1850-53. That Fingo levies did serve, in engagements and in scouting, from the Amatola mountains to the coast is beyond dispute. There is also evidence to show that town planning, as early as 1843, prompted the creation of the village as well as any desire to reward service given in a time of crisis. Whatever the precise explanation, by 1858 318 title deeds had been paid for and forwarded to the Cape Governor for signature. Title deeds alone do not create a community. What they do provide is a point of stability upon which a community can be built.

For a hundred years this security remained for a large portion of Grahamstown's Africans, until a very different government from that of the 1850s came along with a new panacea.

In 1956 the Group Areas Board, constituted by the Group Areas Act of 1950, turned its attention to Grahamstown, inviting proposals for the racial zoning of the city. The first plan was presented in 1957. In March 1970, on the eve of a General Election, Group Areas were finally proclaimed. The intervening period was a complicated one, a kaleidoscope of proposal, protest, respite, uncertain

hope, and finally an ideological pronouncement which in 1957 would have been thought impossible. Not only was the Fingo Village (except for a small section) declared to be an area for Coloureds; its African inhabitants were to be drafted out of the city altogether.

Certain clear features can be detected in the kaleidoscope. The first is the excellence, the doggedness and, one would like to think, the delaying effect of 'Grahamstown's protest'. There have been the public meetings, beginning with the notable meeting of over 350 people of all races on 22nd May 1957, at which Rhodes University's Professor of Sociology, James Irving, said: "There is nothing in this scheme but raw pain, suffering and the loss of an integrated community". (Grocott's Daily Mail, 23 May 1957). Equally important, behind the public meetings, has lain the hard work, reminiscent of William Wilberforce and his colleagues, of gathering statistics and testimony and piecing together the jigsaw of the historical record. The fruits of this labour were presented, often through leading lawyers in the city, at successive sittings in Grahamstown of the Group Areas Board. A Vigilance Committee, formed at the first public meeting, kept a watching brief on developments, raised money, galvanized action and provided a good example of inter-racial co-operation in a common cause.

A second important feature has been the consistency of the City Council's opposition to Group Areas in Grahamstown. There have been exceptions, once at the very beginning and once at the end of the process, when negotiation was held to be wiser than outright opposition. It has been said that if the Council had accepted the original proposals of 1957, far milder social dislocation would have occurred than now appears certain under the 1970 decision. This may be true, and illustrates the dilemma of local government on an issue of this kind.

In 1957 only a small portion of the Fingo Village was affected; the part south of the railway line was proposed as a buffer zone. In 1970 the whole of the village was affected *except* this small portion which alone was not set aside for Coloured occupation. The question is: Would a 'mild' change not have been followed by another and another? Moreover, should bargaining take place when moral issues are at stake?

After more than ten years of uncertainty the City Council landed itself, unwittingly it seems, in a further complication. Unemployment, of Africans in particular, is a serious Grahamstown problem. To help meet this, negotiations were set afoot to secure 'border area' status for the city. In 1969 this was finally achieved: a (somewhat dubious) victory for economic development, it seemed to be unconnected with the Group Areas question on which there had been a strange silence for almost four years. Suddenly, in October 1969 the Bantu Affairs Department produced its scheme for a settlement of Grahamstown Africans at Committees Drift, on the east bank of the Fish River, 45 kilometres from Grahamstown. The City Council found itself confronted with the ideological enormity that only 'homeland Bantu' could work in border industries, so that if Grahamstown Africans were to work in Grahamstown's hoped-for border industries, they would have to live in the homeland! Homeland policy at this point coalesced with Group Areas policy. When the Fingo Village was declared a Group Area for Coloureds in March 1970, the assumption was that its African inhabitants would move to Committees. Earlier assurances that such removal would be voluntary began to have a hollow ring.

The City Council was split. A majority decided at first not to protest, in the hope that it could persuade Government to build sorely needed houses in the rest of the African location. Such building had been refused by the Government since 1963. Renewed public pressure and an awareness of disarray in Government Departments helped persuade the City Council to revert to its earlier policy of protest and ask for the Fingo Village to be de-proclaimed. (Disarray seems to continue. Mr. W.H.D. Deacon, M.P. for Albany is recently reported as having said: "The planning and co-ordination between departments seems to be as well-organized and as orderly as the Mad Hatter's tea party". "Grocott's Mail". 19th May, 1972.)

Fingo Village



A ministerial visit was pressed for. Despite a strong municipal deputation to Cape Town, Mr. J.J. Loots (Minister of Planning) announced in August 1971, that the Fingo Village would remain Coloured under the new proclamation. In December, Dr. P.G.J. Koornhof (Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration) came to Grahamstown. More houses were promised, but without any revocation of the Committees Drift plan. Rather than redevelop Fingo Village for the people already in it or resettle them elsewhere in the Grahamstown location, the government has thus chosen to move them to the Ciskeian reserves. (There is, of course, no practical reason why the first of these alternatives should not be adopted — by declaring Fingo Village a Coloured group area, the government has in any event committed itself to redevelop the area. The second alternative is similarly feasible, for the present severe shortage of land in the Municipal location should not prove too great an obstacle to a government which has all the necessary powers to extend it.) The precise details of the Committees Drift plan are not clear, but the emerging "official" picture is that, as part of the development of the Ciskei "home-land", a "township", accommodating from 100 000 to 200 000 Africans, is to be built in the Peddie district near Committees Drift. Africans from various as yet unspecified areas in the Eastern Cape (but including Fingo Village) are to be resettled there. An irrigation scheme is to be developed in the area, using water from the Orange-Fish river diversion scheme, but the bulk of the necessary employment is to be provided in similarly unspecified, existing and proposed nearby industrial areas. Building is scheduled to begin at the end of 1973 and the official estimate is that the first groups of people will have been settled there by 1976, although by the most optimistic forecast water from the Orange River will not be available before 1978.

Those who are familiar with previous 'black spots' removals elsewhere in South Africa will recognise some familiar features in the story of Fingo Village: the violation of the rights of freehold title holders; the long periods of uncertainty; the complete lack of choice for the people concerned; and, of course, the nihilistic destruction of an established community — one does not have to be a sociologist to appreciate that the physical transplantation of an entire community from one location to another does not imply that its less tangible characteristics (such as its character and its spirit) will remain intact.

Why then should Fingo Village excite any more interest than the multitude of other 'blackspots' removals? Firstly, because this will not be the displacement of an isolated or rural community to another isolated, rural location. Fingo Village is an integral and substantial part of a prominent, albeit small, urban community and the removals will be far more 'public' than many of the others have been.

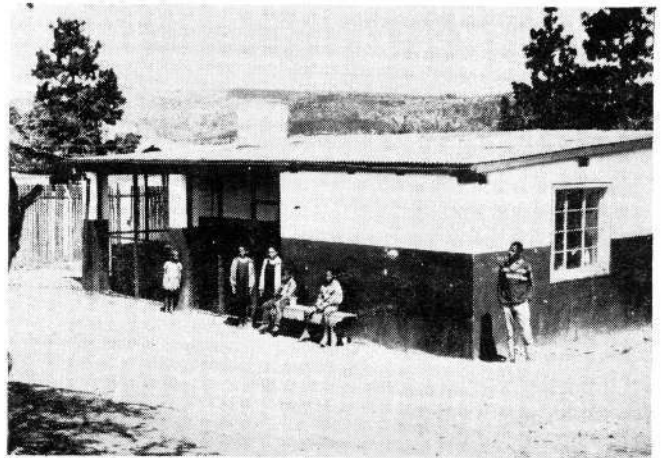
Secondly, and perhaps more important, because in no previous removal have so many near-utopian promises and assurances so repeatedly been given both in public and in private by government spokesmen.

The leading prophet of paradise has been the Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration, Dr. Piet Koornhof. After a visit to Sada, Dimbaza and Ilinge — all Ciskeian resettlement camps — he said: "What can be done to ease this misery? We must improve the situation here. We are going to do everything we possibly can." (E.P. Herald, August 7, 1971) Subsequently he asserted: "Places like Sada, Dimbaza and Ilinge will no longer be

established for widows and old folk. They will be settled in the normal well-planned modern townships and, as far as possible, near work opportunities." (E.P.Herald, September 1, 1971). More specifically, he has recently given assurance that Committees Drift will be a model development unlike that anywhere else in the country; that all services, amenities and mod. cons. — including (as he once took pains to mention) flush toilets — will be provided; that adequate employment will be available for the inhabitants; and that he will use his influence to have Grahamstown declared a decentralised "growth point" for industrial development. In short, he has said that Committees Drift will be a town of which to be proud and in which there will be no half measures, because he is not prepared to have inhumane treatment on his conscience (Daily Dispatch, December 8, 1971).

That government planners are making provision for all these amenities in resettlement areas for displaced Africans must be hailed as a significant advance, which can probably be seen partly as a result of Grahamstown's own protest and partly as a result of the more general outcry over conditions at Limehill, Morsgat and Sada and Dimbaza. But there seems to be an assumption here which really begs the question. *For without an economic base, no human settlement can be viable.* And if Committees Drift is indeed to grow into a thriving town of 200 000 (or even 100 000) people, of which both its inhabitants and South Africans in general can be proud, then it is going to require the creation of work opportunities on an enormous scale. What is more, if it is to become a settled and stable community with modern shopping centres and all other amenities, then these jobs will have to be available within commuting distance of the town, for a large absentee labour force will spend a significant proportion of its earnings elsewhere than in Committees Drift. No matter how much the government spends on providing facilities, they will be of value only if the population has enough money to afford them. A modern cinema, for example, will be of little use to the people who cannot afford the price of the tickets.

The chances of creating employment on even a modest scale at or near Committees Drift in the near future are, however, virtually nil. Firstly, apart from Port Elizabeth and East London, the Eastern Cape is an area with few natural advantages (and several disadvantages) for attracting industry. Secondly, Committees Drift itself has absolutely no existing infrastructure for industrial development — it does not even have a decent access road, let alone rail sidings, power supplies, water reticulation schemes and all the other services which are a pre-requisite for industrial development. Thirdly, only Grahamstown and King William's Town could conceivably be regarded as being within daily commuting distance from Committees. Neither of these is an existing industrial centre in any real sense, and in any event, both have severe black unemployment problems which will themselves be alleviated only after considerable economic development. Fourthly, and perhaps most telling of all, given the present priorities for industrial decentralisation and the criteria for selecting "growth points" (as laid down in last year's White Paper on the Riekert Committee Report), it must be regarded as unlikely in the extreme that the government will at this stage commit itself to large-scale expenditure on infra-structural and industrial development at or near Committees, notwithstanding the welcome support from Deputy Minister Koornhof. Moreover, designation as a "growth point" will not necessarily bring a rush of industry to Grahamstown or Committees Drift. Even East London, with all its natural advantages and with large-scale



Fingo Village

government assistance over an extended period, is still unable to provide sufficient work opportunities for the more than 100 000 inhabitants of Mdantsane township. (It should also be pointed out that the "border industries" status and concessions already granted to Grahamstown (and to many other small centres in the Eastern Cape and elsewhere) will not in themselves do much to foster industrialisation. They merely indicate that industrialists wishing to site their factories in Grahamstown may apply to the government for various concessions, but with no guarantee that these will be granted.)

Clearly, then, without the requisite scale of development, Dr. Koornhof's vision must remain a pipe dream, and the people of Committees Drift will be able to obtain employment only by enlisting as contract workers for jobs in the more established and more distant centres. Indeed, a recent official statement that they will be eligible for contract labour in the Port Elizabeth/Uitenhage industrial area would seem to give the lie to the vision. In short, the chances of establishing a settled community with stable families appear very slim.

In this light, it becomes most instructive to examine the probable position of an individual resident of Fingo Village who is moved to Committees Drift. Let us assume that this person is at present employed in Grahamstown, and that he (or she) has the requisite residential qualifications for continued residence in the Grahamstown urban area in terms of section 10(1)(a) or 10(1)(b) of the Bantu (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act of 1945. By virtue of this qualification, he will be accorded a 'privileged' status and be permitted to retain his job in Grahamstown. But he will have to commute the 45 km each way on a daily basis, using the subsidised transport which the government undertakes to sponsor. How much this transport will cost him is not known, but it will not be a negligible amount. (In 1971, the cost of daily commuting between Mdantsane and East London — a distance of only some 20 km — was approximately R5,50 per month.)¹ Nor is it known how long the return journey will take, though it will probably not be less than 45 minutes each way from terminus to terminus.² He will expect, not unreasonably, more pay and/or shorter working hours. But he will leave behind him some 20 000 other Africans in Grahamstown, who have not offended the government by owning land in a "white area," and amongst whom there will still be many unemployed people. Apart from a few exceptional cases, it is hard to believe that the supposedly privileged former resident of Fingo Village will not lose his job unless he is prepared to absorb the higher

monetary and personal costs involved in commuting. Women will probably be even harder hit in this respect than men, for the average wage of women domestics from Fingo Village in 1970 was a mere R8,42 per month.³ The dilemma of the individual worker in this situation is little short of horrifying. A further 'benefit' accruing from this 'privileged' status is that the very act of leaving Grahamstown to reside elsewhere will, presumably, result in the automatic forfeiture by the worker and his family of the very rights which it took him so many years to earn.

If, however, our exemplary Fingo Villager lacks the requisite statutory qualification, or is unemployed, or loses his job after moving to Committees, then he will have to register as a work-seeker under the contract labour system. As such, he will be eligible for employment in Grahamstown, including such border industries as that city may succeed in attracting, as well as in other centres, including the Port Elizabeth metropolitan area. This latter factor is regarded by the government as being to his advantage, for he is, at present, not able to leave Grahamstown in search of employment elsewhere without forfeiting his residential rights (if he already has them) or his years of credit towards these rights (if he does not). However, two points are relevant here. Firstly, by moving to Committees he will forfeit these rights anyhow. Secondly, in terms of the Bantu Administration Boards Act of 1971, a government committee has recently recommended that a large portion of the Eastern Cape, including Grahamstown, but not including Committees Drift, should be combined with Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage to form a single Bantu Administration Board area. The purpose of creating such areas is, amongst other, to permit Africans to move from one town to another within each Board area but without forfeiting their "section 10" qualifications. If this recommendation is accepted, our Fingo Villager will find that, had he remained in Grahamstown, he would still have been able to seek work in the Port Elizabeth metropolitan area and yet retain his residential rights. What is more, our hapless worker is going to find that by moving to Committees he will have to face competition on a very wide front. Firstly, he will be competing with all the other Africans, not only at Committees itself, but also throughout the Peddie area in particular and the Ciskeian territories in general, who will similarly be wanting work. Secondly, he may have to compete with Africans from Grahamstown and other parts of the proposed Bantu Administration Board area for employment in Port Elizabeth. And thirdly, he may well even be competing with Africans from the new Board area for jobs in his native Grahamstown! Wherever he finds work, if he finds it, he will have to leave his home and family in Committees for the dubious privileges of life in an urban hostel, from which depending on distance he will be able to return to his family at most once a week.

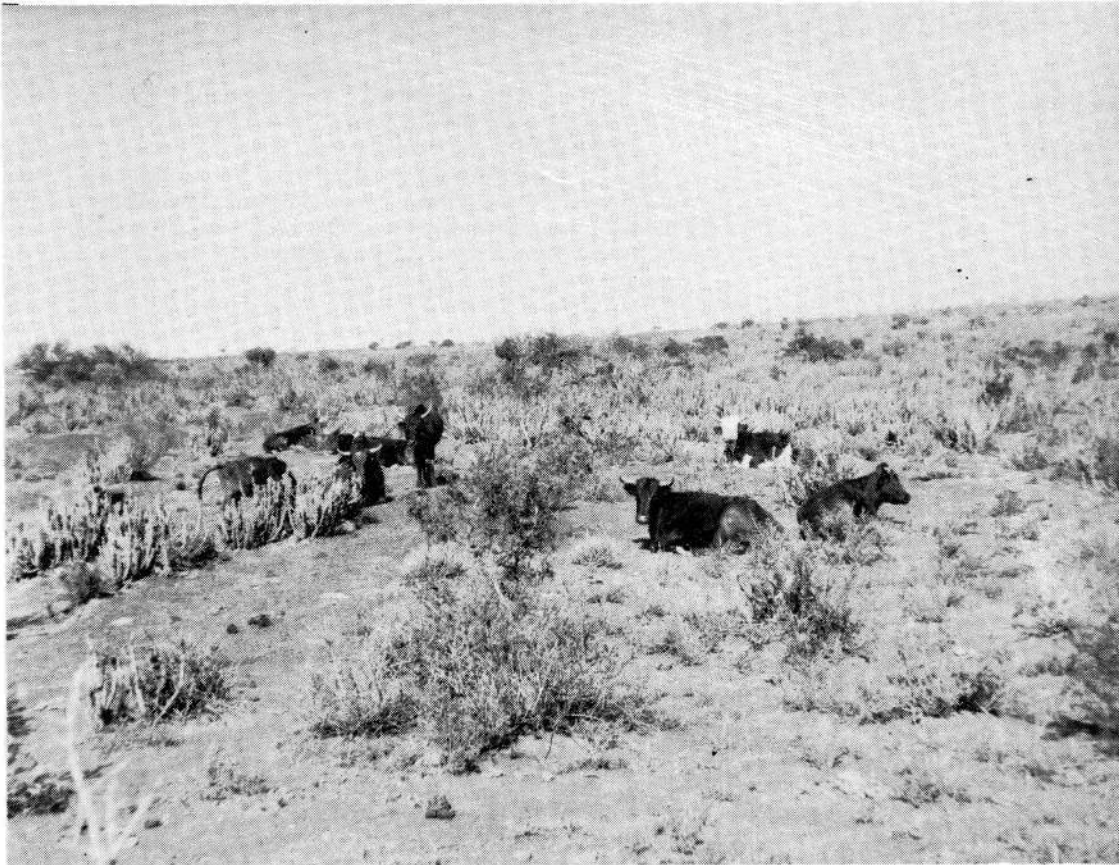
What if our Fingo Villager should happen to be an old age pensioner or a widow with a maintenance grant for her children? Where the authorities consider such a person to be "a deserving case", rent-free accommodation will be provided at Committees. But this would appear to be the only credit item. On the debit side lie three factors: firstly, many grantees currently supplement their meagre pensions with income from "odd-jobs" in and around Grahamstown; secondly, Grahamstown has a wide range

of hospital and medical facilities available either free or at very low cost to the needy; and thirdly, many pensioners derive significant support in the form of food, rations, clothing, blankets and other essentials from a variety of welfare organizations in Grahamstown. (Particularly important in this last respect are the 2 000 Fingo Village school children who, each school day receive a free fortified meal.)

At Committees, however, itinerant employment will be virtually out of the question because of transport costs; there have been no guarantees forthcoming that properly equipped and adequately staffed clinics will be provided at Committees before anyone is moved there – only assurances that all necessary facilities are being allowed for in the planning of the township; and welfare assistance, which will probably be even more sorely needed at Committees than in Grahamstown, will be far less readily available – some of Grahamstown's welfare organizations, including its most important one (GADRA), have already indicated that they will not be able to cater for the needs of a distant community with their present resources (E.P. Herald, November 24, 1971).

None of this is meant to imply that conditions in Fingo Village are ideal. On the contrary, there is poverty a-plenty to be found there; there is crime, drunkenness, and disease; there is overcrowding, illegitimacy and social and family disintegration. The causes of this are not hard to find – lack of employment; low wages; inadequate schooling facilities (and inability to afford school costs); migratory labour (some men go to seek work on the mines or special projects like the Orange-Fish river scheme); and, of course, inadequate housing provision. (This latter factor deserves special mention, because Grahamstown's African population has increased by over 10 000 in the 10-year period during which the building of houses has been prohibited, and it is small wonder that serious overcrowding has resulted. In the Fingo Village, this overcrowding, combined with the years of uncertainty for the owners of property, has caused a deterioration in the physical and environmental condition of the area. But despite the fact that it has been partly responsible for the creation of the slum conditions in Fingo Village, the government now uses these conditions as a major justification for moving the Africans out of the area.)

However bad these conditions in the Fingo Village are, they are nonetheless better than the conditions in many other parts of the Grahamstown location. Despite the general deterioration, the number of well-constructed and well-maintained houses with carefully tended gardens compares favourably with privately erected dwellings elsewhere in the location. There is also a relatively greater availability of shops, churches and other community facilities. Again, bad as these conditions are, there can be no justification for moving people elsewhere unless it can be shown conclusively that conditions in the resettlement area will be demonstrably better. But this the government has so far failed to do. In fact, despite the assurances and promises, a sober assessment of all the available facts



Committees Drift

leads to the unhappy conclusion that, far from being a model township, Committees Drift is likely to be yet another resettlement camp where unemployment, poverty, hunger, disease and suffering, and premature death will be the order of the day.

For 15 years then the fate of Fingo Village and of its inhabitants has hung in the balance. That of the settlement itself has now, and apparently irrevocably, been sealed; that of the people is perhaps even more uncertain now than before. That they must move appears inevitable; but whether it will be a move from poverty to paradise is very much open to question. □

1. Calculated from figures given on page 130 of Muriel Horrell's "A survey of Race Relations in S.A., 1971".
2. In all likelihood, the typical Fingo Villager will not have been incurring transport costs before moving to Committees Drift. A survey in 1970 revealed that 81% of all working Africans in the Fingo Village normally walked to work ("Fingo Village", by Marianne Roux and Molly St. Leger, published by S.A. Institute of Race Relations).
3. From Roux and St. Leger, "Fingo Village."

BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS AND WHITE LIBERALS

By Richard Turner

The argument between "black consciousness" and "white liberalism" is heading towards greater confusion. Important problems of goals and tactics underlie the argument, but at the moment these issues are being obscured by misconceptions and by semantical confusions. In this article I want to look at one or two of these specific issues rather than to give an evaluation of the situation as a whole.

The major misperception is to see "black consciousness" as essentially an attack on "white liberalism", and nothing more. In fact, the attack is directed essentially against "white racist society" (SASO manifesto Point 1), and the question of "white liberals" is considered to be of relatively minor importance. It has been given disproportionate significance in the way in which the white press has reported "black consciousness" meetings. For obvious ideological reasons there has been an attempt to distort "black consciousness" in an attempt to discredit both "black consciousness" and "white liberals" simultaneously.

To untangle the confusions it seems to me to be useful to distinguish between two different points which are being made about "white liberals". The first point is that, as a group, white opponents of apartheid are not a significant political force, and are certainly not going to be the chief agent in the overthrow of apartheid. It would therefore be wrong for blacks to orient their political activity towards an appeal to whites to help them. There has always been a tendency for black political organisations to make appeals to the moral sensibility of the whites. It is this strategy that is being attacked by proponents of "black consciousness". And of course they are quite right to attack it. Blacks cannot leave their case to be argued by whites in the context of white political institutions.

ASSUMPTIONS OF SUPREMACY

The second point that is being made is that the behaviour and beliefs of "white liberals" often constitute a striking example of precisely how deep the assumptions of white supremacy run. It is in this sense that an analysis of the phenomenon of "white liberalism" is important to the case of "black consciousness".

However, it seems to me that their analysis is confused by a very loose use of the concept "liberal". To put it another way, the range of attitudes lumped together and described by the term "white liberalism" is uselessly broad. I shall first develop the critique of "white liberalism", and then attempt to present a more precise set of categories in which to embody the critique.

According to point six of the Saso manifesto: "Saso believes that all groups allegedly working for "Integration" in South Africa — and here we note in particular the Progressive Party and other Liberal institutions — are not working for the kind of integration that would be acceptable to the Black man. Their attempts are directed merely at relaxing certain oppressive legislations and to allow Blacks into a White-type society". That is, they are considering "an assimilation of Blacks into an already established set of norms drawn up and motivated by White society". (Point 5)

The point here is that this attitude remains arrogant, paternalistic and basically insulting. It involves the acceptance of the idea that to behave like whites is the

ideal; it is to accept the concept of the "civilising mission" of the whites, the idea that, although blacks are not biologically inferior, they are culturally inferior. They may be educable, but they need whites to educate them.

For any group to treat another like this would be unpleasant, but for whites to make this sort of assumption about their cultural superiority is also laughable. It is arguable that the main "contribution" of western civilisation to human history was the development of a new and higher level of exploitation of person by person, and of a new and higher level of materialism. The theoretical Christian principles of Europe were contradicted by the factual concentration on the acquisition of material goods through the efficient exploitation of one's neighbours. Christian Europe was based on servile labour and, as it expanded, internally with the development of industrial capitalism, and externally through imperial conquest, it refined the mechanisms of exploitation. The working class at home, the "natives" abroad, were so much raw material for the accumulation of wealth. Naturally more efficient accumulation led to better science and technology, grander architecture, more sophisticated cultural leisure-time pursuits for the rich, and so to the illusion of superiority in "civilisation". But this superiority was based on an ethical void. Whites are where they are in the world essentially through having developed a great capacity to wield force ruthlessly in pursuit of their own ends. That is, there is an integral relationship between the nature of the culture of the whites and the fact of their dominance in South Africa. The refusal of blacks to want to be "like whites" is not racism. It is good taste.

THREE CATEGORIES

In the light of the above, I would now like to suggest that it would be useful to use three categories to classify the political attitudes of whites in South Africa: racist, liberal and radical. Racists believe that blacks are biologically inferior or "different". Liberals believe that "western civilisation" is adequate, and superior to other forms, but also that blacks can, through education, attain the level of western civilisation. It is worth noting that many blacks have also accepted this position. Booker T. Washington in the United States, J.T. Jabavu, and the early leadership of the ANC, are examples. Radicals believe that "white" culture itself is at fault, and that both blacks and whites need to go beyond it and create a new culture.

It is important to notice that all three of these categories apply to blacks as well as to whites. There are black racists of all kinds, black liberals, and black radicals. Black consciousness is a form of radicalism. So far the argument has been formulated in terms of the categories "liberalism" and "racism", with resulting confusion on both sides. The introduction of the third category enables us to clear up these confusions, and to point to the real problem, which is the need for a new culture.

OBJECTIONS

Two objections are likely to be raised to this classification. Firstly, the term "liberal" has a long tradition. It is normally understood as referring to a set of beliefs about the limits of government, the importance of the rule of law, the rights of freedom of speech and assembly, and so on. Now obviously in this sense radicals, including proponents of black consciousness, can also be liberals. The problem here is whether we are to accept the traditional meaning of the word, or the meaning which has tended to become associated with the word in South Africa, particularly amongst blacks. Perhaps the only solution is to remember the ambiguity which the term has now acquired.

The second objection, from the direction of black consciousness, is in its strong form, that whites cannot be radical, and in its weak form that the existence of white radicals obscures the issues, prevents the development of self-consciousness amongst blacks, and so politically is no different from the existence of white liberals. The strong version is obviously untrue. To show that the weak version is also untrue, it is necessary to indicate what positive role there is for white radicals to play.

In an interview in 1969, Eldridge Cleaver was asked the following question: "Since the National Conference on New Politics, held two summers ago, what we have seen for the most part is not viable working coalitions, but whites acquiescing to the blacks, somewhat because of guilt feelings, rather than offering constructive criticism. What effect does this have on such a coalition?" Cleaver replied: "The guilt problem is part of the racial heritage of America. But such guilt feelings make many people non-functional from our point of view. This stance of acquiescence can be detrimental if a black is advocating a bad programme. Such a white cannot distinguish between what different blacks are saying; all he recognises is that a black is saying it. Motivation that is spurred by guilt doesn't make for reliable whites, and we have had many problems with people of this type." (The Nation Jan. 29, 1969)

PATERNALISM

The attitude that Cleaver is criticising is in fact the ultimate in white paternalism. "White" because it involves, on another level the "They all look alike" mentality of racism; "paternalism" because it treats blacks as being incapable of listening to criticism and engaging in rational argument. Thus one must not confuse a) the fact that any political policy/strategy in South Africa must have as its unquestionable basis the objective of satisfying the needs of the black masses, irrespective of whether this clashes with white interests, with b) the idea that one must go along with the policy/strategy of any particular black leader just because he/she claims to be aiming at that goal. A political strategy has to be rooted in the needs of a particular group or groups, but it is also something which can be argued about in terms of objective criteria. Will the strategy work? Is it based upon an adequate analysis of the situation? In such discussions what is important is the validity of the argument, rather than the colour of the arguer. Even if there is to be, as is probably necessary, a tactical division of labour between white and black opponents of white supremacy, the results of their activities will be interrelated, and so will benefit from conscious co-ordination. In "private life" one has a right to demand to do one's own thing. But in politics the way I do my thing has implications for the way you do your thing.

Thus, for whites, in the face of the phenomenon of "black consciousness", to believe that they must now simply shut up and leave it to the blacks would be a serious

mistake. Nevertheless, whites do need to re-evaluate themselves and their political roles, particularly in the light of two specific criticisms. For it is argued that in South Africa a black is likely to be much more politically effective than a white a) because there are no barriers between him/her and other blacks; and b) he/she is immediately, by the very fact of being black, pushed into political action. The white, on the other hand, is continually tempted by the possibility of a return to a life of privilege, and is in any event only working with blacks to work out his/her own personal psychological problems, in order to "find himself through contact with the Black man" (SASO News Letter Vol. 1, No. 3).

OVER-SIMPLIFICATION

However, although these points are important for whites to consider, it is also important for blacks to realise that they all involve over-simplification if they are absolutised. Even leaving aside the difficulties arising from divisions amongst black groups, there are two other problems here. 1) The idea that blacks can immediately communicate with blacks, and cannot meaningfully communicate at all with whites, involves an inadequate theory of communication. No two individuals have the same experience of the world. This means that they will always see things in more or less different ways. So communication between two people is always difficult. It is made more or less difficult by the size of the gap between the two sets of experience, and by the skill or otherwise of the two communicators in trying to put themselves into one another's shoes. In South Africa a black and white will usually have had very different experiences, and this is likely to complicate communication. But it is not an absolute gap. Also, different blacks have different life experiences. They have in common the experience of being discriminated against, but each individual experiences this in terms of his/her own particular social situation and personality. There may also be areas of their lives where their experiences are entirely different — a wealthy, educated urban Indian man has a life experience different in many respects from that of a poor African peasant woman, and communication problems are likely to result. 2) The idea that blacks are automatically political, while whites only engage in politics for contingent personal reasons is a similar over-simplification. Whether or not individuals move out of the circle of their private concerns into the sphere of public co-operative action with their fellows is always a matter of choice. However bad an individual's situation is, he/she risks something in some ways worse by trying to change it — he/she risks being endorsed out, or losing the meagre salary he/she does have, or perhaps going to prison. Thus one has to make a choice, and that choice involves some sort of reflection on oneself and on one's own values. Some situations make this choice easier than do other situations. In particular, it is perhaps easier for a black to make this choice than it is for a white. But the difference is one of degree, not of kind.

Thus in both cases, the question of political action and the question of communication, there is a difference of degree, rather than of kind, between black and white, and there are also other factors to take into account besides colour. Even if colour is the main factor, and the difference of degree is very large, as is probably the case in South Africa today, it is nevertheless important to bear in mind the nature of the difference. For if black leaders believe that they have an intuitive understanding of the needs of the black people, and no need to motivate them to act politically, then they are not likely to be very effective leaders.

DIMENSION

To misperceive this difference of degrees as a difference of kind is also to ignore a further crucial dimension to the question of change in South Africa. Black consciousness is a rejection of the idea that the ideal for human kind is "to be like the whites". This should lead to the recognition that it is also bad for whites "to be like the whites". That is, the whites themselves are oppressed in South Africa. In an important sense both whites and blacks are oppressed, though in different ways, by a social system which perpetuates itself by creating white lords and black slaves, and no full human beings. Material privilege is bought at the cost of mental atrophy. The average white South African is scarcely one of the higher forms of life. For whites who have recognised this the desire to change South Africa is not merely the desire "to do something for the blacks". It is the urgent need for personal dignity and the air of freedom and love.

Having said all this, I would like to return to my earlier assertion that white critics of white supremacy are not a significant political force. This statement needs qualification in two ways. Firstly, although as a group white radicals are not a vital force, many of them have skills which make them useful as individuals in political activity.

Secondly, there is one major area of political work where they are perhaps best equipped to work. This is, as proponents of black consciousness have pointed out, in the area of changing white consciousness. It is vitally important to analyse the ways in which whites oppress themselves, and to devise ways of bringing home to them the extent to which the pursuit of material self-interest empties their lives of meaning.

LITTLE THOUGHT

Very little thought has been given to this problem. The characteristic "liberal" approach has been either to argue that the end of apartheid is really in the material interest of the whites, or else simply to appeal to abstract ethical principles, as against material self-interest, without making any attempt to show how the infringement of these principles vitiates the unique life of each individual. Whilst whites are wedded to materialism they will fight against change. In order to bring about this change as smoothly as possible there should be as many whites as possible who want to become full human beings and who recognise that to do so requires co-operation with all their fellows in changing South Africa.

At present, white consciousness is cabbage consciousness a mindless absorption of material from the environment. The synthesis which both Steve Biko and Alan Paton were looking for, the synthesis of cabbage consciousness and its antithesis black consciousness, is human consciousness, and it is the possibilities and promises of human consciousness that we all need to explore.

I have tried to show in this article where the attacks by "black consciousness" on "white liberalism" are justified, and where they are too sweeping. Finally I would like to say that it seems to me that the time has come when both sides could fruitfully bury the argument. By now it should be clear to even the most insensitively paternalistic "white liberal" that he or she needs to examine his or her values very carefully indeed. For the proponents of black consciousness the best way to convince black people that salvation will not come from "white liberals" is by simply getting on with the work of community organisation.

OTHELLO IS NO MOOR!

Rand Daily Mail

CAPE TOWN.— A unique presentation of Shakespeare's "Othello" opens at Cape Town's Space Theatre on June 22 — without an Othello.

This is because British playwright Donald Howarth, on finding that he was not allowed to cast a Black man in an all-White production, has adapted the play to conform with the rules of South Africa. He has overcome the problem by reconstructing the play, leaving out the Moor, Othello, and introducing three new characters.

He says in spite of this the play does not differ drastically from Shakespeare's original version. In rewriting some of the lines Mr. Howarth has adhered to established "Shakespearean language" but emphasises that he has tried to make the action more suitable to modern times.

Mr. Howarth, who once firmly supported the British boycott of South African theatre, said that after meeting Athol Fugard and Yvonne Bryceland during the London run of the play *Bosman and Lena*, decided to come to South Africa to take a "closer look." He said he had grown tired of the "total freedom" of Britain.

Discussing the strong comic elements of *Othello* he said that people were "so serious as to be almost inhuman." He said he wanted to crack this attitude and make people laugh. However, with his limited knowledge of South African audiences he was "slightly apprehensive".

DR. JOHNSON ON SOUTH AFRICA

On the Republic in general

- (1) "It is a most unnatural state, for we see there the minority prevailing over the majority.
- (2) "Where a great proportion of the people are suffered to languish in hopeless misery, that country must be wretchedly governed: a decent provision for the poor is the true test of civilisation."

On Nationalist speakers about Afrikaans-haters

"Sir, you have but two topics, yourself and me. I am heartily sick of both."

On Banning

"Where secrecy or mystery begins, vice and roguery are not far off."

On election speeches

"When a butcher tells you that his heart bleeds for his country, he has in fact no uneasy feeling."

On certain speakers

"A wicked fellow is the most pious when he takes to it. He'll beat you all at piety."

On the Budget

"You may have a reason why two and two should make five; but they will still make but four."

On Commissioners to the Bantu

"There is nothing more likely to betray a man into absurdity than condescension, when he seems to suppose his understanding too powerful for the company."

On stopping fishing on Sundays

"While half the Christian world is permitted to dance and sing and celebrate Sunday as a day of festivity, how comes your puritanical spirit so offended with frivolous and empty deviations from exactness?"

Any Minister at election time

"Sir, patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel."

Two reflections after reading Hansard

(1) Boswell: "Suppose we believe one half of what he tells."

Johnson: "Ay, but we don't know *which* half to believe."

(2) "In the tumult of conversation, malice is apt to grow sprightly."

On "Current Affairs" on the S.A.B.C.

"They excite in my mind no ideas and hinder me from contemplating my own."

THE GRANTS

The departure of Rev. G.C. ("Jack") and Ida Grant for North America, where their children are and where they hope to retire, marks the end of many years of selfless and devoted service to the peoples of Southern Africa. They have had some hard rows to hoe. Jack was the last, and by no means the least distinguished, of the Principals of Adams College, and had the heart-breaking task of fighting its last battles and seeing it taken over by the Government and by "Bantu education". Then he went up to Rhodesia to work for the United Church Board for World Ministries (incorporating the old American Board of Missions) and found himself up against U.D.I. and the Ian Smith ministry. He fought a good fight over many years, under every disadvantage, but with a brave heart that did not understand the word "surrender".

Ida Grant, a born South African, was not only a help to Jack as every good wife is a help to her husband, but a doughty fighter in her own person and help to many both at Adams and in Rhodesia.

The early Church would have canonized them as "Confessors" – those who had the spirit of the Martyrs though they did not actually suffer death. "Reality" would like to include their names in the list of Liberal Confessors in Southern Africa.

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