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1976 was a watershed year.

It saw the independence of the Transkei, the first visible sign of the so-called equal side of the policy of separate but equal development, which is yet too inequitable to make the Transkei either viable or acceptable in the eyes of most of the rest of the world.

It saw the widespread escalation of rioting and violence — the tangible expression of the dissatisfaction of the great majority of the people of South Africa with their lot.

It saw the application of strongarm methods of riot control and the broad and arbitrary utilisation of all the repressive legislation presently “adorning” the Statute Book.

It saw a militant Black Africa approaching ever closer to the boundaries of South Africa — civil war in Angola with unfortunate South African interference, the entrenchment of Marxism in Mozambique, military incursions into Rhodesia, dissension at Turnhalle and the almost total collapse of Mr Vorster’s dream of detente in Africa — a dream he thought he could fulfil without doing anything to defuse the racial tension within South Africa itself.

It saw a collapse of the economy of the country, galloping inflation, growing unemployment, a reduction in the “good life” for White South Africa and increasingly stark poverty for Black South Africa.

It saw a crisis situation which the Government steadfastly refused to recognise as such, expressing only its determination to restore law and order at any cost, obstinately digging in its heels and seeming even to retreat from its decision of the previous year to remove discrimination and to make concessions. The concessions it did make were too few, too late and too hemmed around with “ifs” and “buts”.

But 1976 also saw the emergence of relatively considerable, articulate, Afrikaner dissension, particularly in the Afrikaans Press and amongst the intellectuals. There were signs that at last

the granite was beginning to crumble, at least on its edges. But there was a concomitant hardening within the solid core and the Government appeared to be heeding its gut rather than its grey matter.

It saw the emergence of Women for Peace — a broad-based attempt by women across the entire political and colour spectrum to get together, find common cause and work towards peace. Women for Peace must be credited with the creation of a representative platform, but may well find itself hamstrung as a result of its efforts to retain its unanimity. However, its wide appeal has involved more women than any other movement since the inception of the Black Sash 21 years ago.

It saw a belated but nevertheless encouraging attempt by the various opposition parties to form a united and therefore more effective opposition, one which might conceivably be able to apply a brake to the Government juggernaut. If it does become viable the most important plank on its platform will be that decision-making must be shared, for unless the Black people of this country are speedily involved in the government of this country the point of no return will have passed and the choice between confrontation and co-operation will have evaporated.

It is a measure of the state of unreality in which we live that so much interest and hope have been generated by the Kowie Marais Commission. If it is successful it will succeed merely in forming an opposition — scarcely cause for rejoicing when there is such urgent need for change and so little likelihood of unseating this intransigent Government even with a united opposition.

What is needed — now — is a national convention representing every singly section of the community, to hammer out a new dispensation which will dovetail and fulfil the rights and requirements of all in this land. This is no easy task, but anything else is irrelevant.

Problems of political power

FREDERICK VAN ZYL SLABBERT

*An address by Dr Slabbert, MP, to a symposium entitled Are We Civilised?
organised by the Union of Jewish Women*

THE question should not be: "Is politics in South Africa civilised?", but rather: "Does politics allow the kind of civilisation which the majority of people, subject to decisions of state, want?"

This reformulation allows comparative analysis of politics and civilisation and in order to answer it for ourselves, let us consider some key problems that any society faces with regard to the state's monopoly of political power.

No doubt there are many others but I would briefly like to consider four key problems of politics about which a great deal has been written. These are the problems of stability, control, decision-making and change.

They are closely interdependent and more often than not simply highlight different aspects of the same problem.

● Political stability is almost pre-conditional for long term administration and planning as well as foreign confidence. Stability simply means the absence of dramatic and or frequent succession of political control as well as the absence of arbitrary violence, and upheavals within a society.

S. M. Lipsett has identified two variables which he regards as crucial for stability: the legitimacy or support of government and its effectiveness. More closely defined legitimacy means: the ability of government to elicit the voluntary support of major interest groups and sections of the population in society.

Legitimacy is defined here in a sociological sense, i.e. the sense in which groups and sections in the society demonstrate their support for government as being the acceptable government.

Effectiveness on the other hand, has to do with the ability of government to meet the material needs of the major interest groups and sections of the population in society.

This definition makes it clear that the effectiveness of government is closely linked to the state and potential of the economy and the manner in which government exploits this.

Even if a government does not enjoy high legitimacy, or support, i.e. support from major interest groups and sections in society, it can still maintain a reasonable degree of political stability if it is effective in meeting the material needs of these interest groups and sections in society.

Political instability will increase, however, if there is a downturn in the economy and when this happens, problems of legitimacy will compound the problems of ineffectiveness.

One way for government to re-establish stability and avoid problems of legitimacy, or support, is to get the economy on the move again. This can be a tall order in the highly interdependent and industrialised world we live in, where fluctuations in the economies of other societies reverberate on one's own.

● Closely linked to problems of stability are, of course, problems of political control, i.e. the measures and methods adopted by government to cope with problems of instability. Talcott Parsons, the well known American theorist in sociology, has applied his mind in several of his works to this issue and, briefly, some of his insights are as follows:

There is an inverse relationship between coercion and consensus in government's attempt to control the political order in society. Consensus refers to the voluntary co-operation of subjects, whereas coercion refers to the use of force or physical deprivation to establish co-operation.

It has been argued that even though it is sometimes necessary for a government to use coercive measures to control problems of instability, once such control has been established it is in government's own interest to make concessions to the sources of discontent, so that conditions for demonstrating consensus can be re-established.

An alternative to this possibility is that a government can maintain control even for fairly long periods of instability. Thus, Lipsett points out that governments in many African states with a poor economic infrastructure, experience continued difficulties with legitimacy and effectiveness and thus resort to interim military regimes as a means of maintaining coercive control, though in the long term, of course, such control is inherently unstable.

● Political decision-making has experienced the most fundamental changes during the 20th Century. Directly related to these changes is the conception of belief in the accountability of government. Accountability simply means that those affected by political decisions can call to account those who take such decisions, and the most familiar illustration of this is the extension of political participation to the average citizen.

This is in effect what democratic government means and it is argued that democracy allows for the highest degree of accountability on the part of government.

But the accountability of government and its effectiveness do not necessarily go hand in hand. For example, when there is a frequent change of government by electoral means, long term planning becomes impossible and therefore high accountability can compound the problem of ineffectiveness.

The problem of accountable government is, of course, particularly relevant to the underdeveloped or Third World. Modernisation theorists have argued that given the problems of industrialisation and urbanisation facing these governments it would be better to forego the advantages of accountable government by having a strong modernising oligarchy with coercive control pushing the society towards greater economic development.

This, however, is purely an academic argument, because if it happens to be a matter of fact that the majority of citizens believe and want accountable government, then any government that ignores such pressures will very soon experience problems of instability and control.

With the extension of accountable government, particularly in Western Europe and the United States of America, has been the development of the tradition of divorcing state and government.

The state is seen as a more or less permanent structure where police, military and courts provide the stability within which a particular government can attempt to implement its policies. If it is not successful, it is substituted through the electoral process by another.

Consequently, where there is a low accountability of government the distinction between government, state, police, military and legal process becomes blurred and are all seen as part of the instruments of political control.

Accountability has become such a universally accepted value for judging systems of government that whether the actual conditions for realising it are present or not, without exception, governments will claim that they are acting on behalf, or in the interests, of "the people".

Ironically "the people", or some of them, will at some or other stage demonstrate whether they accept this as valid or not. This demonstration can of course vary from the peaceful rejection of the claim through electoral means to more violent manifestations such as coups, riots or revolutions.

Because accountability plays such an important part in modern politics one can briefly relate it to the other variables which have been discussed. Thus accountability appears to stand in a more positive correlation to legitimacy, and consensus than it does with effectiveness and coercion, although a number of cross correlations can lead to interesting hypotheses.

● I would suggest that in the political context change is most closely linked to the redistributive function of the government. When significant interest groups or sections of the population become dissatisfied with the pattern of redistribution of government pressures for changing the quantity and/or quality of redistribution will develop.

These pressures lie at the heart of political conflict in any society and those who feel aggrieved at government can articulate their demand for change in utopian or incremental terms.

As a rule of thumb, I would suggest that the lower the legitimacy and effectiveness of government, the greater the degree of coercion and the greater the absence of accountability, the more likely that demands for change will be radical, utopian and violent.

Whatever the particular case may be, the problem of change for government is directly related to its ability to accommodate conflict. Conflict, i.e. the competition for scarce resources, is the most reliable indicator of the demand for political change in a society.

Governments can negotiate conflict more or less peacefully or simply try to suppress it by coercive means. R. Dahrendorf, a German sociologist, wrote a fascinating book titled, *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society*, in which he pointed out that the one test for political stability in a society was not whether there was conflict in society or not (he regarded conflict as being present in any society), but whether the government created the instruments to negotiate conflict in a more or less peaceful and rational manner. To the extent that such instruments were not available conflict resolution would be more violent and radical.

Within the political context this simply means that whenever government is confronted with an aggrieved group demanding change and that group has no freedom of organisation and communication among its members, has no regular and representative leadership and the legitimacy of the group's claims are not recognised by government, then conflict will most likely be arbitrary, with the possibility of violence becoming the major means for applying pressures for change.

This, however, can result in a vicious circle in which coercion has to be used to contain violence which in turn precludes the possibility of effective instruments for conflict resolution developing.

Thus, the absence of instruments for effective conflict resolution can in turn exacerbate the other problems of legitimacy, effectiveness, control and accountability for government.

A government may: be low on legitimacy, make extensive use of coercive measures to control instability; not be accountable to the majority of its citizens and have inadequate instruments for negotiating conflict, and yet, it can for a con-

siderable period, monopolise political power if it can effectively meet the material needs of the major interest groups and sections of the population.

In short, given a growth-oriented economy and a healthy infrastructure, a government that wisely exploits these resources can remain in control and cope with most of the key problems of political control that I have discussed.

But, it is always a precarious control, for if the economy should not respond to the government's policies then these problems will present themselves with an intensity greater than can be expected in more "normal" political orders.

There are many more problems related to the "generation, distribution and use of political power" in a society, but perhaps those that have been discussed provide us with a tentative framework in terms of which we may briefly take a look at politics in South Africa.

It would perhaps be fruitful to use the various factors I have mentioned and frame questions under them with reference to particular circumstances in South Africa.

The implicit approach in framing these questions would be to identify trends and developments in South Africa which pose problems for the political order in terms of its support or legitimacy; its effectiveness; the degree of consensus or coercion; the accountability of government and the available instruments for negotiating conflict.

Support

● What are the available organisations at the disposal of the various groups in South Africa in terms of which they can demonstrate their support for, or rejection of government and their acceptance of its initiatives and policies?

Can we conclude that the available organisation for Whites, Coloureds, Asians and Blacks are equally representative and adequate for demonstrating such support?

Effectiveness

● South Africa is blessed with vast economic resources. To what extent is the redistributive function of government adequate to meet the material needs of the various interest groups and sections of the population or is it a potential source of conflict between its citizens?

Our economy is based on the principle of free enterprise: Is there a possible contradiction between the economic implications of government policy and the exploitation of our economic resources on the principle of free enterprise?

Coercion

● We have very severe coercive measures in South Africa. To what extent is the use of coercion by government intended to control an interim period of instability in order to establish

more favourable conditions for eliciting consensus from the major interest groups and sections of the population, or not?

If these coercive measures did not exist would the organisations that could develop among Blacks, Coloureds, and Asians, display consensus with or rejection of government initiatives?

Accountability

● At present we have a racially entrenched electoral process in South Africa where White voters can call the government to account for its decisions in relatively peaceful manner. What other forms of accountability are available to non-voters where they can do the same?

Is it possible for government to transfer some of its powers to the Black, Coloured and Asian political institutions it has created, so that their representatives can be adequately accountable to the people over which they will have separate control or will we have a situation where a Black citizen will be subject to political decisions from different sources of government?

Negotiation

● It is obvious that South Africa is a country locked in conflict. Conflict between those who have effective monopoly of political power and those who do not; between those who, on racial grounds, have easier access to social and economic opportunities and those who do not.

What are the available instruments at government disposal to negotiate the conflict between Black and White as rationally and peacefully as possible? How effective, representative and autonomous are these instruments for conflict negotiation?

Where such instruments do not exist, how can government create them without contradicting its own policy initiatives?

Obviously one can ask many more questions. I tried to frame these on as general a level as possible because I do believe that if they are taken seriously and investigated in more detail, one would be in a position to give a more reasoned response to the question: "Does the political order in South Africa provide the kind of civilisation that the people subject to political decision making want?"

All indications point to the satisfaction of the majority of Whites in this respect but it is (to put it in the delightfully cautious language of the academic) not clear whether the same can be said for the majority of the rest who are subject to political control.

How this problem can be solved and whether the overall majority will get the civilisation they want is, of course, an entirely different question and not the one I was asked to consider. However, I do believe that on the answer to the latter question hinges the possibility of a more peaceful future for all of us in this land.

From Lisbon to Soweto

A. W. STADLER

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THE significance of the disturbances which began in June last year in Soweto and other areas cannot be fully assessed (nor freely commented on) until after the judicial commission of inquiry has made its report. But in trying to understand them, it is also necessary to recognise the specific conjunction of the changes which were being registered locally and internationally by early 1974.

The collapse of the Portuguese dictatorship (intimately connected with its inability to stop the rot in its colonial empire) exposed South Africa to stronger winds of change than the formation of independent states during the sixties had done, partly because of the strategic situation of the former Portuguese colonies, but also because they are not simple successor states, and promise a radical departure from the post-colonial states constituted in much of the rest of sub-Saharan Africa.

The impact of these developments might have been less marked had it not been accompanied by the economic crisis which began spreading through the industrial countries during the early 1970s and which deeply affected third world states. Within a few years the dominant political order was stripped of two protections — the strategic and military cocoon provided by the Portuguese colonies and the expansion of its industrial economy which brought some measure of international neutrality.

Furthermore, industrial expansion served to secure the acquiescence of large groups of Whites, apathetic at best towards the Government. It also permitted the Government some room for manoeuvre in responding to pressures from particular groups of Blacks, in that affluence placated White working class opinion, which in harder times might be expected to resist attempts to tamper with the protection offered by apartheid legislation.

The particular conjunction of the changing economic situation with the shift in the regional balance of power has therefore thrown timetables for piecemeal change radically out of kilter. The pressure for much more rapid, far-reaching and significant change now concatenates with heightened resistance to change.

Of course the relationship between Government and its constituents has also been changing. The industrial development of the 1960s brought a self-confident and aggressive Afrikaner middle-class to prominence. With some exceptions the Afrikaner working class has become relatively less militant. Agriculture is much more centrally organised and controlled. The bureaucracy enjoys a more powerful role in allocating resources.

In brief, the state is much less the instrument of the forces which brought it to power, and symptomatically the old populist formulae which linked Party, Volk and State is less often heard — Government has become more remote from its other bases than previously.

But it is a long way from finding any roots in alternative groups in society. Indeed the most confident prediction is that authoritarian measures will be increasingly necessary.

Mechanisms such as the development of self-government in the homelands were never successful, even in favourable conditions, in substituting tribe-based political structures for the universalist goals formulated by the Black nationalist movements prescribed during the early sixties. The Transkei, for instance, has operated for 20 years under the protection of Proclamation R400, which empowers the executive to detain those of its opponents which it finds threatening.

Perhaps underpinning the authoritarian structure of the homelands' governments is a desperate matter of survival — any political group which gets its hands on the rudder of the state and the resources which go with it is not likely to be fussy about the methods it uses in order to keep in power.

The tension in these areas between pro-Government elites and other groups is likely to be heightened by changes both in the economy and in the international situation. The Black rural areas contain the most impoverished groups in South Africa, and their condition is likely to deteriorate markedly — indeed there are signs that this deterioration is already alarming.

Secondly some of the homelands lie in problematic strategic areas — Eastern and Western

Transvaal; Northern Natal. Their inhabitants are men of the periphery in terms of their situation in both economy and policy.

The situation in the rural periphery is often contrasted with that in the urban areas, but the latter is both continuous and intimately connected with the former. The simplest and most obvious connection between them is that rural landlessness and impoverishment supply the force impelling Blacks into industrial employment. While the crisis is not likely to provide a basis for common political action between Blacks in the urban industrial areas and on the land (at least not in the foreseeable future) the situation is likely to produce mutual repercussions.

It has long been a postulate of White critics of the Government that urban Black industrial workers stratified into classes might generate, somewhat on the model of the industrial states of the West, a basis for alliances between White middle class and Black skilled workers, and that to this end measures like granting property rights and lifting of racial employment codes were necessary to depolarise racial conflict.

Implicitly this position assumed that one danger to White hegemony lay in the possibility of an alliance between rural and urban Blacks.

To the exponents of such a position, the Government's position, which denied the permanent existence of Blacks in the cities, must have been exasperatingly obtuse, but in fact the Government resisted pleas for a "multi-racial" solution of this kind for two perfectly rational reasons.

Firstly, to end racial discrimination would put the interests of much of its support among the White working classes at jeopardy. Secondly (partly connected with the important source of Government support in agriculture), its position flowed from the State's critical function in standing command over the rural hinterland of South Africa's industrial enclaves.

For ultimately the control of labour to the mines, to industry, and to "White" agriculture is the central economic function of the South African State. In this it duplicates the functioning of the "market" in early capitalist states, and resembles the activities of the Japanese and Prussian states during their coercive drive to industrial development.

Mainly for these reasons the option to liberalise its policy in urban areas was largely closed off. Yet, to look at the matter again from the perspective of the controlling interests within the urban areas, the need to make some gestures towards liberalisation was imperative.

Despite the devastating effect of security legislation on the expression of nationalist and (*sub voce*) socialist aspirations, and on attempts by workers to organise effective machinery for industrial action and negotiation, political activity

in Black areas achieved expression, notably in the Black consciousness movements and worker activity.

The response from various White groups, sometimes with connections among Blacks, was both unusual and significant. It was to attempt to inculcate the assumption that a trajectory of developments, different from that projected by either the state or the most "militant" Black groups, was a possibility which could be worked for.

The areas in which this latent potential for change could be developed were legion, but attention centred heavily in three areas: industrial relations, education and urban housing. There was room in each area, it was implied, for the realisation of a harmonious and equitable relationship between the races, at least in urban areas, which would avoid the "excesses" of the most intransigent Whites on the one hand and the Pandora's box which might be opened should Black nationalists or militant unionists succeed in gaining a significant following.

Education seems to me to be the area in which the most interesting processes can be observed at work, which encapsulated most perfectly the assumptions of the reformers, and which links together most characteristically the diverse aspects of the crisis which has been generated over the last two years or so.

The central function of modern education has become the production of the different components of an industrial society's work-force through schools, universities and technical institutions (including agricultural schools geared to realising the industrial potential of agriculture.)

Educational establishments are simultaneously central in propagating the ideology of industrial society — they inculcate not only the skills valued in the industrial economy but also the habits of deference, the competitive compulsion, habituation to the endurance of tedium and other traits of industrial man. Supremely, however, they serve to inculcate the central tenet of industrial civilisation — the belief in social mobility.

The general assumption that intelligence, hard work and perseverance will be rewarded with an improvement in living standards and life styles is carefully inculcated in the school system. The belief in education as a means for achieving upward social mobility has become in some societies a major agency of social control and of political stability.

Yet, by an inversion which is perfectly easy to understand, such an assumption is also potentially a major stimulant of conflict. In a situation in which the belief that education opens opportunities jars against the reality of shrinking employment prospects, it is possible to envisage a sharp political crisis when people find their certificates do not get them jobs.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Joyce Harris

The melting pot

PHILIP MAYER

MANY "tribal" groups are represented in Soweto, speaking mutually unintelligible languages and having different backgrounds of custom and tradition. This raises two important questions. First, whether the individual identifies primarily with his ethnic group, or "tribe", conceiving it as a clearly bounded group in opposition to other similar groups within the urban setting.

This is the problem of political ethnicity — an ideological alternative to either African nationalism or nonracial South Africanism; second, whether Blacks in town continue to practice cultural ethnicity; i.e., whether they adhere to ethnic customs, norms, values and symbols, including, of course, language.

Cultural ethnicity usually supports political ethnicity, but it can stand on its own. Where it does, we have only ethnic "categories", but not ethnic "groups". The most common alternatives perceived as replacing cultural ethnicity among urban Africans are either identification with a new common Black culture or with "Western" culture.

Ethnicity

On the evidence of various cities in independent Africa we might expect in Soweto continuing or increasing manifestations of ethnic groupings, particularly in the form of powerful tribal associations. The Department of Bantu Affairs seemed to be thinking on some such lines when in 1955 it introduced a policy of residential segregation for the major language groups in the new Johannesburg townships.

However, exclusive tribal patriotism seems to have almost died in Soweto, if we consider only explicitly formulated ideologies and main institutional forms. Ideologically, it is race and class oppositions that are claimed to matter, while ethnic oppositions are denied or simply shrugged off. This was one of the most clear cut findings in the whole mass of research material.

This does not tell quite the whole story, because research also indicated that ethnic categories do still have considerable resonance in daily interaction. Sometimes this can simply result from the official policy of concentrating members of ethnic groups in separate townships; e.g., associations (football clubs, choirs, and the like) recruiting their members predominately from a single ethnic group.

But sometimes it reflects a voluntary preference for associates with the same ethnic or language background. Such "miniethnicity" is not infre-

quent among illiterates with rural backgrounds. Their leisure time friends are often not only from the same "tribe", but also "homeboys" from the same country area.

Even the highly educated often *de facto* move within a circle speaking their language, but they stress that "I have never really thought about it. Ethnic grouping does not itself mean anything to me." This applies to very many people of all levels. Similarly with "tribal" endogamy. Many parents would still prefer their children to find a partner from their own language group ("I would prefer them to marry a Sotho, because they know the customs and speak the language"), but they would add significantly, "I would not force them" — a telling support for the popular claim that ethnic boundary maintenance is no longer a matter of supreme concern in Soweto.

The Melting Pot

Many statements playing down ethnicity as a factor in group identity or individual relations obviously went beyond the objective reality. "There are so many groups. You hardly know or can be bothered about who belongs to which." Others, more in accord with reality, would say that although "tribal" divisions have not yet disappeared, their disappearance was both desirable and inevitable.

Younger people remarked they would intentionally make friends from other tribes. They foretold that "in the next two generations Soweto will be a pure African national place with no Zulu, or Sotho, or Shangaan, or Xhosa, but only Africans".

The preponderant ideology expressed here, that of the melting pot, is justified most consistently and emphatically by the consciousness of a common African identity, or in the language of a few years ago, by African nationalism.

Whereas in tribally homogeneous East London-Mdantsane, with its many unemployed Blacks, political consciousness seemed to focus on pass laws and job reservation, a major focus in polyglot Soweto has been the Government's policy of "supporting tribalism" by introducing residential segregation on ethnic lines. The same formulae of resentment were encountered right down to the rank and file. "The motive behind this policy is to kill the spirit which was gradually growing among these different tribes — the spirit of African nationalism. If one makes the small nations to clash among themselves, they will somehow forget about the major enemy." "We

are all Africans here, suffering from the same malady — the injustice of Government.”

The ideological depreciation of political ethnicity is not felt to be incompatible with singling out Shangaan and Venda for disparaging comments. “The Shangaan have funny habits. They are not clear.” To the “civilised” citizens of Soweto this “distancing” does not reflect a low ranking of Shangaan as an ethnic group, but a reaction to the Shangaan display of tribal distinctiveness, and their excluding themselves from the civilised norms. It is not an expression of ethnicity, but antiethnicity.

The Homeland Link

Has “deethnization” in Soweto then proceeded beyond the point of no return? The Government emphasises “homeland links” and tries to propagate “national identifications. The evidence suggests that it is too late for this kind of political ethnicity; its place is likely to be taken more and more by Black ethnicity.

Reemergence of groups based on common ethnicity is not only possible but rather common, whenever residual feelings of ethnic identity can be exploited. Pressure groups may form, using the ethnic idiom. This happened in postcolonial Africa when the departure of the White administration offered scope for new forms of competition between groups for economic or social advantages. It is happening in South Africa today.

In some contexts, therefore, ethnicity has been increasing in Soweto in recent years. However, generally speaking, the total volume of political and economic power available to Africans in the townships seem too limited for this kind of ethnic revival to become a major phenomenon.

In regard to ethnicity informants referred to the strong group consciousness of the Afrikaners and their political dominance over other Whites as well as Blacks. As we have seen, only a few traditionalists among the Blacks at present show a similar desire for boundary maintenance and group emphasis. It is unpredictable whether one day in the future, in an independent Soweto, the numerically preponderant Zulu speakers might be tempted to use ethnicity in a bid for power.

So far the homelands have very little tangible to offer the urban dwellers. On the contrary, they appear to threaten a further diminution of their security in town. In East London and Mdantsane people expressed their dread of being sent back to homelands — as they put it — “to starve”. The homelands are seen as places where work either is not available or is underpaid, except for the few educated who may land posts in the bureaucracy.

However, urban Africans may well feel increasing sentimental or emotional concern with the homelands or their leaders, Chief Buthelezi, and

other homeland politicians, are immensely popular in Soweto, especially among ordinary people. Their popularity is somewhat qualified among the educated, who sympathise with Buthelezi’s pragmatism and yet remain critical of the whole homeland policy. Many of them continue to support the traditional African National Congress (ANC) policy of a common, non-racial South Africa and totally reject separate development.

Urban residents who still have homeland links generally try to keep them up, because of their feelings of insecurity in town. Only if or when Soweto residents, as distinct from migrants, begin to see that the homeland leaders or parties are able to wield real influence on their behalf, are they likely to give active support to organisations that are developing around homeland representatives in town. In any case, there is little reason why such organisations should introduce ethnic oppositions or rivalries into the urban field itself.

On the contrary, the lot of the urban African may well become a major area for co-operation between the various homeland authorities, so that the homeland links, rather than “retribalising” urban residents, might help to “Africanise” homeland policies. Defining his views on the responsibility of homeland leaders towards urban Blacks, Chief Buthelezi spoke in terms of Black solidarity as against divisive ethnicity.

Here then is one of the notable differences between Black urbanism in Soweto and in many other African cities, notably those in West Africa. Three reasons seem to account for this difference.

First the Soweto rank and file interpret relations with Whites in terms of economic class. In the copper belt, in the late days of colonial rule, tribalism was transcended in situations of industrial confrontations between White management and Black workers. On the Rand today, all vertical divisions between Africans are conceived as undesirable, if not meaningless. “The struggle we are all facing for economic reasons is the same.”

Second, in the social world of the Blacks themselves, class distinctions are widely seen as more important than ethnic ones. In the copper belt of the 1950s, “tribalism” was still “the most important category of day-to-day interaction”. In Soweto the prestige principle has come to surpass the ethnicity principle in importance and has often supplanted it.

Third, the long experience of Blacks’ living together has accelerated the processes of cultural integration within the townships. A strong nucleus of settled inhabitants can look back to years of ethnically intermingled living. Even for the rest situations in which tribal norms govern behaviour have dwindled.

The new common norms are not only designed to cope with casual encounters, but present fully

developed guides to expected behaviour. The common culture is seen as belonging to the same family as that of the Whites. Part of the process of cultural integration within the townships is the wide use of English and the *Tsotsitaal* or "lingo". English is claimed to be the "Black man's *lingua franca*", and is used freely even by those with little formal education; the *taal*, an Afrikaans-based patois, is much in vogue even by the educated who were brought up in town.

Ethnic Renewal?

There is, however, a sense in which cultural ethnicity seems to be making a comeback among urban Blacks. Today the value of "keeping customs" is openly appreciated by many of the better educated. Afrikaners, Jews and Indians are quoted as successful examples of this. "Jews may be Westernised, but they still keep to their customs." The speaker may feel regretfully that this is too late for him personally. "I cannot guide anybody in his traditions. I have lost them. This is a bad thing, because along the wayside somewhere you find yourself lost. If you can, it is better to keep both (traditions and modern ways.)"

Until recently traditional customs were observed more fully, but especially more openly, as one descended the educational ladder. However, the educated, who appeared to be striving for complete cultural assimilation, may often have been less committed to this goal than they appeared. Many educated Black townspeople have Marrano-like quietly retained enough of the old faith to go to a great deal of trouble to practice it *sub rosa*.

Our respondents blamed them mainly for their timidity. "They do not want to be seen doing a thing that does not belong to Western civilisation, because a person may laugh at them. They have no truth to themselves", unlike the "simple people" who follow the customs and traditions without wavering. "They are like Abraham who had true faith in God... He was prepared to sacrifice his only son."

The present tendency among the educated, even among intellectuals, is to be more open and tolerant in these matters. For instance, it is very common for a goat to be slaughtered at funerals and weddings in Soweto. People are fairly open with the use of "medicines"; perhaps they are least open about witchcraft beliefs, which are referred to as "undesirable superstitions".

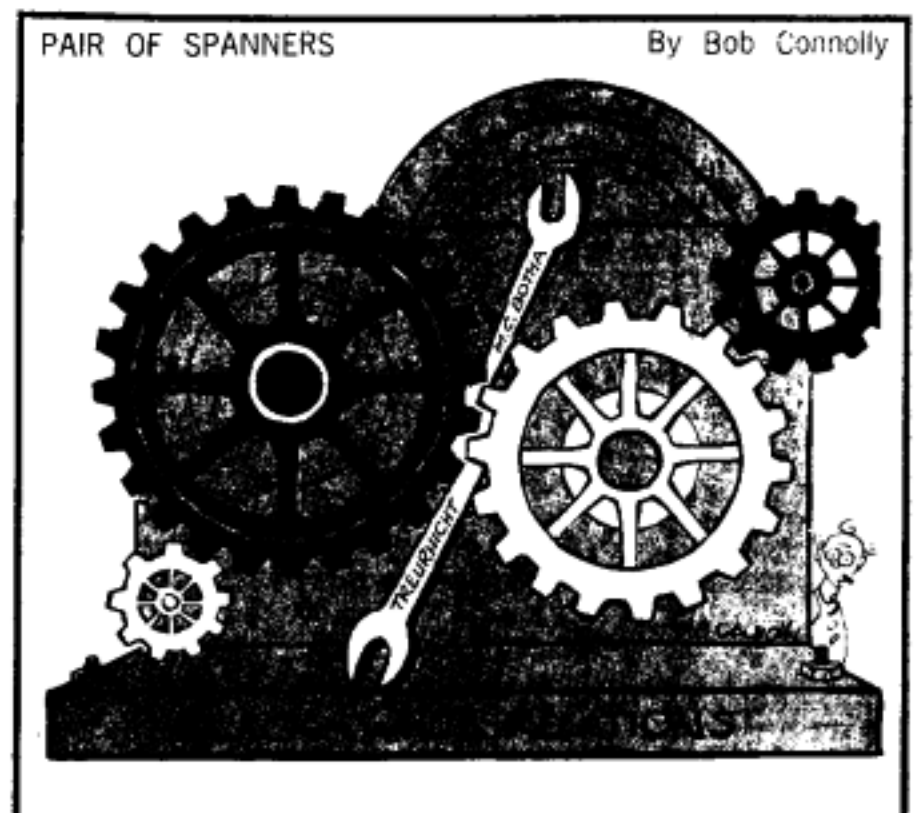
The whole question waits for a lead to be given by African intellectuals and trend setters. At present, as a respondent said, people "are fumbling in darkness and don't know where they are going." Lobola, as is well known, is widely practiced, especially so among the better-off, and is appreciated by the women as enhancing their dignity in a patriarchal society.

In the linguistically homogeneous African townships of the Cape it is argued that though Xhosa initiation is Xhosa and not universally African, it is still African as distinct from European. In Soweto, where there are many different African language groups or tribes, the same argument was heard about customs specific to any particular one of them.

In this light, sentiments of African nationalism and traditionalistic tribal customs are not felt to be mutually exclusive. Besides, many customs were claimed to be common to all Africans: e.g., respect and hospitality, the broad principles of lobola and clan exogamy, the practice of sacrifice, and, of course, the all-embracing concept of "humanity" (*ubuntu*).

Soweto people, then, see themselves as settling down into a common Black identity. But they see the identity as belonging within the family of Western (industrial-urban) cultures. In their eyes, this kind of life-style should allow them freedom in their private lives to seek ethnic identification or assimilation, as they choose; something that indeed, White and other South Africans would claim as well.

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City of Stress

THELMA HENDERSON

An extract from a talk given by Mrs Henderson to the Albany Black Sash

THE whole world is becoming increasingly urbanised — the movement from the country to the big city begun during the Industrial Revolution is gaining momentum today, especially in the developing and Third World countries. Most cities are not evolving in a slow orderly process — they are coping with great migrations coupled with population explosion.

In Soweto 700 000 registered tenants and, at a guess, 300 000 illegal tenants are housed in 96 000 houses spread over 34 sq miles. Average occupancy is 10 per house. Average density is 30 000 per sq mile.

The houses vary a little in size but not in shape. They range from two to five rooms. They are dull and monotonous little boxes and stretch out on a flat barren landscape and look grey from a distance. Tenants have no choice of house or neighbourhood.

No spirit of community develops as communities are not natural. There are people of different cultural backgrounds, different standards of living, different educational levels, interests and aspirations. As a result tensions often run high.

First new occupants of brand new houses receive them unplastered — four to five room houses have front and back doors, but others only one door leading to the outside, usually through the kitchen.

These are the only doors that can be closed. The other openings have door frames but no doors and the occupants are expected to provide the doors themselves. The five-roomed houses are the only ones with an inside toilet. These also have space for a bath to be fitted.

No houses have ceilings and the rooms are 9x12 or 9x9. Sitting, moving and sleeping space is often a nightmare. People sleep everywhere — under kitchen tables, on top of wardrobes, etc.

If an occupant wishes to lead a civilised life he has to add, at his own expense, plaster for the walls, floorboards, doors, ceilings, stove, bath, handbasin, hot water system, electricity. The house itself is nothing more than an empty shell.

Most houses have coal stoves and paraffin lamps. A pall of smoke hangs constantly over the area, the streets are dusty, rutted and dangerous, litter is everywhere and the smell of poverty is ubiquitous, caused by rotting garbage and the bucket system in some areas.

Clashes between hostel dwellers and Soweto residents last year caught most people by surprise, but the reasons for the hostility are explicable: By and large the hostels are little pieces of rural South Africa transplanted into the city — predominantly contract workers from various homelands and mostly semi-literate or illiterate. They share neither the political aspirations nor the social life of the urban dweller who looks down on hostel dweller (izicasa, a Zulu work akin to country bumpkin).

They are unaware of the real issues of township life. With no children at township schools many are unaware of the unrest in the schools. Their lives centre on their jobs and keeping their jobs, so they met the stay-at-home campaign with resistance.

There are 10 single-sex hostels in Soweto, accommodating 40 000 inmates. Each hostel accommodates between 4 000 and 10 000 people.

They are dull, dreary places providing only the barest basics — bed, bare cement, locker, overhead light, stove. Sixty per cent live four to a room, 1 per cent six to a room and 20 per cent eight to a room. Facilities consist of kitchen, common room, beerhall, five baths and three showers per 100 people, one lavatory per 17 people.

The rent is from R3 to R5 a month.

By building these places the Government condoned the migratory system, favoured hostel accommodation over house accommodation, encouraged the social evils pertaining to single sex accommodation for thousands of married adults in dormitories. They are designed to produce sociological and psychological symptoms of emotional and physical insecurity, hostility and antisocial behaviour, depersonalisation and frustration, lack of identity and homosexuality — and all leading inevitably to violence.

Overcrowding is the most serious aspect of life in the Black urban areas. People live in crowded trains, in the schools the classrooms are full to overflowing, in the cities and on the stations, at the footballstadia, in the stores, on the buses — they are constantly in a crowd.

What effect does overcrowding have on people? We do not know exactly, but zoologists and behavioural psychologists are suggesting we learn a lesson from the humble Norwegian lemming. These little creatures breed at a prodigious rate.

Every few years millions of them set off in a suicidal rush across the plains of Scandinavia into the sea.

Zoologists believe that this is due to overcrowding brought on by over-reproduction. In their research, psychologists have shown that the most marked result of stress caused by overcrowding amongst animals is the increased growth and activity of their adrenal glands which regulate the metabolism of the body.

Where stress is sustained over long periods it results in physical weakening, such symptoms as extreme rage and violence or extreme passivity or docility, sexual aberrations and a collapse of what we call "normal group behaviour".

This could explain the social disintegration of so many Black communities, also the enormously high rates of crime.

In Soweto there are nine police stations, 1 000 African policemen, 150 White policemen.

Fourteen months before the riots The Star put Soweto under the microscope in its series entitled "The Shadow City".

It examined the festering wounds of social disintegration and deprivation and warned of a developing "witches brew of racial hatred". Leaving the politics of the situation aside, a scientific survey was undertaken to determine the social disabilities of Sowetonians and what they themselves saw as their most urgent need.

The following priorities emerged, all of them relating to quality of life.

- The people of Soweto have a unanimous desire to own their own houses.
- They want more houses and better quality ones.
- More schools and creches — one million toddlers have 38 creches. Classes in schools are 50-70 in size and many children cannot get into school.
- More street lighting to penetrate the shadows where tsotsis lurk; more homes with electricity.
- University. They reject homeland universities as residential life is costly.

- Free choice of where to live instead of arbitrarily being allocated housing on an ethnic basis.

- Better roads and pavements, transport, shopping and sporting facilities — there still are no supermarkets in Soweto and so residents have to shop in central Johannesburg.

- More cinemas. There are still only two cinemas plus a hall used as a cinema.

Other major grouses were insufficient police protection against thugs, the shortage of restaurants and hotels, the need for bathrooms in the houses.

It is obvious from this survey that the growth and encouragement of a stable middle class with stable home ownership was the surest way to reduce tension. But nothing was done and the toll has been tragic.

There have been two positive responses to date:

The language issue was settled and the 30-year lease on home ownership was dropped.

On August 19, 1976, the Government dropped the time limit on the lease granted under the Urban Home Ownership Scheme — a move regarded by the Blacks as significant recognition of their permanence in the urban areas.

Africans will now be able to buy or build homes in urban townships on "indefinite" period leases. Also homeland citizenship is no longer necessary as a prerequisite to buying a home.

Two schemes are available for people who want to build their own homes and for people who want to buy their existing homes.

Those urban dwellers who work for affluent or enlightened employers will benefit.

Several large companies have already indicated they will help their employees to build or buy their homes.

The urban dweller has proved conclusively to be the achilles heel of the grand plan of separate development. The Black Sash and opposition parties have consistently warned the Government who, in their wisdom, have ignored all the danger signals.

IT is with deep regret that we record the death of two aged members of our local branch of the Black Sash in East London, namely MISS BRUTON and MISS FALES.

They were lifelong friends, passing to rest within a month of each other, sharing the same convictions in matters of justice and truth as revealed to them.

Their lives devoted to the Sunday School movement, they gave time and all they could spare specially to the children of the poor in our community.

In seeking a tribute to their long life of service to others in the simple definition "fond faithful". Surely in these times when injustice and inhumanity are rife, this is not to have lived in vain.

Miss McFarlane

Our debt—our mission

D. J. BOSMAN

THERE are those among us who claim that apartheid is our traditional way of life. They say that God created races of different colours and that those races should not mingle and intermarry. Then those who think about it in this way must also remember that if God created races of different colours he also gave them different areas of the earth to live in.

To the white man he gave Europe, to the brown man and the yellow man he gave Asia, to the red man he gave North America and to the black man he gave Africa. Then what is the white man doing in Africa? What right has he to be there?

I believe that we have a mandate from God. I believe that we are permitted to be in Africa in accordance with a divine purpose and that we have a mission. That mission is to bring civilisation and culture to the African peoples and to impart to them the teachings of the Christian Faith. On no other ground can we justify our presence here. We are not here merely to possess the land and to repeat the pattern of European existence.

It was the Roman who said that out of Africa there is always something new. We are here to show the new things out of Africa. It just happens that in future every nation will to some extent be faced with the problem of multi-racial living.

We are face-to-face here with that problem in its most complicated form and it is our duty to solve that problem for the benefit of all mankind. We have no right to point a finger at any other nation; to try to justify our own actions by drawing attention to the shortcomings of others.

The world looks to us for a lead in the solution of the problems of multi-racial living; that is why the eyes of the world are upon us. And the world has a right to criticise us if we fail to do our Christian duty and by our actions arouse the resentment of the African peoples.

We are a Christian people. That has been our proud boast ever since we came here. But we must prove that great truth by our actions. To the African peoples we can demonstrate the wonder of the Christian way of life only by our daily conduct.

If we are to fulfil our mission it is not possible for us to live to ourselves alone but if we have the right attitude toward the African peoples there will always be a place for us in Africa. If on the other hand we think only to dominate their lives for our own selfish ends and to keep

them in subjection by force then our lives too will become part of that pattern of violence which has emerged among the European nations in the years of this century and which is even now emerging in Africa.

Time is not on our side any longer. We have come to the cross-roads. We must choose now and because of the conditions that are shaping on this continent that choice for each and every one of us can be stated today in stark simplicity: By which road will you go — the Way of the Machine Gun or the Way of The Cross?

If there is one thing certain it is that we, the North-Europeans in Southern Africa, have not paid our debt to the Past, nor have we fulfilled our mission because we have failed to share with the African the benefits of our civilisation just as we have failed, by living example, to demonstrate to him the wonder of the Christian way of life.

That this should have happened is mainly due to the fact that during the last two hundred years we have gradually become involved in and in the end have become part of the Machine Civilisation which came into being in the North-Western European countries.

Our Age is the Age of the Machine. Our civilisation is a machine civilisation and the machine created by the European peoples have become indispensable to us and aid us in everything we do.

Without a doubt they have made possible for us a very high standard of living and have transformed our lives but they have also caused us to place too great a value on material things and when we come to contemplate what is happening in the world of today it is evident that they have also served to intensify human greed and selfishness.

From the beginning the machines were put to misuse. Not only were they made to produce articles of value to us but they were also made to produce an endless stream of weapons. Those weapons made possible two great wars and even today the machines are still producing the weapons that are keeping the world in a state of turmoil.

On the other hand the machines are producing too many objects. We have too much to choose from and our selfish lives are cluttered up with too many possessions. Material values have become for most of us the only values and we seek only ease and comfort and still softer ways of living.

At the same time our lives are becoming ever more complicated and we no longer seem able to cope with the conditions we ourselves have created. On every hand we see chaotic conditions and the decay of moral values. Self-denial and simple living, sacrifice and service, have little meaning for most of us and those of us who still have ideals are constantly made aware of the lack of the simple virtues of honesty, decency and consideration for others.

The striving onward and upward, the blood, the toil, the sweat and the tears of centuries, the glory and the wonder of life, the dream and the vision — what meaning have these things for us today? Those things that tended to inspire and uplift, to enrich and ennoble other generations we have scorned and derided and we have lost them.

There is nothing left — nothing but our possessions to which we cling and of which we grant to the African only a bare minimum. That is all we now have to give him!

The lesson that History teaches us is that because of human imperfections every great civilisation carries within itself the seeds of its own destruction. Our way of life, too, is failing and will have to be replaced by something nobler, more just and more true. And this for us has become a matter of urgent necessity.

Too long we have refused to face the realities of our existence. Now Time is not on our side any longer. History will not wait upon us and in this respect even Africa has a message for us, a message that is being urgently impressed upon our minds by recent events, and that message is, that we must share what we have or lose everything.

Many possessions lead to brute selfishness but sharing comes easily to those whose needs are few and who have a simple way of living. Our way of life is *not* the way of life for the African.

He must never lose his simplicity and his readiness to share with his fellowmen.

Somewhere between our many possessions and his simple way of living there must be found a new way of life for both the African and the European. That is the Challenge of Life with which we are now faced.

There was a time when the Europeans would proudly say: "In God we trust!" But we have lost our spiritual values and have put our trust in armaments. Year by year we think only to arm ourselves the more completely against our enemies with ever more powerful weapons and in doing so we are wasting resources that could transform the lives of those among us who live in poverty and want. Yet we are not entirely to blame. The Contamination of Weapons has spread to every part of the earth and we suffer from a World Malady.

It seems to me that our paramount need today is to find a new way of life for ourselves that will meet several essential requirements and to my mind these are that it must give a meaning and purpose to our lives that the African will understand and that will bring to us the goodwill of all the African peoples; it must give to us a secure place in Africa for centuries to come; it must gain for us the approval and cooperation of the leading North-Western European peoples; and in the practical and economic field of endeavour it must again make South Africa a place that will attract capital from overseas.

We must have a change of heart, which lies in our thinking. Our thoughts have hemmed us in and are making us prisoners in our own land. We must have wider horizons and the first essential is that we should end our isolation and begin to think of the needs of Africa as a whole. The time has come to set aside all thoughts of domination, of arrogance and violence and to revise our attitude toward all the African peoples.

BORDER REGION reports with deep and shocked regret the untimely death of TUZETTE DUNCAN-BROWN — on December 31, 1976.

She was a foundation member of the Sash, served many years on the Border Committee, once as Vice-Chairman, but she shunned the limelight, preferring always to being part of the dependable solid core working in the background. She loathed having to demonstrate but never refused to do so.

Her quiet, gentle dignity, her scrupulous honesty, her strong sense of duty, her beautiful charm and her unwavering convictions made her one of the most outstanding women we have ever known. It was our privilege to know and love her. It is difficult to foresee how the Region will operate without her.

We offer sincere sympathy to her husband and family and renew our resolution to continue the works she served so devotedly.

Deena Streek

A way of life

*Jenny Dyer and Shirley Moulder discuss the theory and practice of
AFRICAN SOCIALISM*

AT the invitation of the Senegalese Government, African leaders met at Dakar in December, 1962, to examine and define the character of African Socialism.

They failed. And the reason for their failure is that "African Socialism" has not been the product of a single thinker.

This contrasts with the history of Western socialist thought, where there is a clear relationship between individual thinkers and ideological movements.

On the other hand, no single leader has been uniquely and distinctively associated with the ideology of African Socialism. Rather the ideology has been the product of a diverse group of leaders, each of whom has been influenced by the particular problems which face his country. This diversity of leaders and problems helps to account for the lack of development of a unified theory.

SHIRLEY MOULDER

AFRICAN Socialism can perhaps be best understood when viewed against a background of the other main socio-economic systems.

At the one extreme — Communism, where no individual can own productive property, and the State is the only proprietor and employer. Then European socialism, where the remedy for capitalism is state nationalisation of all basic enterprises and trouble spots. Only restricted capitalism is allowed.

On the other side, capitalism, where property is owned by a privileged few and workers are entitled to wages and not to a share in property or the business. Then the welfare state, where capitalism and company law are left uninterfered with, but the Government helps workers with pensions, progressive taxation, social security, etc.

In the middle, we find African Socialism. This is socialism achieved by radical legislation and not by nationalisation. The role of the state is to keep a socialistic control over the economy, thus ensuring the widest possible decentralisation of property and wealth.

Company structure will be reformed to include employee-membership of companies and all div-

idends will be limited. Co-operatives will be foremost. There will be private enterprise, but not capitalism; public control of the economy, but not communism.

Africa has gone through a series of political revolutions, but must still experience social and economic revolutions before African Socialism can emerge.

African leaders have found that they must remain integrally African, even while modernising their way of life. Ancient African life was well-integrated thanks to the operation of certain principles of economic, social, cultural and political life based on human nature. African neo-socialism aims to use these values and principles by devising the best techniques, the best institutions and processes for incorporating and perpetuating them under modern conditions.

So, briefly, African Socialism is the modernisation of traditional African communitarianism.

What are the main points of it? Firstly, there is the human or psychological element. African Socialism is, first and foremost, not a doctrine or ideological abstraction, but a way of life.

It is more than an economic formula or political structure — these are necessary, but they must spring from a truly African mentality and a socialist view of life and human relationship. The soul of African Socialism is the spirit of

solidarity and brotherhood; of co-operation and of service.

African Socialism must therefore be defined in psychological and sociological terms — in terms of a will, an attitude, a people, a conception of life — as well as in economic and political terms.

Secondly, there is the element of social justice; socialism and "hunger after justice" are identical. A return to the traditional values is not a nostalgia for the primitiveness, but for the equity of tribal life.

Their forefathers are admired for their way of doing things together and for their instinct for justice which was based on their ideal of the sacredness of life. Everyone was seen as a "brother", hence there was no exploitation of one man by another on any scale worth noting. Capitalism, feudalism and proletarianism were unknown! Every man stood before the other as a person — to be counted upon, loved and assisted. He contributed to the physical and spiritual strength of the community by taking part in community discussions and projects.

His sense of his own dignity was fostered by a stable family life and by direct access to property and economic activity without the intermediary of a bureaucracy of any kind. Everyone had equal access to social capital. Their ancestors were both socialists and personalists. The basis of the system was distributive justice.

African neo-socialism, therefore, cannot compromise with injustice. It must state the principle of social control of all productive wealth; but the purpose of this will not be to concentrate wealth for the benefit of politicians or civil servants, but to regulate the just distribution of cash income and economic responsibility.

The policy of eliminating the enormous number of propertyless citizens must be the essence of African Socialism. Thus full employment and high salaries, even if attainable, would not be enough; would, in fact, be outside the point. Everyone must become an owner or part-owner of his house, land, factory or business. Only in this way would justice, after the traditional African pattern, be done.

Citizenship without ownership is a feature of European civilisation. The African way of life is that each person should have immediate access, not only to consumer goods, but to productive goods — always, however, under social control.

This programme under modern conditions is a difficult one; so difficult that only a socialist nation can attempt it; so unheard of that the socialism that will be created from it will be altogether unique and original.

Co-operatives of all kinds are of the utmost importance in African Socialism; therefore housing co-operatives, insurance, credit, hospitalisation, burial, utilities, libraries, handicrafts, cottage industries, mortgage banks, producer, marketing and consumer co-operatives. This presents

an endless field for human collaboration without injustice.

Another area where there is a need for distributive justice is in the salary and wage structure. Absolute equality of income is not advocated and is not possible. Nevertheless, the present structure of salaries in Africa is a far cry from absolute equality.

The scandalous gap between the income of government ministers and that of other salary-earners in the country can be compared only with another gap, equally unjust — between the income of salary-earners as a whole and primary producers.

Ministers in under-developed Africa receive the same salaries as ministers in prosperous European countries, where the cost of living is higher.

Salary-earners receive more than half the country's revenue, but form only 10 per cent of the population (1965). In Africa the proletariat is the peasantry. It is the task of African Socialism to reduce this great inequality.

Thirdly, there is the problem of economic development. There can be no social development without economic progress or without the full exploitation of productive resources. Where there is under-development, there must be a rational plan to ensure the steady increase of the investment ratio and national income.

To have progress there must be agricultural development. Here African Socialism differs with Marx who neglected agriculture and who felt the peasants were not the right material for revolution.

Africa is, however, 80 per cent rural, so the revolution must begin with the peasantry. African farmers need a mission of technicians, organisers and animators to stir them up and serve their needs. Guinea, Ghana and Senegal have advanced programmes which appeal to and involve the peasantry.

The problem of unemployment can be solved only by industrialisation. The worker must not be considered to be a second-rate personality or a vassal. His labour contract must include his legal right to own shares and become a member of the company.

True socialism cannot tolerate the anonymous investor who sits back and watches his investment grow while receiving dividends, while the men who cause the capital growth and earn the profits by the labour, spend all their lives as dependent wage-earners, without ever becoming owners in the industry!

Large-scale and long term foreign aid is required for full industrial development, preferably "aid without strings"; also better terms of trade.

Fourthly, there is the question of nationalisation. African Socialism has as little to do with the nationalisation of private industries as it has to do with capitalistic enterprise. Government industry will not be typical of African Socialism.

In the years following independence, the urgent need for industrialisation forces the nation to depend initially on foreign capital or public capital, or both.

It has been suggested that foreign capital should be treated differently from indigenous private capital. But all government capital invested in the new industries should be considered as held in trust for the people. It should form part of the national share pool, which later on will be on sale in the form of share certificates, as soon as the people are ready for it.

This shows that the unique role of African Socialism is to distribute positive values evenly among the citizens, rather than to strip them of these values and have them dumped in the hands of the state.

African Socialism wishes to be a personality and community-building socialism. Every opportunity will be given to the citizens to grow as persons, not merely in the sense of providing them with their basic needs (food, housing, education, health, etc.) but also in the higher sense of enabling and leaving them to serve their own needs themselves, without trampling on their fellows.

In big businesses, the anonymous directors, who usually serve only the investors, should be turned into quasi-public servants and made to be directly answerable to the National Industrial Council.

The policy in Africa will be to create an economy largely based on private individuals, but not on individualism; an economy which eliminates individualism, without introducing statism.

Fifthly, there is the sovereignty of the state. Because of the many anarchic forces present in Africa, a united and sovereign central authority is required. The state must be physically and morally stronger than any other force within the nation if it is to implement the socialist programme. This sovereignty is one of service and not of domination; a service dedicated to the rehabilitation of the most underprivileged sections of the population.

The road towards African Socialism is a stony one, as many will oppose it. There are some who believe society was meant to be stratified, especially when they are well situated in it. Some are too individualistic and have lost the capacity to work for their less fortunate brothers, especially self-serving politicians and backward-looking intellectuals. There are also saboteurs from outside the continent — communist and western.

The West has made and can make a great contribution towards the development of Africa, but Africans insist on their right to choose their own path. African Socialism chooses democracy without an opposition party; private enterprise

without the unjust company law; socialism without state monopoly of economic activity and without atheism.

African Socialism does claim to be a new type of socialism. It springs from a completely different background from European socialism.

African Socialism is not anti-clerical, not based on the factory worker nor on any particular social class, it starts off with practically no industries to be nationalised and must be very constructive so as to fill the economic vacuum.

It is being advocated by people in power, not by an underground movement. It draws its idealism not from "Das Kapital" but from traditional African values. It is for a community-loving people, who are impatient of ideologies and suspicious of alien imported "isms".

The task facing African Socialism is not to curb over-charged citizens, but to give life and vitality to a static and inactive population. It is not confronted by overwhelming capitalism and a reactionary clergy, but by local tribalism, foreign imperialism, apartheid, inertia, ignorance and disease and poverty.

In general terms, African Socialism is the firm and deliberate will on the part of the African nations to rid themselves of colonialism, to create a new society of free but socially responsible citizens, where traditional African values of human solidarity, national unity, social equality and economic democracy will be of utmost importance.

Expressed in psychological terms, African Socialism becomes a socio-cultural philosophy; way of life based on traditional African humanism. It wants to get rid of exploitation and social stratification by providing each citizen with equal and easy access to ownership and economic activity, within the framework of political democracy.

To attain these goals, African Socialism will use a single mass-party system, with a presidential form of democratic government; dialogue between all the different parts of society, a mixed economy; a reformed and democratic system of company and labour contract law; a system of national share pool available to all; free education, which is African and socialist; and, to crown it all, a super-structure of Pan-Africanism.

Naomi Mitchison, in her book "The Africans", says that money alone cannot solve their problems and the great African leaders know this. They know that the Africans must help themselves, out of confidence in their own abilities,

The countries of Africa must come together, even if a few politicians must step down and some civil servants become redundant or accept lower salaries. They must not allow a gap to

develop between town and country; it could be as dangerous as the gap between the haves and the have-nots. It is the country people who are most likely to keep the real African values safe and honoured.

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JENNY DYER

IN April 1962, Dr Julius Nyerere delivered an address entitled "Ujamaa — the basis of African Socialism" to the Tanganyika African National Union (Tanu) study conference on Pan-African Socialism.

His opening thoughts set the tone of his treatise: "Socialism — like Democracy — is an attitude of mind. In a socialist society it is the socialist attitude of mind, and not the rigid adherence to a standard political pattern, which is needed to ensure that the people care for each others' welfare welfare."¹

Ujamaa therefore is neither a call to action nor a programme for development, but a statement of humanistic ideals. And so Tanzania's men of action did not quite know how to regard it or to use it.

For example, for one deputy secretary, Ujamaa is a national and revolutionary concept requiring the co-operation of all the people on communal farms and other self-help projects. He thinks in terms of nation building and conjures up images of massive work brigades.

Thus to men like the Tanu secretary, Ujamaa is used to describe and to justify their own activities which centre on the promotion of self-help schemes, co-operatives, party organisation, etc.

The area chairman on the other hand is inclined to think of Ujamaa in terms of the local community. Helping one's neighbour — or ideally all Tanzanians — but in fact not extending beyond one's village; or at most beyond one's tribe.

Although it is not fully understood and at times it is misinterpreted, the influence of Ujamaa can clearly be seen in three areas. Firstly in the co-operatives; secondly in the land policy; and thirdly in the self-help and villagisation schemes.

I will take a brief look at the first two and then discuss the third in more detail.

● Co-operatives were established many years ago and reached a high level of development under colonial rule. Although they were efficient, they were largely limited to agricultural marketing and they were regarded primarily as economic institutions.

Colonial co-ops were involved in production as well as marketing. For instance they bought approved seed, fertilised, encouraged good habits of culture and set crop targets.

The independence period has seen the decline of money-important co-ops, for example among the Wachagga. They had become relatively progressive, wealthy farmers, and in Chaggaland were in the process of individualising land holdings.

But independence has also contributed to the co-operative movement in a positive way. Since independence, the co-operative movement has struck out in new directions.

Its sphere of operation is no longer restricted to agricultural marketing but extends into nearly every sector of the economy. A change in the "attitude of mind" has also taken place. This is seen in a growing awareness of the co-operative movement as a social force.

● In 1962 the Tanganyika Agricultural Corporation (TAC) launched a programme which involved granting 80-acre holdings to individuals.

The intention behind this programme was the development of large scale African commercial agriculture. This programme was shelved because it contained a contradiction in terms of Ujamaa's classless society.

To quote Nyerere: "And in rejecting the capitalist attitude of mind which colonialism brought into Africa, we must reject also the capitalist methods which go with it. One of these is the individual ownership of land. To us in Africa, land was always recognised as belonging to the community... The Tanu Government must go back to the traditional African custom of land holding."²

In 1963 legislation abolished freehold title and set out procedures for the conversion of leasehold. It also outlined the obligation for development that the new forms of tenure implied. This policy did not affect land held "under Native law and custom". On the other hand, it did affect land leased by Europeans and Asians.

● I will deal with the influence of Ujamaa on villagisation and self-help in two phases. Firstly the phase from 1962-66 — i.e. the period just before and after Nyerere's Ujamaa statement — and secondly, the phase 1967-74 — that is, the period which followed the Arusha declaration.

Nyerere realised that national identification and economic advancement depended to a large measure on the mobilisation of the peasantry. But he was also very aware of the dangers which are involved when one disrupts many relatively isolated communities.

The responsibility for prying the masses loose from their parochial concerns and involving them in the process of nation building was undertaken by Tanu. Tanu assumed this responsibility because, through its organisation and mass membership, it had links with all the villages as well as with the cities.

This educational process could not succeed without the co-operation of a variety of institutions and a great deal of grass-roots support.

ence. This paper implied that the peasants themselves would start these villages.

In 1968 some villages were started. But often, as happened at places like Hadeni and West Lake, they were started by over-zealous local politicians who used force or threats of force.

Almost in response to these methods Nyerere issued a paper in October, 1968, entitled "Freedom and Development".

The essence of this paper is that no one can be forced into a Ujamaa Village.

In March, Presidential circular No. 1 of 1969 directed that "all Government policies, and the activities and decisions of all Government officials, must therefore be geared towards emphasising the advantages of living together and working together for the good of all".⁵

This change was reflected in the second five-year plan, which started in July of that year.

Funds were made available to any group willing to work together and call itself an Ujamaa Village. But many of these, like earlier villages, suffered from over-capitalisation. They therefore became dependent on the central government and remained unproductive.

This year also saw the banning of the Ruvuma Development Association by the Central Committee of Tanu. It is not clear exactly why the association was banned.

Coulson (in his article on peasants and bureaucrats in the *Review of African Political Economy*, May/October 1975) suggests that it was probably due to the fact that they became too self-reliant and acted independently on the Government and the party bureaucracy.

During 1970-73 Nyerere sent presidential planning teams into areas containing these villages. This was done because of his concern at the number of villages that had been established without proper foresight.

These teams were not very successful because of their lack of local experience; because of the over-enthusiastic targets which were set and because of the willingness with which they offered material "inducements".

Thousands of peasants had already been moved into these villages — both willingly and unwillingly — and problems were experienced, especially with communal food production.

Because of these problems the emphasis was changed from communal agriculture to block farming in an attempt to increase productivity. But 25 000 tons of maize had to be imported that year. This was partly due to a drought but it was also due to lack of productivity.

In November, 1973, came Nyerere's order that the whole rural population had to be living in villages by the end of 1976. He also implied that if it could happen sooner it would be even better.

The order was carried out with great speed. (By October, 1974, the Mwanza leaders were able to announce that in their region more than

one million peasants had moved into planned villages.) Unfortunately, this sometimes required the use of force and property was sometimes destroyed.

One of the main requirements for the new villages was that they had to be along main roads, and this policy was implemented regardless of the consequences for agriculture.

For example, in Karagwe the roads run along the tops of hills but people were moved from the fertile, cultivated valleys to the tops of the hills.

And in nearby Kibondo, where the road ran at the bottom of fertile hills, people were moved from the hills to the valleys. In Mwanza houses were built on the most fertile cotton lands.

● Has socialism worked for Tanzania?

At the moment one has to say no for at least the following four reasons:

The initiative to start the villages did not come from the peasants — except in the 1962/63 period of spontaneous settlement schemes; and in the period after the publication of "Freedom and development" in 1968/69. But in each case the schemes were taken over by government Ujamaa planning teams.

From 1968 force was used. During the 1969/71 period force was replaced by the bait of social services. After this the main thrust was once again force.

The original aim of the Ujamaa villages was two-fold: To provide a better and happier life for people by living together, and to increase productivity by living together.

But the individual peasant did not have the ability to transform the economy.

The use of force could not make productivity increase in fact it resulted in passive resistance.

Because production did not increase, promise of aid and social services had to fail because the cost of these services could not be met.

It seems inevitable therefore, that a long and difficult struggle lies ahead for the people of Tanzania and for those of us in Africa who "believe in human brotherhood and the unity of Africa".

For in the words of Senegal's Leopold Senghor "our task is nothing less than to give the world the example of a new country creating a new civilisation in tune with Africa and with the 20th Century world".⁶

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Advice Office round-up

Albany

ONE wonders how the "change" we hear spoken of so often nowadays will affect the majority of the people who come to the Advice Office for help. So often their problems are compounded by the very officials and the departments which the State provides to help them.

The turnover of staff is rapid; and the new staff are often not aware of which regulations apply to which problem. Added to official ignorance is the way in which employers often blatantly disregard regulations especially the Unemployment Insurance Act of 1966.

As there is no Labour Department in Grahamstown the unemployed register is administered by the Revenue Office at the Magistrate's Court. Signing takes place on Wednesdays at 3 pm.

If this register is not signed the unemployed person is penalised. Because of ignorance on the part of White clerks, men who had received UF 48(a) forms were being prevented from signing.

Various Advice Office workers visited the Revenue Office on signing days to try to sort out this matter but we were not successful. Eventually it was agreed that Ms Charton, Noble and Moulder would request an interview with the Magistrate with a view to clarifying and correcting the situation.

Since our meeting with him men who have received the UF 48(a) forms have *not* been prevented from signing the register. But other reasons have served the same purpose — e.g. being too busy! The battle goes on and we have reported the inefficiency of the local Revenue Office to the Labour Department in Port Elizabeth in the hope that they can and will rectify the situation.

Employers are also to blame on the UIF issue. We have reported four local firms to the Labour Department for not registering their employees under the Act. When men are dismissed/retrenched the employer often does not hand over the UIF card. This creates problems for the man wanting to sign the unemployed register.

In the interview with the magistrate we asked about the rationale governing the granting of poor relief and the reduction in some maintenance grants — known in Grahamstown as "mothers' pensions".

The magistrate felt that poor relief should not be granted to people awaiting pensions or grants. If this happened it would mean that some people would receive State help *twice*, as pension pay-

ments were backdated to date of application. The reason for reducing "mothers' pensions" is that the mother "is not making sufficient effort to support her family". This is the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions' reason to women who can only get part-time employment if they are lucky!

In August, Mr Bill Deacon (UP MP for Albany) was invited to our monthly meeting. He was requested to take up the matter of maintenance grants and poor relief at Parliamentary level. He also agreed to explore the possibility of having a second social worker or welfare worker permanently seconded to the Eastern Cape.

In Grahamstown with its roughly 10 000 out of 38 000 unemployed Blacks we have far too many stores which urge Black South Africans to buy goods on HP.

One firm sold about R500 worth of goods to Ms E M a self-employed dressmaker who said she earned R50 pm. The firm agreed to her buying the goods because she had an "excellent" record. She was not asked nor did she volunteer the information that she had two other HP contracts.

In May her home was destroyed by a fire. The fire brigade arrived too late to do anything except to certify that she had lost everything. Three days later she received a bill from the City Council for services rendered. This was reduced by two-thirds after we wrote to the Council.

After the fire one firm wrote off her debt of R400 and urged her to come and buy more goods. The other two demanded their money. One amount was small, R5, the other R500.

The firm to whom Ms M owed R500 threatened to take her to court and the Advice Office agreed that should this happen we would obtain legal assistance for her. We communicated this to the firm and the manager said he would contact his firm's credit controller to see if "something" could be done.

Two weeks later the Advice Office was informed that Ms M's debt had been written off because "she had lost her source of income in the fire."

The manager of the firm that threatened court action has agreed to approach his head office in Germiston with the request that they explore the possibility of offering insurance cover to folk buying on HP.

Shirley Moulder
Chairperson

Athlone

PEACEFUL change has always been a principle objective of Advice Office work, and this in the face of contagious violence will remain our hope and endeavour.

Signs of increased unemployment are viewed with anxiety. A growing number of migrants on annual contracts are reporting early termination of their contracts by employers for slender reasons, or simply because "we have no more work for you".

Contract workers are finding it much more difficult to get employment in this area, where "Coloured" labour has always had the pick of the market and where the local African labour pool now has a longer list of unemployed Section 10 residentially-qualified men, whom employers are expected to take before asking for the introduction of migrants on contract.

The reservation of the Western Cape as a "Coloured Preferential Area", together with the new Transkeian Citizenship Act (which enforces membership of a territory regarded as foreign by very many urban people with Xhosa-speaking backgrounds) are the aspects of Government policy most affecting Africans in the Cape Peninsula.

Security of tenure is a top priority for the stability of any community. In the case of our Cape Peninsula Africans, it is what is most longed for. Yet it remains "policy" to limit family housing to an unexpanding or even shrinking minimum.

While comfortable-looking hostel-type buildings are going up for the accommodation of "visiting" wives with their "visited" husbands, even men who have lived here in their parents' township homes all their lives are being refused permits to bring in their wives on a permanent basis (one wife apiece, all lawful and above board) even from other prescribed areas.

The system has evolved of giving the "visiting" wife a different address from that of her husband on her permit. A return ticket to some rural area must be produced and its number is noted as proof that the "visit" is temporary, before a permit is vouchsafed.

Requests for permanence are eventually refused, after the couple have gone backwards and forwards between offices and officials for weeks in their quest. Most men are obliged to pay rent for "single quarters" accommodation, while those luckier few who have lodgers' permits in family homes hold these permits on a month-to-month basis in terms of GNR 1036, Chapter 2, Section 20 (3).

It is quite a triumph that as many as three of some 30 couples (not counting couples from Crossroads) seen during the past three months

at the AAO have been able to succeed in their applications, thanks to the assistance of our attorneys and to the fact that in each case the husband is actually the "occupier" of the house, not a lodger.

In one case success is linked with the seriously bad health of the wife, attested by a number of medical certificates.

A simple labourer expressed his feelings powerfully: "My wife is my parcel, no one else's. I want her to live with me, that is all I want, I do not ask for anything else and I pay my way. No one has any right to stop us from living together."

Another comment came from a life-long, educated resident of Langa, who has married a very beautiful young woman from Port Elizabeth. With a sad but by no means resigned shrug he said "we went from Langa to Observatory and back to Langa, and told our story to three officials, but we ended up with "policy".

This trend must go into immediate reverse. Everyone wants peace and we earnestly trust that these and other urgent grievances are about to receive redress.

The Divisional Council application for the clearing of Crossroads squatter camp for health reasons brought a record number of people pouring into and overflowing our Mowbray quarters on May 20, when we somehow achieved 270 interviews.

A very high proportion of the men seen were definitely Section 10 (1) qualified for residence in this area, and only living in shanties in order to have their families with them, the law and the shortage of houses precluding any other solution.

Crossroads has now been declared an emergency camp and only "new" or "unoccupied" shacks have been the target for recent demolitions, undertaken by Divisional Council inspectors who are concerned with "illegal structures" while the BAAB concerns itself with "illegal Bantu".

We have had distressed reports of shacks becoming "unoccupied" by dint of the BAAB enforced removal and entrainment of the occupier, and others of the demolition of shacks only "unoccupied" while the occupiers were at work, leaving the children with neighbours.

This community longs for freedom from such anxieties and for a chance to consolidate what little they have. They declare themselves willing to pay site rental in return for basic facilities and we note their appreciation of moves in this direction, but the rental asked is surprisingly high, R10 pm per household. Only security from imminent eviction can make this worthwhile.

Half the total number of interviews conducted over the past three months have been with squat-

ters. The assistance of attorneys in defending people, mainly women, appearing at Langa Bantu Commissioner's Court charged under Section 10 (4), has been most helpful and rewarding.

Our attorneys bring most refreshingly strong awareness of their clients' circumstances to bear in their defence. They have shown up the unfairness of many charges with pleas in mitigation, forcibly and effectively presented. Fines have been minimal and many charges dropped where attorneys have been in court.

Adverse judgment was delivered in the Supreme Court appeal case of Mr Gideon Mtima. His wife's claim to qualify in terms of Section 10(1)(c) of the Act was rejected on the grounds that his qualification under Section 10(1)(b) was unacceptable, the wording of that section having been interpreted retrospectively to the date of promulgation, June 24, 1952. An appeal has been noted and will be heard at Bloemfontein.

**M. Henderson
B. D. Versfeld**

Border

MORE and more people affected by retrenchments in staff are visiting the office. These people are often angry and frustrated. After giving good service, often for a number of years, they cannot understand their dismissal. We try to explain that it is not a personal thing, but the economic state of our country which has led to their discharge. It is sad that the people with the least are the first to suffer.

We have had a number of successful pension cases. One man had tried for five years to get pension money owed to him by the Cape Bantu Administration Board. Eventually he came to us for help.

After nine months and so many letters we were able to hand him his cheque for over R700. Tears filled the man's eyes and he said that the money would ensure that his youngest child would receive an education.

We are interviewing a large number of people with marital problems. This is a difficult area as Bantu custom and European law are worlds apart and muddling for uneducated people.

The follow-up in all cases is difficult. Often our letters remain unanswered. People often do not return to report the outcome of advice given.

It is wonderful, however, when a smiling face appears "just to say thank you for successful help". This is our encouragement.

E. A. Kaye-Eddie

Natal Coastal

THE following case histories illustrate the hardships that White South African law has forced on Blacks. In the Advice Office we see daily what these hideous, destructive laws are doing.

MR MSELEKU is 26 years old, has a disease whereby he has become almost totally blind and consequently is no longer able to work. He has Section 10 1(d) rights for Durban. Mrs Mseleku, who is now the sole bread-winner, has to leave her three small children and look for a form of employment that will enable her family to live as far as is possible in the way to which they were used, while Mr Mseleku was earning a fairly reasonable wage.

However, as she has no rights to work in Durban, she has to get numerous medical certificates in order to prove her husband's state of health and only then can we begin to try and appeal to Influx Control to allow her a work seeker's permit for this area.

Meanwhile they have no money coming in, and the battle to try to alleviate this situation is a long, difficult one including red-tape and officialdom.

MR NTANZI — 18 years old, works as a domestic. As he comes from a homeland area where there is positively no means of employment, he is only allowed into Durban as a flat worker, builder, labourer or domestic worker. At the time that he was job hunting, he was offered domestic labour or back to the homeland! He is paid R10 a month and has no protection against the gross exploitation that people in this job category especially, have to endure. His alternative? Domestic labour or starvation because by law once you are employed in one of the three mentioned categories you cannot change.

MR NGCOBE is a machine specialist and comes from Ndwedwe district where there is no labour available for a man with his qualifications. He has legal hostel accommodation in Umlazi, got a job with a very reputable, large countrywide company. However, he was refused registration on the grounds that the Durban unemployed people must be catered for first. But Influx Control was unable to provide this company with a man of similar qualifications — the result: no employment for Mr Ngcobe; no employment for a Durban work seeker and the company which was willing and able to give someone employment was forced to do without a machine specialist.

MR MCHUNU qualifies under Section 10 of the Urban Areas Act, but due to the present economic situation and lack of employment opportunities, he was unable to find a job within the 30 days allowed on his work seeker's permit. Consequently this expired and seven days later

he did find work, but because his permit had expired, he was refused registration and was asked to leave the area forthwith. He has nowhere to go, knows no-one in the area of his birth and is now desperate, hungry, angry and confused.

MRS MTHABALI qualifies under Section 10 1(b). She had a house in Chesterville until 1972. This was taken away from her while she was away at her husband's family farm, where he had taken ill and died. She left her sons in the house, the rent was always paid, but they were ejected and her furniture removed. Her one son is a widower with six children, all born in Durban and he cannot apply for a house as he is not married. All representation has been refused and no alternatives given for this desperate family of eight people.

MR MKHIZE is 66 years old and was fired because of his age. He has worked continuously for most of his life. Now as he is classed as being not capable or available for work, he is refused his UIF benefits to which he has contributed since the institution of this act. He can only look forward to a pension of R15 a month to maintain himself, his wife and their home.

Despite continuous representation and appeal about the daily contravention of the Unemployment Insurance Fund by employers, the majority still without doubt ignore this act. They seem to have little regard for the subsequent deprivation and suffering experienced by their African employees.

Solveig Piper
Advice Office supervisor

Natal Midlands

IT is difficult for us to assess how successful our attempts to assist workers have been. A fundamental problem seems to be the lack of communication between employer and employee. In this respect liaison committees in certain firms do not appear to be functioning properly, for many workers do not even know of their existence.

It might be useful if we wrote to firms in the area suggesting some form of initiation scheme of new workers informing them of existing channels of communication. This would save their workers from much unnecessary misunderstanding.

The first three months of the year were relatively busy ones, but the next three brought a lull in Advice Office activity. It is not clear why this should have happened. Unemployment is, from all accounts, on the increase, many of our cases regarding "pay disputes" are to do with retrenched cases who have not been paid leave pay, notice pay, etc.

One would, therefore, have expected an increase in our activity. In fact July was busier — we had 49 new cases, the most of any previous month this year, and at a time when pressure on Black society has never been greater.

At the present time, on balance, it would seem that the advice Office serves a useful and important service to individual African workers. For this reason it is important that we continue to function, in spite of any opposition we may have to face both from private industry, as well as the public sector.

Sheila Hindson



Keep your library

An open letter to those East London City Council members who voted to close the library to Blacks. From Russell Ally, a teenage pupil at John Bissiker High.

A LEAKING roof, a flickering candle and... a large air-conditioned library. A kitchen table, rickety chairs, five of us and... a large air-conditioned library. Squalor, poverty, us.

We need a place to study, to read, to breathe. Our primary school brothers and sisters swarm our already too small library. The city library is closed to us. Where now? Have we caused any damage? Destroyed books perhaps? Given the place an unpleasant odour? Or does our presence cause embarrassment, uneasiness, maybe? Might we steal from somebody? Might we harm somebody?

We only want somewhere to sit, for you, for others, and you need have no fear of us taking over your library. Not for a chance in education we ask, but for education.

A sinking carpet, soundproof cubicle, silence, atmosphere of learning, feel of life... a library. A kitchen, a baby screaming, brother and sister fighting over who must sit nearest the candle, mom washing pots.

If we promise not to touch any of your books, not to sit on your chairs or use your tables, not even to look at you, would you allow us to sit on your carpeted floors? You could build a separate entrance for us at the back. We will not use your toilets. Honest we will give you no trouble.

You could order us to work for a visit. A kind of covert. We will work for the floors we use. Dust shelves, sweep floors, clean toilets, and where we have sat we will spray, fumigate so that no-one will know we have been there.

Do you know you could make special hours for us? Midnight, early morning, your convenience first.

About subsidies, administrators, what is right and what is wrong, we know little. About three storming out of a meeting in a teacup we do not understand. Conditions, concessions, we do not care. We have up till now eaten half loaves of bread. Whole loaves cost too much and besides one cannot live on bread alone.

Could we come with a police officer present? Some dogs, strict security?

On second thoughts, keep your library. We can do without. The complete loaf of bread will be ours one day.

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THERE must be few who, at the age of four score years and six, could reach the end of a very full and useful life with the same tempo and enthusiasm that marked its span. **FLORENCE DRUMMOND** was one of those singular people. Perhaps the tempo had slowed down a little; but even on that Friday, the day before she died on Saturday, September 11, she had motored out to Mobeni to collect material for the stall she ran for the Progref fete.

So the news of her sudden, quiet death came as a shock to us all. We mourn for her family to whom she was a wonderful mother.

Aunt Florence, as we knew her, was strong in mind and body, and because of her interest in people, both young and old, and in the affairs of her country, she had a sort of "ageless" quality. So it was natural that she should have been one of the first to join the Black Sash movement that stood out against the Nationalist Government's rape of the Constitution in 1954. I remember, also, on returning from Johannesburg after the inspiring inaugural meeting of the Progressive Party, speaking to a group of Aunt Florence's contemporaries.

Only Aunt Florence, and my mother, realised that the time had come to break through the sound barrier of old attitudes. It was not easy for people of their generation to discard outdated habits of thought, but it was characteristic of Aunt Florence that whenever a situation or need arose, she faced up to it squarely, not purely out of a sense of duty, but because she believed it was right and she enjoyed doing it.

She had an amazing capacity for hatching "new ideas" to help a cause, and with her mental and physical stamina, her fearlessness, her sense of humour, she was able to undertake any task, not just with dedicated purpose, but with great enthusiasm.

She was a very genuine human being, and we shall all miss her greatly.

Elizabeth Franklin

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All political comment in this issue, except when otherwise stated, by J. Harris, of 501 Lestar House, 58 Marshall Street, Johannesburg. Cartoons by courtesy of Bob Connolly and the Rand Daily Mail.

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