

7-APR 1956
7-APR 1956
THE NATAL SOCIETY
OF SOUTH AFRICA
LIBRARY SECTION

FIGHTEING

Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper

Vol. 12 No. 4

Price 6d.

APRIL, 1956

TALK

Michael Harmel

on

SABRA'S POLICY

for Africa

...

THE WOMEN'S ANTI-PASS CAMPAIGN

By Helen Joseph

...

"Can Congress Be Neutral
In The Cold War?"

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

...

THE MOZART BI-CENTENARY

...

BOOKS

A MONTHLY JOURNAL FOR DEMOCRATS

"FIGHTING TALK"

Published monthly by the "Fighting Talk" Committee, P.O. Box 1355 Johannesburg.

Annual Subscription: 7/6

Editor: RUTH FIRST

FROM THE SIDELINES

This month's writer :
HELEN JOSEPH

IN THIS ISSUE

	Page
FROM THE SIDELINES	
By Helen Joseph	2
HUNGARY—FACT & FICTION	
By Michael Harmel	3
EYE-WITNESS IN BUDAPEST	
Charlie Coutts	5
A CHRISTMAS STORY	
By Alex La Guma	6
MOON OVER DISTRICT SIX	
By Richard Moore	7
AN ENGLISH ARTIST IN SOUTH AFRICA	
By Paul Hogarth	8
OPEN WIDE THE DOORS . . .	
By Alfred Hutchinson	10
THE TRIAL	
A Short Story by T. H. Gwala	11
THE NASSER GOVERNMENT	
By L. Bernstein	13
BOOKS REVIEWS	
A Single Pebble	
French Short Stories	
Passive Resistance in S. Africa	
BRIEFER REVIEWS	15
DRAWINGS by	
Paul Hogarth	
Peter Clark	
Arthur Goldreich	



E "EDUCATION BY DICTATION!" That's what Father Martin Jarrett-Kerr calls it and how right he is! Dictate, indoctrinate, don't let the children think for themselves—that's Bantu Education. And the tragedy is that the undermining of the children is a slow, pernicious, indiscernible process. It doesn't show in a year, or two years. It will take a generation before we can really see what Verwoerd has done to the children. And he may be gone by then, but the evil that he has done will live after him. (And there is no good to be interred with Verwoerd's bones!) Meanwhile nearly two years have passed and parents' minds have been lulled. "At least the children learn to read and write," they say, and the long-term damage passes unnoticed. But there is a core of resistance, small enough but as yet indestructible—the cultural clubs. Over four thousand children on the Reef and in the Eastern Cape—and they have some forty club leaders who have so unbelievably managed to cope with the children. Heaven knows how they have done it! No buildings, no desks, no books, for the clubs are not—must not—be schools. How many of us could, day after day, year in and year out, handle these vast numbers of children in such conditions? The average number of children to each club leader is over one hundred! And for pay, these patient people must be content with a sporadic pittance—a sort of "Now you see it—now you don't!" system. But the club leaders carry on. And as long as the parents of four thousand children still declare their opposition, the fight against Bantu Education will go on. It is a question, however, how long the clubs will be able to continue on the present hand-to-mouth basis. If go they must, because they are crushed by Verwoerd's merciless legislation, that is no victory for him. But if they disappear of the neglect of the Congress movement, then that will be Verwoerd's triumph.

HOW LONG will it be before European working mothers are faced with this problem, already so acute overseas, where millions of school children must come home every day to an empty house and a closed door. This is not a question of crèches and nursery schools for the children of working mothers—that's another problem and a very real one, with our Government refusing subsidies; the municipality closing nursery schools; and the Education Department paying out £20 a year for a White child, £10 a year for a Coloured child and nothing at all for an African child! But the latchkey child is the school-going child—what of him? European housewives are warned that the domestic servant is disappearing from South Africa—(she wants to work in the factory eight hours a day and for cash wages instead of working sixteen hours a day for a "nice room and all found" and a few pounds a month!) South Africa, you are only forty years out of date! This happened in Europe with the first world war when the domestics became munition girls and never went back to the basements, the steep stairs, and the attics. But is the "latchkey child" really something new to South Africa? What about the hundreds of thousands of Non-European school children who come home to empty, closed houses, to play in the streets—if streets you can call them?

BUT IT ISN'T a child saying this, it's the police! A microphone is found placed overnight in a hall hired to the African National Congress for a conference. And it wasn't exactly a skilled job: a few holes drilled in the roof, and a microphone fastened above them — with "IT WASN'T ME" plasticine! Was it perhaps done by a father, who had this strange device in his pocket? Perhaps he was taking it home to his children? A child's toy to be used for such a purpose? At least it may indicate that even policemen have family lives—but then, of course, it wasn't the police who put the microphone in the roof. Or so they say.

Had the Soviet Union the right to intervene? Was this the imposition of Socialism from outside? What of the peoples' discontent? and war plots and intrigues?

MICHAEL HARMEL writes on

HUNGARY — FACT OR FICTION

CAN YOU REMEMBER, in the flood of horror stories from Vienna over the last few weeks, the dreadful report of Soviet troops shelling the Budapest children's hospital and murdering the inmates? It was circulated by SAPA—Reuter and given prominence in the daily press.

Now, on November 13 the American (but not as far as I know the South African) newspapers published a joint statement by the correspondents of the Associated Press, the United Press and Reuters. They reported that they had inspected the hospital. It was undamaged. Not one of the over three hundred children had been harmed.

A Tainted Press

IT SEEMS to me that this incident illustrates the dilemma of the serious student of world affairs trying to understand and weigh the meaning of the Hungarian rising.

Our sources of information (apart from the *New Age*, which had done a splendid job these past few weeks, and once again demonstrated its indispensability) are tainted—the same press, radio, and international news monopolies which have for thirty-eight years demonstrated their incorrigible malice and mendacity towards Soviet Russia, and whose army of foreign correspondents in Vienna have clearly had instructions to go to town on Hungary . . . especially in view of the need to distract attention from the rape of Egypt.

I am not trying to say that the Hungarian events are not serious and important. Indeed they are, and there is no person with feelings who can but deeply regret the suffering and bloodshed of Hungarian and Soviet people. But sympathy is not enough. *We must try to draw the correct conclusions from what has happened, and not to be swept away by the tidal wave of hate propaganda against the Soviet Union, which is all that the tainted news-sources are really interested in.*

Many people, even some on the Left, made up their minds about the Hungarian events without really knowing what had happened. The picture presented by the newspapers, beginning with the demonstration of October 23, was extremely confusing. Prior to that date our attention had been directed towards Poland, where we were assured big trouble was brewing. Then "somehow" peaceful Budapest was turned into wild rioting. This, we were told, was a rising against Soviet domination, and the Nagy government which called in Soviet troops, legally stationed in the country, to restore order was depicted as a Kremlin dominated "puppet administration." Then as Nagy began to occupy a more and more ambiguous position, calling upon Soviet troops to withdraw from Budapest (which they did), altering his cabinet from day to day to bring in more and more Right-wing figures from the past, and ultimately denouncing the Warsaw treaty and calling for Western intervention, the papers told us that he wasn't a puppet of the Kremlin but a national hero. Then came the intervention of the Government of Janos Kadar, its appeal to the Soviet Army, and the flood of atrocity stories from Vienna: massacres, shelling of hospitals, deportations "to Siberia," the lot.

The general picture presented to us has been one of a nation gallantly rising for its freedom, brutally crushed by foreign intervention.

I do not pretend that we have all the facts necessary for a complete assessment of what happened, but I am convinced that this is a grossly misleading, oversimplified and distorted picture: one which leaves out essential factors vitally necessary to a proper understanding of what has happened.

Outside Intervention

IN the first place, it leaves out the whole background of the cold war and America's vast intrigues in Eastern Europe. *The United States Government has been openly spending 100 million dollars a year in subversion in socialist countries in Europe.* This has been spent partly on propaganda calling for revolt from radio and leaflet balloon transmitters in West Germany and elsewhere. It would be wrong to underestimate the effect of inflammatory propaganda, especially in a crisis situation. The West Berlin correspondent of the *New Statesman* (17.11.56) reported that the Free Democratic Party had complained to the Adenauer Government against broadcasts from the American-controlled "Radio Free Europe," which called upon the Hungarians to carry on fighting as foreign aid was on its way. He also cites the *Sued-deutsche Zeitung*, which

"places responsibility for bloodshed in Hungary upon these broadcasts and suggests that the radio station should be removed from German territory."

American intervention in Hungary was by no means limited to radio and leaflet balloon propaganda. *Emigrés and ex-Horthy p.o.w's have long been organised into armed units with carefully-laid plans to cross the border from Austria at a favourable opportunity and to carry out a military putsch.* Here one should refer to the deeply significant statement by Dulles that he knew in advance what was going to happen in Hungary.

The Peoples' Discontent

HOWEVER, to ascribe the Hungarian crisis merely to American and other imperialist intervention and intrigues would be a gross oversimplification. *Such intrigues would have been powerless, but for discontent in the country, both wide and deep, created by gross errors, maladministration and bureaucratic leadership sadly out of touch with the people.* Reform, though promised in an important series of decisions in July, was slow in being implemented. And criticisms of past errors had been made in a one-sided way which confused and split not only the people but also the leading Workers' Party.

Moreover the insistent demands for withdrawal of Soviet troops and for relations of full equality with the U.S.S.R. (taken together with the Soviet's own recent notable statement on future relations with socialist countries) make it clear that the Soviet Union on its part had not been guiltless of high-handedness in some of its dealings.

There were many elements mixed up in the confused situation that prevailed in Hungary from October 23. Most of the students who marched in Budapest that day, carrying pictures of Nagy and Lenin, no doubt believed that they were demonstrating in favour of the programme of democratic reforms, within the

framework of socialism and the People's Republic, already announced by the Government. But there were others who had very different ideas, who had well-laid plans to seize upon this democratic and patriotic upsurge to destroy the Republic and restore capitalism.

Kadar's Statement

LET us turn to the statement of Janos Kadar, shamefully suppressed by the entire South African press, with the honourable exception of *New Age*.

He quotes students, who were directed to go "a certain place on Szabadsag Hill. There you will find arms." Armed students were divided into groups and sent in different directions: some to Parliament with a list of demands, others to destroy the statue of Stalin, others to the radio station to insist, at revolver point, on the broadcasting of their demands.

After that, stated Kadar, things began to develop fast. An armed group occupied the telephone exchange. Another attacked the office of the newspaper *Szabad Nep* and its printing press. Another occupied an arms factory and carried off a large quantity of army and ammunition. Others seized lorries, attacked a munitions dump, etc.

"Things began to take place on a bigger scale. It was clear that this was a well-prepared military campaign, far from what the young students who had started the demonstration had believed."

During all this time, said Kadar, the defence forces and the Soviet troops studiously avoided attacking or even opening fire. They were concerned to avoid bloodshed, but the order not to fire in fact completely confused the soldiers, who found themselves under attack with orders not to fight back. They allowed themselves to be disarmed.

"Soldiers even left their tanks without battle—and it became apparent that in this so-called peaceful demonstration there were people who knew how to drive tanks and where they were going in them."

Counter-Revolution

PERHAPS there was never a counter-revolution so cleverly carried out," says Kadar. In fact the directing brains kept carefully behind the scenes. "*The confusion of the situation was caused by the fact that the people who were drawn into the demonstrations were not against Socialism while in reality the direction of the movement was counter-revolutionary.*"

Now this question, of the nature of the Hungarian events, is precisely the one on which some writers, including those of the standing of Basil Davidson and ex *Daily Worker* reporter Peter Fryer, differ sharply from Kadar's analysis. They say it is not true that counter-revolution had taken over. "The great mass of the Hungarian people," says Fryer, "have no desire to return to capitalism." That is what Kadar says too. But his point, which people like Davidson, Fryer and others overlook, is that the organised fascists, riding on the crest of the popular uprising, were in fact pursuing aims quite different from those of the unorganised "mass of the Hungarian people."

Nothing shows this more clearly than the bloody events which took place in Budapest following the withdrawal of the Red Army units. From that time, fascist terror ran wild. Kadar speaks of shocking massacres, in which countless Communists and other people were murdered and tortured to death, when the trees and the woods of Budapest were "full of hanged people" lynched by murdering mobs. Nor is it only Kadar who says this. *The New York Times* correspondent, H. Bigart, though strongly anti-Soviet, reported how gangs dragged a wounded Hungarian lieutenant out of hospital, hung him up by his feet and then trampled on his corpse. Harry Schwartz, *New York Herald Tribune* correspondent, who was on the spot, declared that the

"hard core" of the insurrection was composed of former landlords and capitalists. *Life* published photographs of armed gangs shooting, beating to death and hanging Hungarian Communists and soldiers.

Mindszenty's speech calling for a return to capitalism, the speech of Szabo, leader of the Smallholder's Party, whom Nagy had brought into his Cabinet, proposing a return to its 1930 programme, when Szabo owned over 3,000 acres, were also signs of wiping out the revolutionary changes which have taken place in Hungary since the war.

During this period, said Kadar, "Imre Nagy had allowed himself to be drawn more and more to the Right without looking to see what was happening down below in the streets flowing with blood."

It does seem clear, that *whatever the subjective desires of the ordinary people, as observed by Fryer and Davidson and others, the direction which the Hungarian storm was taking led straight towards the restoration of capitalism, which in Hungarian conditions could have only been accomplished by imposing a dictatorship of a fascist character akin to that of Admiral Horthy between the wars.*

Independence and Self-determination

EVEN granted that this was so, many will say, what right had the Soviet Union to intervene? If the socialist workers of Hungary lacked the mass support to maintain the Peoples' Republic did this not prove that the country was not ripe for socialism politically? Is it not true that socialism cannot be imposed from without? What about the right to national independence and self-determination—is that not being infringed by the Soviet Union?

All these questions, I feel, ignore the fundamental character of the international situation through which we are living: the period of the cold war. It is impossible to discuss Hungary rationally without taking into account American intervention throughout the world in support of reactionary movements and regimes, the rearmament of Western Germany and NATO (which brought about the Warsaw Pact as its answer), the critical tension aroused by the Anglo-French-Israel aggression in Egypt. *In such a situation it is absurd to expect the Soviet Union to view events from the standpoint of abstract principle, without regard to her own security.*

We must agree that socialism cannot be imposed from outside. Indeed, if ever there was a social system which depends absolutely upon the voluntary co-operation of the great mass of workers and peasants it is precisely socialism—that daring vision of a new world without masters and servants. But was the purpose of the Soviet intervention to "impose socialism?" I do not think so. I do not believe that the mass of Hungarian people are opposed to socialism, or that they want to bring back the capitalists and feudal landlords. And the path they choose in developing socialism in the future is strictly their own internal affair in which, as shown by recent agreements with Tito and Gomulka, the U.S.S.R. would not interfere. (One might make reference here, too, to Finland which though defeated by the Soviet Union in the war has never been subjected to Soviet interference in her internal affairs.)

The Danger of World War

WHAT is at issue here, however, is not a question of socialism, or roads to socialism. Nor is it a "purely internal affair." *The assumption of power in Hungary by an American-inspired fascist Government, filled with hostility and territorial ambitions towards the Soviet Union and Hungary's other socialist neighbours, could not be regarded with indifference by any of them. Had counter-revolution, screened by the ineffective, vacillating Nagy*

regime, attained its objective in Hungary it could easily have sparked off World War III, already terrifyingly close in these turbulent closing months of 1956.

Nagy's call to the West for intervention was, it seems to me, a decisive factor which brought the danger of war right to the doorstep of the U.S.S.R.—a war which threatened to engulf the world, and which would have utterly destroyed Hungary itself. Anyone who leave this absolutely crucial element out of account in discussing Hungary is in my opinion missing the whole point.

It is tragic and deplorable that the Red Army should, through an unforeseen chain of circumstances, have come into collision with Hungarian people, many of whom were confused and ignorant of the dark forces of reaction operating behind the scenes. The blunders and crimes which led to this sad contradiction must and will, in the course of time, be fully and ruthlessly examined, so that such a thing may never happen again.

But in the meantime those of us who have always stood for peace and progress are not going to lose our sense of

balance and perspective. We are not going to allow ourselves to become parties to the disgusting anti-Soviet campaign (whose real objects are only too plain) being conducted by the imperialists. Those who are guilty of murdering countless innocent Africans and Asians, of supporting and condoning imperialism, have no right to point a finger at the Soviet Union. They shout about the poor Hungarians because they want us to forget about the poor Egyptians, Algerians, Cypriots, Malaysians, Guatemalans, Koreans and others whose lands they have occupied and whose blood they have spilt or are spilling.

The imperialists are rejoicing over Hungary, and indeed it has been a good stick with which to beat the U.S.S.R. But their rejoicing is premature. Workers and oppressed people have a way of turning defeat into victory; for from the bitter experiences of setbacks and temporary defeats they are able as at no other time to harvest rich lessons, which lead in turn to fresh glorious advances and victories.

Eye-witness in Budapest

BUDAPEST is a scarred and battered city, for the tragedy is that Soviet troops had to fight not only open fascist troops but thousands of youngsters and students who sincerely believed they were under arms to defend Hungary.

That fascist troops existed I know from first-hand experience, because I was taken by a group of 20, who debated whether to shoot me or not.

So let me put it straight—I know very well that hundreds of the finest young people in Hungary were in the fighting. But the group who held me were fascists. This is the position in Budapest now as I see it:

If Imre Nagy and other former Government leaders are really patriots, now is the time to prove it.

An appeal from them to resume work and then carry on the struggle around political differences would speed enormously the full return to normal life in Hungary. This is Thursday, and there are many signs that people are returning to work and speeding up everyday activity; but it is still very, very slow.

At a standstill

Of course, there were objective difficulties—thousands lived so far from their work that they could only get there in time to start out on the way home.

In many places there is neither enough fuel or raw materials. Some places spent hours discussing the new wage scales, and in two offices I visited no one could decide who was in charge—the old director or the newly elected Workers' Council.

But behind all these reasons lies the fact that the slogan, "No work until the Russians go home and Imre Nagy back as Prime Minister," holds mass support, and it neutralises thousands of honest workers who fear that continuation of the present position will lead to national suicide.

The terrible danger is that the workers are still united. The new United Workers' Socialist Party is in the popular mind still associated with the era of Stalinism and Rakosi-ism.

CHARLIE COUTTS, a British youth leader, worked for three years in Budapest as editor of "WORLD YOUTH" and here describes Hungarian events as he saw them.

In the ferment and bitterness of the past few weeks people have forgotten that Kadar and the other Government and Party leaders were in the forefront of the struggle against Rakosi and Gero.

Forgotten too, are the enormous social gains of people's democracy. They are temporarily overshadowed by the worst features of the policies that led to disaster.

Even now the majority do not understand why the Kadar Government called for the help of the Soviet troops. The fear of danger of fascism did not loom large in people's minds.

This is an attitude that is not difficult to understand. In those four days before Soviet troops re-entered Budapest anarchy reigned and the streets were filled with armed groups, but they all claimed to be revolutionaries.

The White Terror was conducted in the name of being against Security men in disguise. In this way hundreds of the finest workers, both Communist and otherwise, were murdered.

On the surface there appeared to be a development of democracy. All kinds of political parties were springing up. People who got together and drew up demands were going to the printers and bringing out newspapers in the name of "the Hungarian people" or "the armed youth."

"Stay Socialist"

The main parties like the Social Democrats or the Agrarian Party were of course more serious, but for all that their main concern was the securing of cars, apartments and district offices rather than how to get together in the national interest.

By Saturday November 3 one could say that the events had passed out of the hands of the youth and students who first began this struggle with the aim of an independent, democratic and Socialist Hungary.

Fascist slogans of "We don't want Socialism" were appearing on posters and handbills.

True, in Dunapentele (formerly Szalinvaros) the revolutionary council, elected by the overwhelming majority of workers, had passed a resolution saying: "We were the first Socialist city in Hungary and we must stay that way."

True, too, that the vast majority of the people had similar sentiments, but there were no organised forces to lead them.

The Nagy Government had become one that simply served as a mirror for every new demand, and these demands were coming from the Right Wing. The only end could have been the return of capitalism.

Soviet Responsibility

The Workers' Party was demoralised and ceased to exist.

In these circumstances one could see the full crime of those who had reduced the party to bureaucracy incapable of political action, and one must also add the crime of the Soviet Communists who had in the past given their moral support to those same leaders.

Thousands of honest Communists who had learned their Marxism by rote were so confused by the slogans of national unity that they were either paralysed or willing to regard every one with arms as a fighter for Hungary, whether they were the original student demonstrators, fascists or criminals out for loot and revenge.

Emigres were streaming back from West Germany and Austria. They quickly linked up with those forces, even inside the Government, who had directed the murder and liquidation of leading army officers, Communists and democrats.

It has to be understood that reaction was the only really organised force in the country. In the absence of any united working class they would have taken complete power. Then the slogans of neutrality and free elections would have served their purpose and been thrown aside.

(Continued on page 12)

A CHRISTMAS STORY

By ALEX LA GUMA

"WELL," said my old pal, South West. "It's almost Chris'mas."

"Twenty to twelve," added Hammerkoppie, glancing at the battered clock on the mantelpiece.

We were in Ma Henry's front room, drinking white port at five bob a bottle, which was a shameful price, seeing it was Christmas time. From there we could see her working in the kitchen, plucking a fowl, with a cigarette dangling from her fat lips, and a yellow-and-blue paper cap on her head. The ceiling of the front room was hung with paper streamers and balloons which hid the fly-spotted boards, and a row of greeting cards lined the mantle piece on each side of the clock.

South West was looking a little fired and after a while suggested that we sing a couple of carols. Hammerkoppie proposed "Silent Night," but South West didn't know all the words, so we settled for "Once In Royal David's City." Well, we were about halfway through and not doing so bad, when Ma Henry started raising hell and saying what would the people next door think her house was and besides, her cousin Joe's wife, Maria, was about to have a baby any minute out in the back-yard hokkie, and anyway our voices were terrible.

So we gave it up and had another round of white port and later I could see Hammerkoppie looking sad as hell.

"Chris'mas always makes me think of the last time I been in church," he said.

"When was that?" South West asked. We called him that because he had spent many years wandering around South West Africa, working for the Germans.

"I can't remember," Hammerkoppie answered.

"Well," South West said. "Chris'mas is a time for religion. And talking about religion brings into my mind the time some of these holy-holy people hired the old Union bioscope for holding some holy-holy meetings and converting all sinners to the Lord.

"Well, these holy-holy people got stuck in and you could hear the noise down in Adderley Street the way they went on. Singing and clapping hands and calling on all sinners to give up sin and be saved.

"Awright. They carried on like that a couple of nights and the bioscope was crowded out every time, just like it was in the old days when it was a real bioscope. I reckon most of the

people who went to listen to these holy-holies just did so out of busy-bodiness and maybe because it was a free show almost better than the bio. So those holy-holy people didn't get many people saved by the Lord.

"They kept it up some time and I reckon they were just about to pack up and move on, seeing there wasn't much business, when what to you reckon happened? Well, one night the whole Dragon Gang walks into the place. Well, everybody mos reckons there will be plenty of ructions because the Dragon Gang are a lot of hardcase rookers who smoke dagga and rob and kill all over the place. And vère, nobody dared walk out because the Dragons might have thought it an insult and maybe do something about it. So everybody sat tight and I reckon for the first time there was a helluva lot of praying going on. But to everybody's surprise the Dragons didn't do a thing but throw some people out of a row of seats, you know those that used to be two-and-tuppence, and take their places as quietly as you please.

"Well, the Dragon Gang just sat there, listening to the singing and the praying and calls to the Lord, until they got so fired up with religion, and I reckon some boom, and the next thing everybody knew was that the whole lot of them was converted to the Lord. They jumped up and started singing although I reckon none of them knew the words, and vère they hopped onto the stage and they all started pulling out their weapons and laying them at the feet of the holy-holy people. There was a good collection of knives, bicycle chains, tyre-rims, sharpened screw-drivers and lead pipes. And even one or two pen-knives.

"Well, those holy-holy people were blerry pleased with themselves, seeing they had succeeded in converting the Dragons, and I reckon other people felt the same way, but for different reasons.

"Well," South West said. "That was how the Dragon Gang got saved by the Lord."

"Time for nog a dop," Hammerkoppie said, and passed around the white port.

At that moment midnight struck and we all got up and went into the kitchen to wish Ma Henry the compliments of the season.

"Tenk you, boys," she returned. "And the same to you." We saw that there were tears running from her



"TSOTSI"

(A drawing by Arthur Goldreich.)

eyes. "I'm so heppy because it's Chris'mas and Maria's just got a son."

I suppose the tears were those of happiness, but I had a suspicion the old lady had been having some white port on the side, too. Anyway, we wished her luck, and Hammerkoppie made an improper suggestion that we make a collection for Cousin Joe's little son. We raised three-and-four-pence among ourselves and Ma Henry got so happy after that that she threw in another bottle of white port, on the house.

We sat down in the front room again for another round and I asked South West whether the Dragon Gang were still converted.

"Hell, no," he said. "They only stayed saved by the Lord for a few minutes, because right then somebody brought word that the Queen Street Busters were raiding their territory. And you can't expect a man to stay saved when a thing like that happens.

"Well," South West said. "Merry Chris'mas."

MOON OVER DISTRICT SIX

Story by
RICHARD MOORE

Drawing by
PETER CLARK

THE moon was in a recklessly gay mood and shouted "Happy New Year" to the stars. The stars being older and more respectable, modestly twinkled back "same to you." The moon, a gay young moll did a comic dance around staid spinstery Table Mountain, narrowly missed Lion's Head and bounced dizzily across the sky. District Six hopped, skipped and jumped.

The streetlamps laughed as a handful of teasers went streaming down Tennant Street into Hanover Street.

"Buy my teasers,
See dem blow in 'e breezes . . ."

sang the teaser-man who wasn't much of a poet. You could feel that the teaser-man knew that it was New Year's Eve. The teasers also knew.

"They make me want to wheezes," laughed a young gallant to his girl-friend amused at his own wit. He also was no poet.

"What's wheezes?" she enquired coyly.

"Oh wheezes is wheezes. Don't you know wheezes?" he leered at her suggestively.

"Oh Sis Boetie!" she said with the little dignity she could muster. Then the idea overwhelmed her and she burst out into uncontrollable giggles.

Up Hanover Street to Star Bioscope streamed the teasers to pause at the Fish Market.

"Happy New Yea' Merrim," said an early celebrator pirouetting on the pavement with a fancy cap which read "Kiss me luvvy." In his hand was a half-empty bottle of "Van der Stel which shouted "Me too!"

"You mus' learn to control your filthy mouth," said a prim, fair Coloured lady who only spoke English at home.

"Heppy New Yea' Merrim," said drunk pierot, offering her a drink.

"Go to hell, you dirty bastard," she hissed at him, forgetting for the moment that she was a prim Coloured lady that only spoke English at home.

"Why did 'e White man blame me becaus' I'm Cuuullid. . ." sang an amorous swain lamenting the fate of his people to an empty lane. The lane displayed no interest but a cheeky, yellow youth looked up momentarily from a pair of dice he was rolling.

"I'm a guy who neve' done no haaaaaarm . . ."



twanged the amorous one on his gaudy guitar.

"You singin' balls," shouted the yellow dice-roller.

"Go to hell," retaliated the imitation Lanza.

"Your mama's three-quarters," said the cheeky one spitting on his dice.

"Com quick, sixes my-nick!"

"Buy my teasers,
See dem blow in 'e breezes . . ."

sang the teaser man who had never heard of Shakespeare.

"There's a fight on 'e corner, they buggerin' up you' husband'," sang an urchin to a tired wo-

"Lemme go. He star-man with tired breasts.

ted firs'," sobbed her husband who tried to shield his face from flying boots.

"Leave 'm alone!!!" shouted the woman hysterically as she tried to part her husband.

"Jeeeesus. That's a helvu lotta blood," whispered the urchin who liked fights, to his guttersnipe sister.

"Buy my teasers,
See dem blow in 'e breezes . . ."

sang the teaser-man who preferred to mind his own business.

"Hier ko' 'ie Law!!!" warned a frightened thin-necked spectator who kept to the fringe of the crowd.

"Break it up. Break it up. Break it up!" said authority in the form of a young White constable with his hand on his revolver holster.

"Die Law se ding is vim," shouted an obscure voice from the crowd, that preferred to remain obscure.

"Who said that?" the brass buttons and revolver demanded.

"Heppy New Yea' baas," shouted a jelly-drunk man who was trying to convince the crowd that he was sober.

"Believe in the Lord and thou shalt be saved," foamed a street-corner bible-thumper.

"Here's a penny fir C'lection," said a facetious young skolly who wasn't interested in his soul, "Go home an' have a drink."

"Sinners!" thumped the preacher ignoring the ungodly one, "when the Lord told me to come, I came."

"Here's another penny. Buy yerself a teaser," said the facetious one.

"Buy my teasers,
See dem blow in 'e breezes . . ."

sang the mute inglorious Milton.

"Gie me two," said a reckless, highly-rouged housewife who wanted to bribe the kids because she was never at home.

(Continued on page 8)

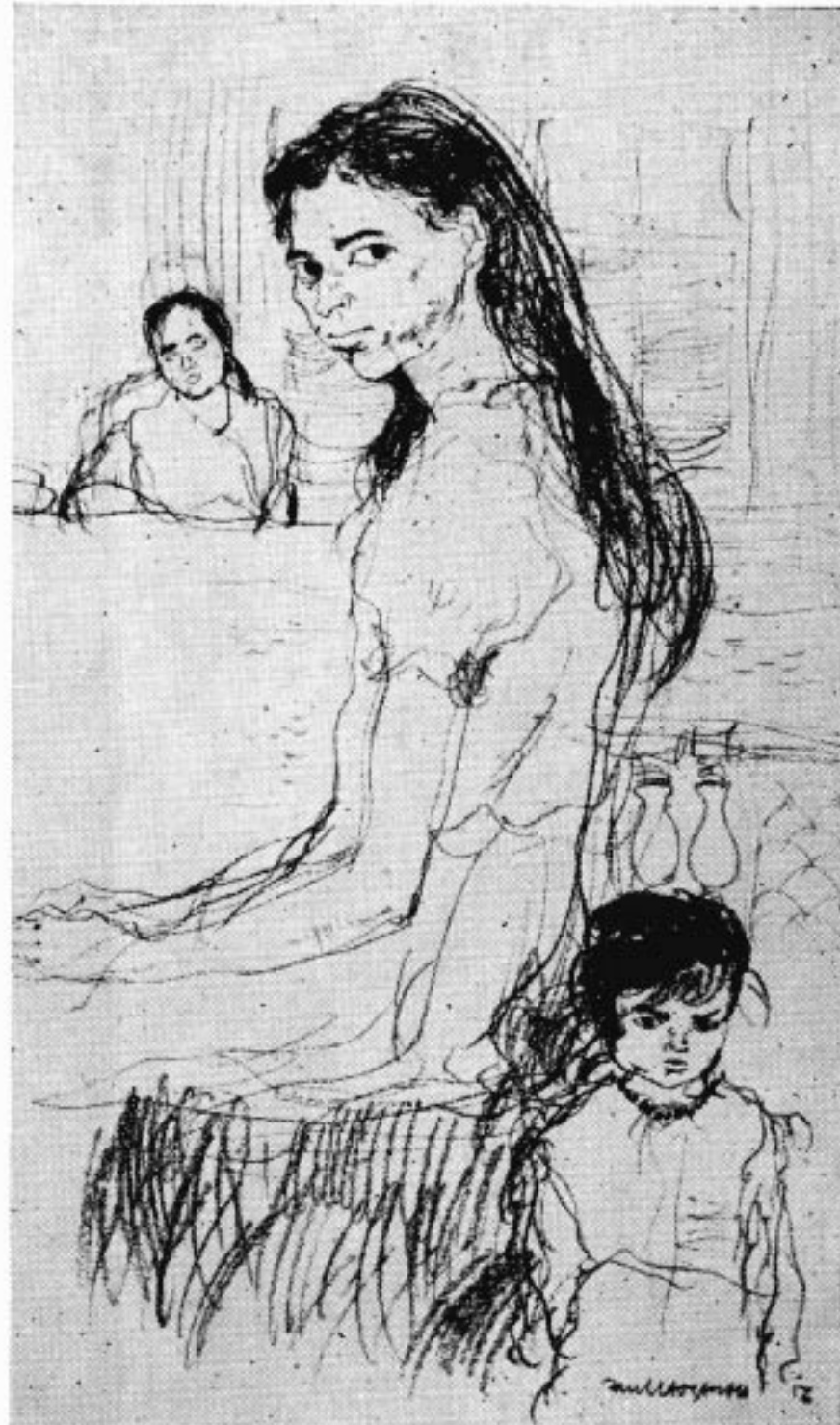
An English Artist in South Africa

By PAUL HOGARTH

THE artist abroad can be regarded with the wildest enthusiasm or with the profoundest suspicion. In China I was mobbed by teenagers and had to complete a drawing from inside an army truck. In Rhodesia, a local White official glared at me and asked if I had come to draw "native nudes" Un-uttered protest was brushed aside with the remark that this sort of thing was all very well in Europe but not in Africa, not *now*. I kept my upper lip stiff and insisted that my interest was in the everyday life of the African people but just to make sure he had the special branch keep an eye on me.

Anxious to avoid the attention of their South African colleagues, I have to confess that I did not apply for permits to draw in the locations. Accompanied by intrepid African and European friends, my drawings were made in all sorts of places under all sorts of conditions which may not have been appreciated; so we couldn't afford the risk. I remember one night in Johannesburg. I drew several portraits of the people's leaders one after another well into the night. They had been brought to the house in which I was staying. What faces! Among them was the redoubtable "Uncle JB," a giant with great warmth of personality with a voice like an amiable frog-horn. "We'll win in the long run," he boomed, and I immediately lost any doubt that we wouldn't.

Shanty towns in Europe are either a source of fun or embarrassment; in the Union they have become an accepted part of the everyday scene. White strangers are regarded not unnaturally, with suspicion and resentment but it must be modestly admitted that this changed to clamorous enthusiasm whenever I sat down and began to depict some familiar scene or face. Hordes of piccanins would race



AN INDIAN FAMILY IN DURBAN

MOON OVER DISTRICT SIX

"I say paaaaal, buy us two one-an-fours," said a flashily dressed dandy in pink socks who wanted to jump the bioscope queue.

"Im a'reddy buying five tickets, lied a frightened stranger.

"O'ny two man," pink socks insisted.

"But I'm a'reddy buying five," said the nervous stranger.

"It's New Yea' an' I'll rip your guts," said pink socks who had no knife.

"You better buy it an' don' talk a lot."

"A'right," said the very frightened stranger.

(Continued from previous page)

"So I sis to her, how abou're date honey," said a dirty seventeen-year-old lying about his sexual exploits.

"Honey, tink you funny," said an admiring wit.

"Widout no money," said another.

"In you' bunney," chimed the last rhymster.

The moon zig-zagged crazily across the sky bumping into a star or two on the way and bouncing off Signal Hill. After all it was New Year's Eve and District Six was hysterical with joy.

"Buy my teasers,
See dem blow in 'e breezes . . ."

sang the teaser-man.

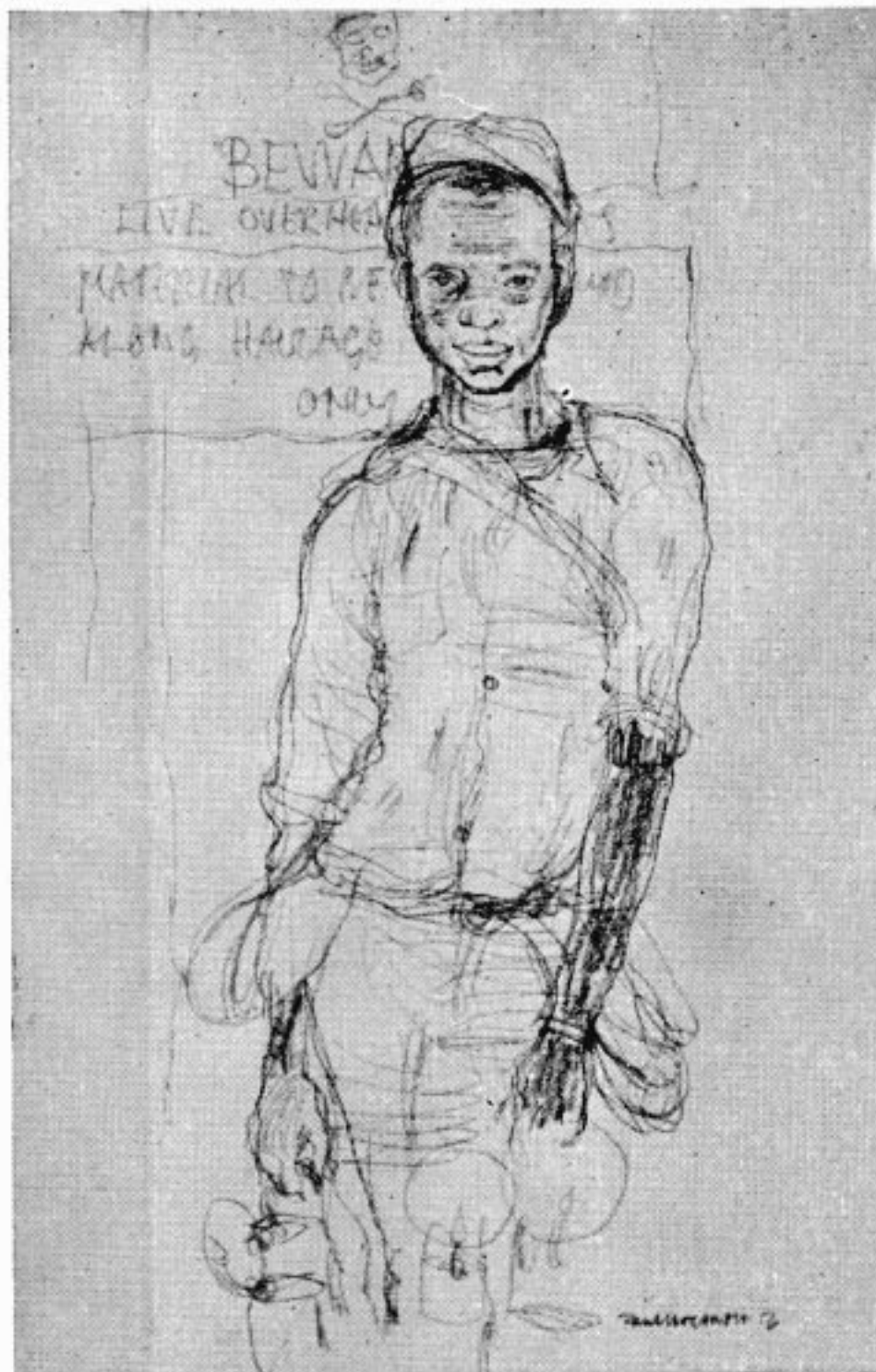
around whilst others would be presented for their portraits by proud insistent mothers. I shall never forget that parched incised hillside on which thirty thousand Africans "live." This dreary panorama of breeze-block, sacking and flattened tin bears the romantic name of Orlando Shelters. And on what seems like the surface of the moon, check-shirted gangs of *tsotsis* stroll by like buccaneers. Like the homeward bound survivors of the Thirty Years War, old men drift by with staring hopeless eyes; *dagga* addicts. Twilight falls and a mute determination to survive is caught in the flares of countless fires as singing and laughter fill the night air.

And then the first time I saw a "beer-hall." It was crowded with hundreds of African workers who milled in and around a huge compound. African police stood at the entrance watching everyone leave. Then, quite suddenly, a police patrol-car screeched to a standstill and four armed White police sprang out demanding passes and a voice behind me cried: "Draw *this* White man!" The police dragged a young African into the waiting car and as they drove by I saw that they were beating him and the blood was on his face.

★ ★

Early one morning near Maraisburg I shook hands with a brutal-looking shift-boss and shortly afterwards found myself racing down an inclined shaft at terrifying speed. Looking back, a square of light the size of a postage stamp was all that was left of daylight. Then we clambered out on the twenty-second level and turned off a passage to worm our way down stopes streaming with water. Above our heads was the glinting strata of quartz and rock in which lay the gold. Further ahead, hundreds of sweating Africans hacked and drilled the rockface; in the flickering light of carbide lamps, we penetrated still further, pausing now and then to peer down some unexplained shaft of yawning emptiness. That day I made many drawings for the spectacle of intense human labour was one which I had never seen the like of before.

Then southwards into the Free State, to Blomfontein where faces became implacable and hostile at the sound of an English voice. Where you could sit for a long long time in a restaurant and not receive any attention. Kruger and Cronje glared down on you and every major defeat of the



A YOUNG AFRICAN MINER

British was dramatically depicted in large lithographs; Colenso, Spion Kop and Elandsgaate. And across the street could be glimpsed an odd sight; a poster for the film *The Rains of Ranchipur* on which Richard Burton's "Indian" face was blotted out as he bent over an ivory white Lana Turner. It did not seem so crazy then as it does now.

★ ★

In the streets of Durban, the visitor can be amused by the antics of the magnificently-costumed Zulu rickshaw boys who pound their lives away pulling tourists round the city streets. Pitiful reminders of the humiliation of a proud nation. But there was a day when I saw something of the Zulu heritage in the person of a dignified and noble man whose stern aristocratic face concealed a warm engaging personality. Chief Luthuli, although de-

posed, still kept the love and respect of his people. I went with him through the fields of sugar-cane and made drawings of the share-croppers; Shangaan families, the poorest of the poor whose homes were made from the waste of the crop they cultivated.

These are only brief impressions of the Union as I saw it; of how it always was and how the White man has made it. But not all White men accept this state of affairs. I met men and women, White, Black and Brown who were involved in an heroic fight for a different way of life; a life in which they could live together as equals. To meet them was a privilege, without their help my drawings could not have been made and I want them to know this. Without this special kind of help and encouragement, an artist would be like an actor without an audience.

OPEN WIDE THE DOORS

By
**ALFRED
HUTCHINSON**

WHITE South Africa is engaged in cultural brigandage. Like all the good things of life, culture, too, is regarded as the preserve of the European section of our population. The Non-Whites are made strangers to culture, left to satisfy their cultural needs as best they can. A culture-bar on racial grounds is indefensible and a violation of the spirit of culture. And this when South Africa is drawing from the founts of culture not of her own making.

Today tribal loyalties are being foisted on the African and, indeed, on the entire population. Were Bantu Education to succeed, the African would be effectively insulated from the rest of the world and his cultural horizons pitifully dwarfed. For the avowed intention of Bantu Education is to force the African to relinquish his claims of membership to a larger community, to world citizenship. The Non-Europeans have flung wide open the windows of their souls to the sunlight of the world but these are being shuttered in the interests of an inhuman political ideology.

But the Non-European people are knocking at the door and demanding to be let in. Their cries cannot go unheeded for long. Already a number of eminent artists have been scandalised by the cultural bigotry of the country; it is common knowledge that a number of artists have declared their pleasure on playing for Non-White audiences. Already South Africa's exclusion of Non-Europeans from teams representing her at international sports gatherings is before international bodies. The country is looking forward with interest to the decision of FIFA.

All along the cultural line pressure is being brought to bear on the cultural bar and it must bend or break. The days of the Non-Whites as *witlanders* to culture are numbered.

Apartheid and Culture

Apartheid is an enemy of culture, just like war, international tension, insecurity. For the sake of apartheid, science is prostituted (blood apartheid); literature is emasculated (bans on books); freedom of thought is suppressed) bannings, deportations, namings). The repercussions of apartheid on culture are disastrous. Apartheid tramples on human dignity; culture upholds it. Apartheid seeks a cult—not culture.

Culture in an apartheid society is denied full development—sterilised against the invigorating, life-giving currents of cross-pollination. The artificial barriers that are erected between the people of different racial groups rob culture of the great driving force it derives from contact with other cultures. The banning of books, the censorship of films and other works of art is impoverishing the cultural life of the people of South Africa. A wall of ignorance is being raised between this country and other countries—particularly the Socialist states. And so suspicion is fostered; and so hysteria is whipped up and men led into acts without thinking. Ignorance is not only the cornerstone of apartheid, but it also helps aggressors in their plans to plunge the world into war.

But the trends today are towards greater and greater cultural interchange; towards more and more friendly meetings among the nations. In our own country a cultural traffic is beginning to flow; incoming traffic from other countries, and outgoing traffic from this country to others. There is increasing cultural interchange—a

welcome sign. South Africa has been graced by the Fonteyns, Menuhins, Segovias, the London Symphony Orchestra, La Scala, the Old Vic; the Lions, Dynamos, the M.C.C. These visits have not only brought new blood into the country, but they have made an impact on the cultural bars in the country. The rationalisation that Non-Whites do not appreciate culture, that they are too backward to fully benefit from it—this has suffered a tremendous setback. For the Non-Whites have shown an appreciativeness and enthusiasm for culture that has rewarded the artists who have appeared before them. It is clear that the exclusion of Non-Whites is not on grounds of backwardness but is merely on grounds of colour.

Culture for Freedom

Culture can be an effective weapon not only for the cause of peace but also in the struggle for liberation. Thus far the cultural front has been neglected and left to the hands of indifferent and often hostile persons. This is a sad thing. For culture can be a driving force, drawing more and more people into the struggle; planting ideas deeper into the minds of the people. The people are already showing the way. The new songs show a people face to face with the hardships of apartheid; the police, the removals, etc. The police-fear is typified by songs like "I-Pick-up-Van"; the removal of peoples by "Meadowlands" and the Locations in the Sky Act by "Bayakhala"—the lament of the Zulu flat workers thrown many miles away from their places of work.

The people, too, are showing new forms, new developments in the culture of the country; the Jazz of the Townships—a new development, unfettered to American models now. But perhaps it is just as urgent to help in salvaging the cultural heritage of the past; African folk dances, folk songs, folk-lore, arts and crafts. And this before it is too late.

The liberation movement is faced with the task of breaking down bars between the various racial groups—the barriers that are supposed to divide us. Culture can accomplish this without pain or tears. Let the people open the doors of their cultures to others. And ignorance of one another—that plague—will be replaced by an understanding of our common aspirations, and our desire to live happily in our motherland.

Bridges of Culture.

Just as local bridges must be thrown across the chasms of apartheid, so too, must bridges be thrown between South Africa and other countries. South Africa must not be allowed to spin its apartheid cocoon, and to go to sleep in the midst of world-shaking events and developments. South Africa must throw open its doors for the people to come and go, and be ventilated by the currents of the world.

Culture can be a two-way traffic bridge—where the people meet and learn to understand one another. Cultural exchange leads to better understanding, to respect for the culture of other people, and so to the love of other human beings. Cultural interchange leads to relaxation of international tensions and foils the intentions of the war-mongers. Cultural exchange is a weapon for peace.

Because of its racialist policies, South Africa endangers world peace; supplies an explosive situation which could lead to a conflagration to engulf the whole of mankind.

(Continued on Page 11)

The Trial

A Short Story by
T. H. GWALA

CROWDS of people moved up and down the door-way, some sat in little groups on the lawn, waiting for the trial to begin. Men—thirty-five of them—were appearing before the judges of the Supreme Court charged with murder, armed assembly and incitement to murder.

The court orderly gave a sonorous shout, "Order in Court!" and the crowd which had now assembled in the court room on this 22nd day of February, 1907, humming like bees, stood up and fell into perfect silence. The accused gave a roaring salute of "Bayede!" The three judges in their scarlet gowns which were a symbol of gravity of the matter filed slowly down the aisle holding their papers under their armpits.

The thirty-five men sat one behind the other with their discs hanging loosely on their chests each bearing the number of the accused. There was nothing criminal about these men. Three of them, grey-haired, tall and well built, sat with that dignity of a Zulu warrior. They never looked sideways; their eyes were always planted in front and their arms folded. Their somewhat worn-out army coats added more dignity to their bearing.

A few middle-aged men sat freely unmindful of all that was taking place. One or two chatted, cutting a few jokes. Now and again they shot a few glances at the audience behind them. The younger men were rather uneasy. They sat with unwashed heads buried on their chests.

According to the law this was a batch of hard-boiled criminals.

South Africa is a weak link in the chain of peace. The contradictions between culture and apartheid are sharpening and South Africa is the sufferer. For by fostering a colour-bar South Africa denies herself the company of Non-White artists . . . in fact denies herself all things in which Non-Whites take a part. The apartheid policies are boomeranging. And they do much harm, not only in the country but also abroad. South Africa is the black sheep of the nations of the world. South Africa can have few friends.

Other Peoples and Lands

I have had the great fortune to attend the Fourth World Festival for Peace and Friendship in Bucharest, Roumania, in 1953. It is difficult to point to a single experience, for everything was an experience; things being born; things dying. New horizons being born, new faith, new understanding. Dying, hatred, despair, and the myopic South African vision had no place there. I met people from many lands. I made friends with them. I heard spontaneous declarations of peace and friendship among people in far-flung lands. I saw the cultural treasures being displayed; Hungarian folk dances, Russian ballet, the wizardry of Chinese juggling, and heard the nostalgia of Indonesian songs. I experienced people and they ceased to be geographical entities. I learnt then that the people are united in their desire for peace and friendship. I learnt then that people desire a better world—peace to make that better and fuller world. The great release of joy made war a monstrous sin; the great faith in the future made peace a need and a creed.

The people of South Africa must throw in their lot with the peoples of the world for peace. We too must forge bonds of friendship among each other and with the peoples of other countries. This can best be done by building closer and closer cultural links between South Africa and the rest of the world. Locally, the doors of culture must be opened, too.

For why should they have dared the gun with their hunting sticks if they were no criminals? Why should they have hit back when two of their number were massacred? Political considerations more often than not crept into the court when a black man was on trial. Law was made not to be bent by pious priests and philanthropists, but it was made to bend whosoever rose against the iron fist of the master. This was the law and under this law the king could do no wrong but men could and always did wrong. It was wrong to defend yourself when attacked by agents of the law; it was wrong to protect you dignity against insults and humiliations.

Deep down underneath the challenge of this iron fist lay old grievances, as old as Noah himself. They were grievances which had become embedded in these men. They had borne hours, days, weeks, months and years of oppression, repression, persecution, ill-use and ill-treatment. They were men who were ill-used under the cloak of religion and civilisation. They were men who were a symbol and represented that grinding hatred for oppression.

To them life had become a paradox. They loved the warmth of the fire-side and the kids playing around them. They loved to see their cattle on the pastures. But the police and the farmers had destroyed the warmth for happiness. For what was the use of living when the police butted your hut in the dead of night looking for men who had deserted from road labour? What was the use of this life when the farmer with his gun loaded kicked your pots upside down looking for stolen lamb?

After the raid of March 1906 for hut tax and road-labour deserters, a meeting of the *ibandla* was called to discuss the affair. The *Nongpai* had come in large numbers on horse-backs and on bicycles. Horses trampled down the mealie crops and rampaged the young cobs, ruining all the pumpkins and sweet-cane. The meeting had no chairman, for who could reduce the matters of the *ibandla* to formalism? People had attended the *indaba* to discuss as equals, matters that affected every member of the tribe.

Nongalaza stood up; tall, hefty with long arms. His cheek showed a round scar of a healed bullet wound received in the battle of Isandlwane. His large hands and muscular legs revealed enormous hidden strength. Rumour had it that in his early days he had caught a leopard with his bare massive hands, bashed its head on a rock, while it tried to raid his goats, flung it over the fence as if nothing had really happened. His *mutsha* hung loosely on his long straight back, tossing this way and that way. His long stomach with three stab wounds was drawn close to his spine as if he had not had food for some days.

The buzzing came to a stop. Head-ringed men, middle-aged men and all the *ibandla* directed their eyes on him. "Who will deny me the right to speak?"

"Nobody, Nongalaza!" The whole *ibandla* thundered.

Are we women, children, cowards that we coil our tails and let our fields be ruined?"

"No, we are not!"

"Then how long will you men sit on your haunches and let your fields go to ruin?"

No, more; never, never."

Old men pulled out their snuff-boxes and snuffed slowly allowing the sensations to travel all over their bodies. Some of them sneezed and tears rolled down their cheeks. The rumbling started again.

"I think there is a lot in what Nongalaza is saying," one old man remarked to his friend.

The young men were now becoming restless while the old men took matters easy. Nongalaza went on:

"If hulumeni will not listen, we shall now defend our homes."

"Elethu!" Ibandla shouted.

"Yes, but have you told the chief about it?" Sishishili, the head induna of Chief Manzolwandle Sithole, jumped up.

"The chief knows about these matters," was a general shout.

"Now shut up the whole damn shoot of you. What will you say if they arrest the chief for this assembly? Who can speak before the White people? Where is your reason, go-damn you; can't you talk like men instead of bellowing like baboons."

"I ask you, who is greater, the chief or the people? Nongalaza asked casting his sharp piercing eyes at the ibandla.

"The people, the people," Ibandla shouted.

"Now we have had enough of this nonsense of shouting and bellowing. I can see you want to kill us. You all go to your kraals now. I disband this assembly," Sishishili waved his stick about.

"We are dead, we were killed long ago," Ibandla retorted. The meeting broke into confusion with people roaring and wrangling.

Each man started to move away. Now in twos and threes and little groups. They followed the footpaths back to their kraals. Each man was carrying a hunting stick or umshiza (plain stick). Elderly men walked away slowly with their sticks across their shoulders, their hands holding them down allowing their elbows to hang loosely on their sides. Some were attracted by noises in the neighbouring kraals and diverted their course there to quench their thirst.

"I told you long ago about that rascal," one man remarked to Nongalaza as they were walking in a single file.

"Yes, the scamp is a tool of the government; wouldn't like to lose his post."

"Puh, will bow to anything to allow the crumbs to fall in his dirty mouth."

They fell into perfect silence. Each man was now thinking of what to do next. They had seen the Native Commissioner several times about this matter. He always promised them to do something about it but in the end did nothing. The Native Commissioner, Kalalembube, was a benevolent father of the tribe who never said "no" to anything but did nothing. Local lawyers always complained that they could never find him whenever they wanted him. It was said that he spent most of his time drinking and sleeping.

A little further up the slopes some of the men from the ibandla met two policemen and a number of farmers escorting a small group of men under arrest. A few questions were asked and words interchanged. Malambule, one of the ibandla sprawled on the ground—a bullet had got him on the left temple. In two shakes of a dove's tail men came running from all directions. A clash had taken place and two men from the tribe lay on the ground dead while one police and two farmers also lay dead.

People collected in little groups. The crowd at Sishishili's kraal grew as more people arrived. As Nongalaza and some men ran towards Sishishili's kraal a bullet whizzed past them. He stood and looked. Farther up the slopes some men on horseback were firing at the people going to the induna's kraal.

The following day the police came armed. Neighbouring farmers also came armed. A large army rampaged the land.

People were beaten indiscriminately and only those who had escaped into the forests and the mountains saved their skins. Cattle were let loose and roamed the mealie-lands. Like Satan hot from hell the police and the farmers let loose their vengeance on the people. Women, children, cripples, invalids were all beaten alike without mercy.

The thirty-five men now sat on the wooden benches facing the judges. The police had used all methods to squeeze out evidence for conviction. Where bribing and soft-peddling failed brutal force was applied. Men who were in no way connected with the clash were brought for trial. Enemies smelt out one another and it was sufficient to coin a little yarn for the man to be brought for trial. Some men were tied on trees and beaten. Pliers were applied on the testicles.

The trial began slowly with the prosecutor reading out the names of the accused. This was followed by their pleas. Each man pleaded not guilty to the charge.

Sishishili went to the witness box as the first crown witness, fat and short with a flabby belly.

"Do you know all the accused?"

"Yebo nkosi."

"Do you know Nongalaza?"

"Nkosi."

"What are you there?"

"I am the commander-in-chief of all the tribe of Chief Manzolwandle."

"You remember the day when Nongalaza, accused No. 1 incited men to defy authority?"

Counsel for defence objected that the crown was asking leading questions. One of the judges asked:

"What is your objection actually, Mr. Ermerson?"

"My objection, my lords, is that a question like this merely makes the witness a parrot."

The defence then cross-examined Sishishili.

"You say you were actually not on the scene of the clash?"

"Yes."

"Then how did you see all that took place?"

"The sergeant saw it."

"But you are not the sergeant?"

"The sergeant is the eye of the government; if the government sees it, it means we also see it."

"How do you mean?"

"Because he is our eye."

Mtwalo was the last defence witness. After the examination in chief he was cross-examined by the crown.

"Are you sure as a gun you only saw ten people and not more?"

"I have never used a gun."

"You say you went there to investigate; what stopped you from getting on to the spot?"

"There was firing and people running away so I also ran."

"Surely you could have made some other means of getting there?"

"When everybody was running away?"

"Don't ask questions, answer them."

"If you got there would you have also fought?"

"I did not go there speculating on my future intentions."

On the day of the execution twelve chiefs were there. Some men were sobbing and letting tears roll down freely on their

EYE-WITNESS IN HUNGARY

How could the Nagy Government not prevent this? First, because the honest patriots in it were so confused by events and nationalism that they could not foresee that they were opening the door to reaction.

Secondly, inside the Government itself reaction had already taken its place and was, in fact, directing events. Thirdly, be-

cause even if the Government had wanted to defeat reaction there was no way to do it.

No organised united armed forces existed. Everyone who wanted arms had them, and no one could tell who was leading or what was happening.

Faced with such a situation, Kadar and those leaders who were able to see the in-

evitable outcome were in a terrible dilemma.

Even if it meant their own political end, they were ready to call for the assistance of Soviet troops to give the time needed to explain and to mobilise the working class in defence of Socialism.

ma. Bitter though the decision must have been, I believe it was the only possible one in the circumstances.

(Continued from page 5)

THE NASSER GOVERNMENT

By L. BERNSTEIN

IN all the nonsense that has been written and broadcast about the Egyptian crisis—and there has been a mountain of nonsense—there has been one consistent note in the Anglo-French-Israeli armoury. Nasser, it is said, is a dictator, a black-shirted Hitler-type fascist thug, oppressing the people of Egypt in the Mussolini manner. Slander is easy to spread; and if spread thick enough some of it sticks. But what are the facts amidst this farrago of nonsense? Is it possible to claim—as some of the opponents of the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion are being driven in desperation to claim—that the Nasser regime is radical, democratic, progressive? I have yet to see a single serious, non-hysterical attempt to assess the character of the Nasser government, or to disclose the road it is taking in its administration of Egypt.

And yet such an attempt must be made. There has been a heavy curtain of censorship over Egypt since the deposition of King Farouk in July 1952; that curtain is still not lifted. Eye-witness reports, reports from the people of Egypt themselves about their own Government, have not filtered through that curtain. But when the character of the Nasser regime is being used as an explanation for armed aggression and as a justification for war, then there is no time to wait for the censorship to lift. Attitudes must be decided in the light of facts, known facts, incomplete as they may be. What are the facts?

Clearing the Decks

THE Egyptian revolution against Farouk was no overnight destruction of the old state power. It is over four years since a military group headed by General Naguib forcibly deposed Farouk, declared his infant son to be king, and assumed the reins of state power. It took a year before the military revolutionists advanced sufficiently in aim or understanding of their own position to abolish the monarchy and declare Egypt a republic. It took almost another year before internal disagreements and disputes on policy led to the removal of Naguib by his own colleagues and the proclamation in March 1954 of General Nasser as Military Governor of Egypt.

The timetable, slow though it be, is characteristic of the type of revolution that was taking place. For here was no mass popular uprising of the people, carrying their leaders forward overnight to the seats of power, destroying overnight the legacy of state apparatus and laws of the old regime. This was a military *coup d'etat*, led by officers of the middle class, carried through by the officer class, possibly with the silent support of the masses but without their active intervention. The old dictatorship of Farouk passed into the hands of the new dictatorship of the military junta, acting without consultation with the people, without elections, without any authority save the force they commanded.

It would be convenient for bolstering the Anglo-French allegations of "fascist dictatorship" if the new military regime had remained in that position, ruling without public approval by virtue only of superior armed force.

But the facts point in a different direction. True the censorship remained. True the Revolutionary Command Council dissolved all political parties and prohibited their reorganisation. True political leaders of the Wafd, the Communists and the supporters of the monarchy were imprisoned and tried by courts martial. But simultaneously the new regime moved toward a republic, and from a republican military dictatorship to a constitution heralding the first democratically constituted regime in Egyptian history.

Constitution

THE new Constitution formulated by the Military Revolutionary Command Council was proclaimed on January 16th, 1956—twenty-one months from the date of Nasser's appointment to head the Council. The aims of the new constitution, it was stated, were "of a socialistic nature," and would abolish social discrimination and the creation of civil titles. Sovereignty, it was said in the preamble, would be vested in the people, and the regime would be "republican and democratic." All legislative power would be vested in a new National Assembly to be created by popular suffrage, with executive authority vested in an elected President. The constitution thus drew something from Europe, and also something from America. In its precise provisions the constitution laid down:

A National Union "would be established by the people to work for the aims of the revolution" drawing its members from all classes. This Union would nominate candidates for the First National Assembly. All citizens over the age of 18, including women, would be eligible to vote, and voting would be compulsory. Until the Government had passed a law regulating the conduct of political parties, all parties would remain suspended.

The National Assembly would nominate a President, whose name would be submitted for public approval by means of a referendum. The President would hold office for six years and would have the right to veto laws passed by the Assembly. His veto could, however, be overridden by a two-thirds majority vote of the Assembly. The President, who must be over thirty-five years of age and not related to the former royal family, would also be Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces.

Civil Rights, including freedom of person, life, residence, religion, abode and faith would be guaranteed by the constitution. Freedom of the press, publication and copyright would be safeguarded ". . . in the interest of public welfare, and within the limits prescribed by law." Censorship would therefore continue until such a new law. The judiciary would be independent of the government, and not subject to dismissal.

Economic Life would be organised ". . . according to the principles of social justice," and would aim at raising the peoples' standards of living. Private ownership of property was guaranteed, but a limit on the maximum land-holdings of individuals was set. Private economic activity would be entirely free from state interference, provided that it did not run counter to the public interest or infringe on individual freedom.

Social Welfare and state aid in respect of old age, sickness and inability to work would be the right of citizens, and elementary education would be compulsory and free in state schools.

cheeks. Nongalaza with the other accused chained to one another led the thirty-five men in the battle hymn of Cetshwayo, the last of the Zulu kings, as they marched slowly towards the firing squad.

Moving Forward

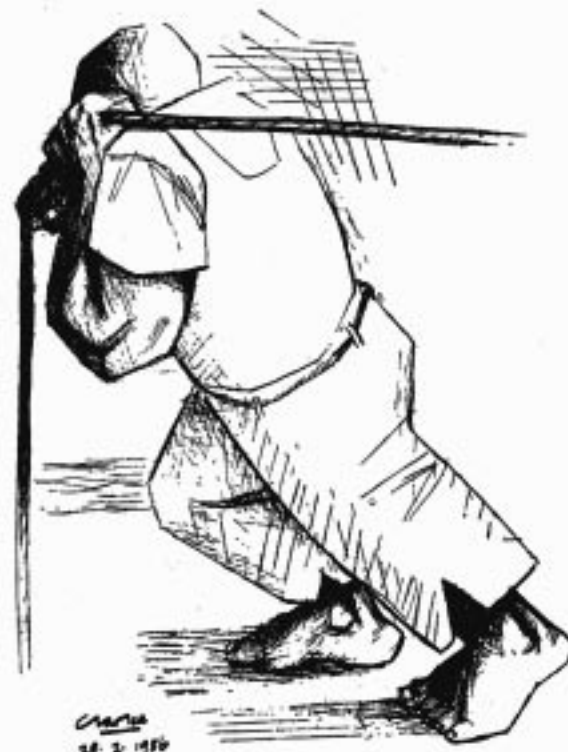
IT is easy to pick holes in such a constitution, to point a finger and show that here and there the constitution falls short of what might be called "ideal" or "complete" democratic principle. But it is difficult not to feel the gigantic democratic leap forward that such a constitution would represent for this age-old oppressed, dictator-ridden land of popular misery. Probably in all Africa—certainly in all British and French Africa—there is no such constitution. And yet it is still the creation of the Nasser regime, of the middle-class revolutionaries representing the middle class of Egypt; it is still the constitution of the bourgeoisie, bowing slightly perhaps before the winds of mass pressure which they have themselves unloosed, but moving steadily away from military dictatorship towards bourgeois democracy. It is not a constitution for "ideal" democracy, but one for carrying on the ancient struggle to break through the colonial bonds which lay on Egypt. "All Egyptians will be eligible to stand for the National Assembly" Colonel Nasser told a meeting on the day the Constitution was proclaimed—"all except those who in the past have supported the imperialists and colonialists." But, in the same speech, there were the echoes of the military caste, of the revolutionist without a theory. No political parties would be allowed to take part in elections, he said, because experience showed that political parties "supported selfish interests and imperialism."

Sometimes constitutions are written as "window-dressing." But facts show that the constitution was not a document designed to stay on paper. On June 23rd, over five and a half million voters, including women for the first time in Egyptian history, went to the polls to vote on two questions—**Yes** or **No** to the questions of Nasser for President (99.9% Yes, 2,857 No); and the question of approval of the constitution (99.9% Yes, 10,046 No). The following day the Revolutionary Command Council—the nine-man military junta which had ruled Egypt for four years, was dissolved. On June 30th, Nasser reorganised his cabinet. Out went three military men of the Command Council, and in came three new civilian ministers, all doctors of engineering, with high qualifications and experience in Europe and America.

Rule of Law

Ten days before the referendum, the first major decree implementing the constitution was announced. A Supreme Court of 12 members was established, six of its members drawn from the senior members of the old judiciary, six more to be elected by the National Assembly. The actions of the President, said the decree, were not outside the competence of the Court. All the age-old religious tribunals, where cases of personal conduct had been heard and judged by religious leaders since time immemorial, were abolished, and all such cases henceforth were to be heard by the civil courts. Egypt was passing into the twentieth century.

And a week later, at a mass rally in Republic Square, Cairo, celebrating the final British evacuation of the Suez Canal Zone, President Nasser announced new giant steps. Martial law was abolished. The censorship of the press was abolished. All those imprisoned "for plotting against the revolution" would be released. "Today," he said, "Egypt is entirely free. Not a single foreign flag flies over Egyptian soil. For the first time in centuries we are completely free to fight for our own destiny. The new constitution aims at building a society based on freedom, justice and equality for all . . . We shall rule in the name of the constitution and the law."



THE LONG HEAVE

(A drawing by Peter Clark.)

THE revolution was moving to its fulfilment. The ancient heritage of backwardness was being thrown off together with the modern remnants of colonialism. It would be too simple to claim that all the high ideals of speech and constitution have been carried through, too facile to look only at the words and not at the surviving undemocratic features—at the Communists and nationalists still in prison for wanting the revolution to succeed too speedily and too completely for the military caste; at the continuing misery and oppression of the fellahin, at the continuing child labour and gross exploitation of the workers. But the revolutionary movement to transform the country moves, forward. Nasser leads, but the masses press him forward from below.

Turning Back

OR so it was, six months ago when the referendum was held. But an attempt has been made to turn the tide. British and French troops are back in uneasy tenancy of part of the Canal zone. And with them have come the worst features of the military dictatorship, which so often go hand in hand with war—martial law, imprisonment without trial, and censorship. There are other ways to mobilise a people for war in defence of their homeland, as Chinese experience has shown. But Nasser's government has reacted in its own way, within the limits of its bourgeois outlook, within the bounds of its military conceptions. The Nasser government has its limitations. It is far from perfect. Its example is not the one to be followed in its every deed by others who seek democracy and independence.

And yet it is a government of progress, of forward movement, of democratic unleashing of the creative abilities of the people, and of the natural wealth that could be theirs. On this, the facts are clear. It is a government of fighters against foreign subjection, taking the first steps against colonialism, against the backward heritage of imperialism. Let its enemies look to their own record in their own territory—in Kenya and Algeria, in Cyprus and in Malaya and Morocco and compare the record.

CHINESE RIVER-MEN

books

JOHN HERSEY is a writer of many parts. He will turn his hand to anything—from a run-of-the-mill novel like *A Bell for Adano* to an epic of the Warsaw ghetto, *The Wall*, and a rather rollicking, satirical piece of folk-whimsy, *The Marmot Drive*. In his newest book he strikes out on yet a different track. *A Single Pebble* derives its inspiration from the trip of an American engineer on a Yangtze river boat, on a mission to build a dam. But it is not the story of the dam-builder. It is a wonderfully revealed description of the river-men who navigate the dangerous waterway, pitting their skill and strength without mechanical aid against the forces of the current. And above all, it is the description of an unforgettable char-

acter, the man "Pebble," who lives and dies in that struggle. Hersey writes with a warm humanity and compassion, choosing his words with the care and skill which make what could otherwise be a trite and romantic story into a real literary achievement. It is a slim volume, marred by a mystical fatalistic belief in man's inability ever to tame the great Yangtze, a belief strangely unreal in this period where man is daily caging and controlling nature for his own well-being. But it is a work to be read by those who like their prose simple, precise and beautiful.

A SINGLE PEBBLE, by John Hersey.
Published by Hamish Hamilton. Price 11/6. L.B.

FRENCH SHORT STORIES

SHORT stories, like heavy exercises, are more pleasant if taken in small doses at long intervals. But read, as a reviewer must, in quick succession, they can become one of the ordeals of a reader's life. Particularly is this true of the current American writers, who have cultivated the slick style to the point of perfection (if that is the right term) and have gradually boiled the short story down to a fragment without point or purpose, told for its language alone, signifying nothing and leading nowhere. It is pleasant, after years of nothing but collections of the contemporary American short story, to come across a collection of contemporary French short stories, edited by John Lehman and published by Faber. For the thing that stands out about these stories is that, generally, they tell a story; they do not leave the reader at the end with the feeling that he has been caught, led through a few thousand words only to finish up in mid-stream, much where he started out. This is a welcome change.

But perhaps the main common feature of these writers is not this, but the realism of the writing. The people, with few exceptions, are people, and the situations are from life. Coupled with masterly craftsmanship, a fine sense of language and a light Gallic touch, it is this realism which sets this collection apart from the usual run, and makes it something worth reading and keeping. The most disturbing feature of the collection is the "timeless" atmosphere of the overwhelming majority of the stories. One is left — as

though these were short excerpts from long novels — with no knowledge of when the story takes place — this century? Last century? Pre-war or post-war? It is impossible to guess. They are stories, not of this time or that, but just stories. With the possible exception of Sartre, with a story of the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War—not, in my opinion anywhere near his best—this "timeless" character seems to express a withdrawal of the contemporary writers represented here from the contemporary life of France and Frenchmen. Here there is talent a-plenty; but little of it turned upon any of the events and history of the twentieth century, upon the lives and social struggles of the age. Perhaps this is the fault not of the writers, but of the selectors. For it seems apparent that France has as great a wealth of literary talent amongst those left out, as there is amongst those whose names appear on the fly-leaf.

Modern French Stories. Edited by J. Lehmann, published by Faber. Price 15/-.

ON WHOSE SIDE?

IN these days of shoddy writing and hackneyed plots, it is a refreshing experience to read a well written novel which has, at the same time, a thought-provoking theme.

The Side of the Angels is such a novel. The title finds its origin in the question tacitly postulated by the author: on which side did the angels fight in France from the days of the Popular Front to the years immediately succeeding World War II?

PASSIVE RESISTANCE IN SOUTH AFRICA is entitled to a great welcome from the people of this country if only because between its covers is the first attempt at a record of the ineradicable imprint that the 1952 Defiance Campaign made upon our country and its political history. The chapters that recall the campaign's resistance episodes fill one with deep pride in the struggles of our people. Some of Dr. Kuper's theses in his discussion on democracy are open to argument, such as . . . "the ideological problem in South Africa is what to do with democracy. It is deeply valued by the Whites for the purpose of regulating their own relations," and the discussion on democracy tends to be ponderous and to slide lightly over the economic factors in our society that buttress the apartheid system. Disproportionate attention is devoted to those among the Africans such as the Bantu National Congress who have capitulated to apartheid.

The writer projects the passive resistance techniques used in the 1952 campaign to be the main ideology of the Congress movement which they never have been and he casts himself somewhat adrift here.

Nevertheless the book is the first serious attempt to evaluate Congress political action and organisations, and contains not only valuable documentary material of this period but also an able chapter: "Communism by Statute" on the Government's attempts to stamp out the struggle for rights by the Non-European people.

PASSIVE RESISTANCE IN SOUTH AFRICA, by Leo Kuper. Published by Jonathan Cape. Price. 26/.

(• *A more detailed review of this book will appear in a later issue.*)

On the side of the Left, fighting for the liberation of mankind, or on the side of reaction? Curtis provides no explicit answer to the question; but the eight characters through whom the theme is developed enable the reader to infer a solution.

Whether or not one accepts the solution, one cannot fail to be impressed by the writer's sensitive observation of human relationships, and by his ability to express a profound truth through spotlighting a seemingly unimportant detail.

This is not a novel of which one can say: "I couldn't put it down." It is, rather, a book to be dwelt over, to enjoy with the intellect, and to savour on the tongue of literary appreciation. R.B.

The Side of the Angels, by Jean-Louis Curtis, translated from the French by Humphrey Hare. Published by Secker & Warburg, London, 1956. Price 18s.

BRIEF REVIEWS

FROM WITCHCRAFT TO WORLD HEALTH. In this history of healing and medicine through the ages the authors range from the cures of the tribal medicine man to today's acceptance of the World Health Organisation declaration that the primary function of medicine is prevention, not cure. Included in these easily written chapters are the fascinating episodes of the priest rites of the Egyptians; the humanity of the Hippocratic school of medicine in Greece; the achievements of the Romans (among them the refinement of false teeth!) the old pest houses and isolation places of the Middle Ages; Leonardo da Vinci's dissections; the pill-peddling of the travelling quacks during Britain's industrial revolution and finally the spectacular advances in health services in the socialist countries which have adopted the positive approach to health.

By S. and Vera Leff. Published by Lawrence and Wishart. Price 22/6.

WHAT IS RACE? No new publication, this UNESCO illustrated booklet but indispensable on every bookshelf in this race-ridden country. Here is the scientists' evidence on such questions as "Is there a pure race? . . . A superior race? Is race mixture a bad thing?" All the answers are here, and if you're anxious for an inkling of the general conclusions here is one: ". . . the biological differences found amongst human beings can in no case justify the views of racial inequality based on ignorance and prejudice . . ." Published by UNESCO. Price 5/-.

FIRST IN THE WORLD. An illustrated description of the Soviet Atomic Electricity Station.

The work of the first Soviet Atomic power plant, in operation for two years, has shown in practice the great possibilities opened up by atomic fuel.

A Soviet News Booklet. Price 3d.

• These publications are obtainable from The Bookstall, 27 High Court Chambers, Johannesburg.

FINEST VALUE IN PIPES

DR. MACNAB

FILTER

SELECTED
BRIAR



WHAT THE ARAB WORLD REALLY WANTS is a small booklet of compelling interest in view of Middle East developments. What do the Algerians, and their neighbours in Tunisia and Morocco; the Sudanese, the Egyptians, the people of the Middle East oil countries, really want? Nothing to do with any "outbreak of Moslem fanaticism," says the writer, but independence from colonialism — possibly later an alliance of federated Arab countries—and the right to build themselves a better life. ("Islam is an important cultural factor in our struggle but this struggle is not really a religious one at all," said one of the Algerian Liberation Front's spokesmen.) The Baghdad Pact is seen by these countries as a disguise for continued Western domination and increasingly the Middle East is turning from British-American pressures for commitment to one or other of these war pacts to the Soviet Government offers of conditionless technical and material help.

A Union of Democratic Control booklet by Basil Davidson. Price 6d.

Juno Furnishing Co.

64 KNOX STREET

Phone 51-1106 GERMISTON

For A Square Deal

Contact Us

STAR CYCLE WORKS

1a GUSTAV STREET
ROODEPOORT

Stockists:

Raleigh, Rudge, Humber
Cycles

COMMERCIAL PRINTING Co. (Pty.) Ltd.

New Era Buildings, Johannesburg
(Cor. Loveday & De Villiers Streets)
Phone 23-7571 P.O. Box 1543

Printers of this Journal

General Printing - Magazine - Bulletin
Newspaper and Advertisement Display
Work.

BANTU HOUSE RESTAURANT

- for Hot Meals
- Refreshments
- Pleasant Company

4a PRITCHARD STREET
(Next door to the Star Office)

Standard Furnishing
(Pty.) Ltd.

30d, 30e, Voortrekker Street
and 35a, Prince's Avenue,
BENONI

For The Best In Furniture

STEWART'S REXALL PHARMACY

S. Joffe, M.P.S.

CHEMIST & DRUGGIST
PHOTOGRAPHIC SUPPLIES

280a, Louis Botha Avenue,
ORANGE GROVE
Phone 45-6243/4

Perfect Writing

Instruments



Your friend

for life!

BARRIS BROS.

WHOLESALE MERCHANTS AND
DIRECT IMPORTERS

120 Victoria Street Germiston
P.O. Box 146. Phones 51-1281; 51-3589