FIGHTING TALK

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DECEMBER, 1962

NEW SHORT STORIES

- **LEWIS NKOSI**
- **MARKS RAMMITTLOA**

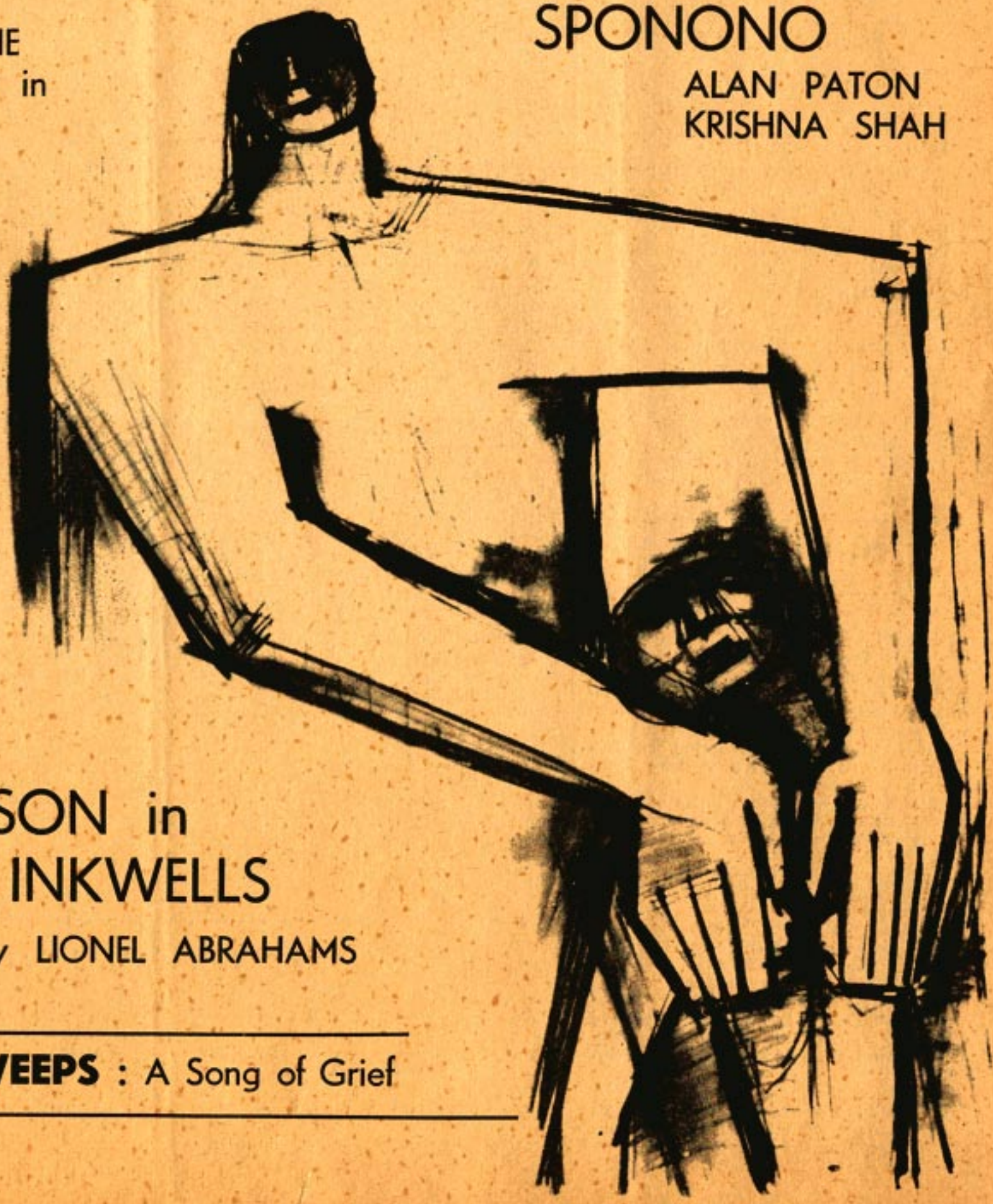
CRACKING THE COLOUR BAR in SPORT—

THEATRE

SPONONO

ALAN PATON

KRISHNA SHAH



Holiday Issue

POISON in the INKWELLS

by LIONEL ABRAHAMS

KODIO WEEPS : A Song of Grief

FIGHTING TALK

A monthly journal for Democrats in Southern Africa

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IN THIS ISSUE

OUR COVER

THE MBARI WRITERS' CLUB became internationally known when it held a thought-provoking "Writers' Conference in Africa" earlier this year where South Africans like Zeke Mphahlele and Lewis Nkosi were leading figures.

But it has made other enduring contributions to the development of African literature.

Chief among them are a series of publications, handsomely got up and featuring writers and artists in Africa.

In 1961 there was a book of drawings by the Nigerian artist Uche Okeke and a powerful play "SONG OF A GOAT" by John Pepper Clark.

For 1962 "24 POEMS" by the Malagasy poet Jean-Joseph Rabearivelo, "HEAVENSGATE" (poems) by Christopher Okigbo and "SONGS OF LOVE, GRIEF AND ABUSE" by LEON DAMAS.

The publications this year each have a distinctive format and are enhanced by drawings which are of great merit in themselves.

The cover illustration—by GEORGINA BETTS for the poems of LEON DAMAS is an example of the fine reproductions which accompany the text.

ASSESSMENT

1963:

SOME years ago, when the Pan-Africanist Congress was having its brief flash of glory in South Africa, there was much talk of '1963—the year of destiny.' It was—like so much other PAC sloganising—idle chatter, based only on vague, schematic dreaming, and not on any real appraisal of the South African political scene. And accordingly, as 1963 came closer, and the dreamers are more and more closely recalled to reality, the talk of 'The year of destiny' faded away and is heard no more.

Clash of Cymbals

1962 has been an upsetting year for the visionaries on both sides of the political line. Reality has proved richer and more complex than any of the dreamers and the schemers could have imagined. The year opened with the clash of Verwoerd's cymbals—with the tremendous publicity spotlight of the government turned on the latest and greatest gimmick of apartheid—the Transkeian "independence" scheme. Here was to be the final answer to the home and foreign critics of the government. Here was to be the final proof that apartheid and national rights of the African people were *not* mutually exclusive. Here was to be the end of the international denunciation of the South African government, and the beginning of the new era of world acceptance of apartheid.

But the dream dissolved. The year which opened so spectacularly for Verwoerd closes with an unopposed decision of the United Nations calling for world sanctions against the South African government, and for international boycott of its trade and transport. In the Transkei itself, only a small group of ambitious, self-seeking men have been found to welcome and accept puppet authority in the first and most important Bantustan. The veil of propaganda about "independence" and "self-determination" has been torn aside. White Transkeians barefacedly demand the continuation of white power; the Commissioner investigating their future openly declares the transfer of power to Africans to be a 100-year project; the African majority, chief and commoner alike, is flexing its muscles for a struggle against Bantustan status, which becomes inevitably a struggle for full citizenship rights in the state of South Africa. Thus the area selected in 1961 for the break-through of apartheid, the area of Bantustan pilot scheme becomes, at the start of 1963, the focus of a new round of struggle and upheaval against apartheid.

Stage Sets

The paradox can be repeated on all fronts. The year which started so favourably for Verwoerd, in the cordial atmosphere of the Carpio-de Alva sightseeing mission to South West Africa, has turned desperately sour. The joint Carpio-Verwoerd communique on South West Africa issued from Pretoria was scripted to be the finale to the South African—United Nations dispute over the territory. But the play faltered. Actor Carpio mislaid the script, ad-libbed, denied, repudiated, contradicted, clowned. Stage manager Verwoerd's climax of dramatic triumph dissolved suddenly into slapstick, amidst the boos and catcalls of its world audience. The stage which had been set for Verwoerd's triumph became the setting for disaster. As the year closed, the United Nations, after dragging its feet unwillingly for many years, decided firmly to establish a United Nations 'presence' in South West Africa, to prepare for the rapid independence of its people. Act 11.

Act 111 of the South West drama opens with the new year. The UN decision has to be carried into effect. Its "presence" in the area has to be established in the face of Verwoerd's opposition. It is here that the people of South West and of the republic of South Africa itself come into reckoning. The stage is set for a new and critical struggle against the South African government, in which the people of the country itself, the people of South West and the United Nations are aligned together. Here too 1963 has the birthmarks of crisis.

And yet the most remarkable thing about the year 1962 in South Africa, which has prepared and ushered in these focal points of crisis, is that there has really been nothing remarkable about it. There has been no major political campaign of any sort amongst the majority of the people; there has been no internal upheaval of any mass character; there have been no important peoples' victories to chalk up, and no important peoples' defeats. It has been, outwardly, a most ordinary and unevent-

KODIO WEEPS

We were three women three men
And myself Kodio Ango
We were on our way to work in the city
And I lost my wife Nanama on the way
I alone have lost my wife
To me alone such misery has happened
To me alone Kodio the most handsome of three men such misery has happened

In vain I call for my wife
She died on the way
Like a chick running
How shall I tell her mother
How shall I tell it to her I Kodio when it is so hard to hold back my own pain.

LEON DAMAS.

YEAR OF DESTINY?

ful year. There has been none of the drama of the 1960 State of Emergency or the 1961 Pondo revolt, nor even of the type of the South African exclusion from the Commonwealth. It is just this very ordinariness that has dismayed the proponents of the '1963 Year of Destiny' slogan, and silenced them. They live and grow only on the moments of high drama and excitement, understanding nothing about history and very little about political developments.

Sick Complex

Despite them, all the signs of maturing crisis have come to the top in this unremarkable year. The exultant self-congratulation and Verwoerd-adulation of the era of the proclamation of the Republic have vanished from government circles. And slowly, over the year, a note of hysteria has developed, together with all the symptoms of a sick persecution complex. Defence Minister Fouche exhibited the hysteria when he called for a massive campaign of rearment and militarisation against nebulous African states whose only desire is to invade and conquer South Africa. Police Minister Vorster exhibited the same sick hysteria when he called for unlimited powers against political enemies, and for the death sentence for any minor offence of a political character which he charactised as sabotage. Radio Minister Hertzog exhibited it when he defined the task of the Broadcasting Corporation as the defence of the nation against it enemies. The Nationalist Press exhibits it when it declares repeatedly that if the Transkei scheme fails, apartheid is doomed. Foreign Minister Louw exhibits it when he declares that UN action against South Africa is the deathknell of the United Nations. The Security Police exhibit it when they rush massive cordons of men to the scene of every minor explosion. The Economic Minister Diedrichs displays it when he rushes from celebrating the republic to plead abjectly for Commonwealth preference for South African goods. Little by little, in this most ordinary of years, they have all become men living on the edge of the abyss, striking out blindly, madly, to save themselves.

Everywhere there are enemies, menacing them. 'The Liberals are Communists'. 'The Progressives are Communists'. 'The English Press are Communists'. 'The Anglican clergy are agitators'. 'Algerian agents are training saboteurs'. 'Chinese agents are training saboteurs'. This is the extraordinary state of government and Nationalist desperation at the end of this most ordinary year.

Crisis Abyss

And yet their troubles are only at the beginning. On every side, the conditions of crisis develop, amongst them a sustained campaign of political sabotage. The first political explosions burst on South Africa in December 1961. And now, a year later, against a background of multiple government reaction—death penalties, special police squads, massive rearmament, house arrests—the campaign grows more widespread and more expert. Against this new development, traditional South African methods of police work fail. No informers come forward to expose the saboteurs; no claimants come forward in response to the unusually large cash rewards being offered. Economic troubles of a new kind begin to show themselves; money accumulates in banks and investment houses, but its holders show no confidence in the future prospects, and fight shy of investment. The bank rate falls; the balance of trade with Britain runs heavily against South Africa; and the first concrete results of the UN call for trade sanctions begin to be put into operation. On every side, crisis and the abyss.

> **"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishnes, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way—in short the period was so like the present period . . ."**
>
> Charles Dickens.
> A Tale of Two Cities.

Dare anyone look on this situation without some chill foreboding? An ordinary year in South Africa is bad enough. From this ordinary year, there are many men in jail for political actions which kept the people's confidence and hope alive. Nelson Mandela, George Peake, Ben Turok—all in jail for long years to come—are remembered; but how many others are already forgotten? How many more arrested, held, perhaps beaten and released. How many, by the year's end, will be imprisoned in their own homes and cut off from communication with their fellow men? These are some of the victims of an ordinary South African year. And there are many others, nameless, unpublicised—thousands deported from the towns to starve in the reserves; hundreds beaten, terrorised and fined by vicious Transkeian Bantu Affairs puppets and their gangs; dozens hounded from jobs by Security Branch police. If this be ordinary, uneventful, what can a year of crisis be like?

Era for Confidence

Different certainly. More grim? Probably, for as the crisis mounts, the government strikes out ever more blindly, viciously and destructively against the enemies who are everywhere around it, but who they cannot pinpoint or control. But yet more hopeful? Certainly. For the dilemma of the South African government is moving to its end. The crisis is mounting steadily, uneventfully, in an atmosphere of utter ordinariness to the point where it can no longer be contained, to the point when either immovable government or irresistible people's pressure will have to be finally swept aside, because the country has become too tense, too explosive to contain them both.

Perhaps, then, 1963 is still the year of South Africa's destiny? Let the sloganisers and the prattlers argue this matter from abroad, safely outside the grim area where the question is being settled in active political work. We in this country **know** with complete certainty that we are moving towards the end of apartheid. We know, and the government knows it. We know that—as this uneventful year of 1962 has confirmed—that we have the morale, the unity of purpose and the confidence in our ultimate victory to weather the worst that might be done to avert that end. We know it, and the government knows it. It is this knowledge which drives them to the edge of hysteria, and which makes them reckless of the suffering, the turmoil and the privation which they cause in their last desperate flings to delay their own end.

But it is this knowledge and confidence, this certainty that keeps the South African people alive, fighting, confident even in the midst of the grim prospects of 1963 under the Nationalist government. If this is to be the year of destiny, it will be because we make it so. If not, then we will live to fight more skilfully, stronger, better in the years to come. In the end of ends, this is **our** era, not theirs, the era of **our** advance to victory and of their decline, the era of our confidence and of their hysteria. It is the era of liberation, of which 1962 was part. May 1963 be a greater part, drawing closer to the end of the chapter.

1962 Issues . . .

An error has been made in the serial numbering of FIGHTING TALK. this year. The August issue was No. 7 of Volume 16, which makes September No. 8, October No. 9, November No. 10, and this issue, December, No. 11.

BRINGING DOWN THE APARTHEID CURTAIN

THEATRE

IF the apartheid curtain has been rent anywhere in 1962 it has been in the theatre.

When non-whites crowd the foyer of the "Empire"—bastion of white culture, it is a little hard to believe. A year ago it would have seemed mere fantasy. True, the foyer is discreetly darkened on the special non-white nights—the image is still too bizarre, it seems, to be brightly lit—but this is a beginning. Not a satisfactory one, it is true; but it holds the promise of better scenes to come.

True, most of those who actively campaigned against all-white theatre have refused to attend these segregated shows. But the fact that there has been some progress is ample justification for their "ranting" in the past.

How has it all come about?

How is it that in the theatre-world at least there is a steady yielding to pressures and the granting of reluctant concessions so that the old order of culture "Slegs vir Blankes" is changing?

It is partly the result of years of quiet pressure, directed mainly at overseas bodies such as British Equity. This culminated in the Equity decision this year that British artistes should not perform before segregated audiences in South Africa. The full impact of this decision has by no means been felt yet. Some of the Equity people have been dragging their feet, and the terms of the resolution will only be put into effect next year. But the concessions made thus far are anticipatory reactions.

A secondary pressure was the agitation against "My Fair Lady" playing to segregated audiences. This led to a partial concession: special non-white nights again. Large numbers of non-whites have flocked to see the show. But many more have not and will not. And among the reasons was the refusal to a degrading segregation which must be fought until the theatre is open to all. And this conclusion is to be extended to other parts of the country. Johannesburg's showplace—the Civic Theatre—has also had special non-white nights—including a glittering "First Night": and the place is clearly designed, whatever its other imperfections, to have regular non-white nights—there are special non-white toilets!

The Civic, The Empire, "My Fair Lady", The British Equity Resolution. Not a bad line-up for one year—and that at a time when the pressures of apartheid are mounting in savagery.

But this is only a beginning.

The American Equity has already tabled a resolution even stronger than that of British Equity. Its effect would be to cut off the majority of American artistes from performances in this country.

Another move holds even more promise: the likelihood that many other dramatists will follow the lead of Samuel Becket and refuse to have their plays performed before segregated audiences.

This, together with the British resolution, will achieve a pretty effective black-out. Stravinsky's mumbled excuses for coming here have at least focussed attention on another sidelight: many more artistes are likely to follow the fine example of Yehudi Menuhin who first insisted that he give performances to non-whites and who has now logically gone much further and flatly refused to come to this country and co-operate in imposing the indignities of apartheid.

All sorts of exciting situations loom for the future. *But they will depend on the drive of our theatre people and the sincerity with which they play their part.*

Already there has been an unhappy development: a group of theatre managers have got together and asked Margaret Webster to put a case to British Equity on their behalf. It boils down to this: PLEASE ALLOW US TO CONTINUE THEATRE APARTHEID IN JOHANNESBURG FOR A LITTLE LONGER. This is their sorry story. But if we are not careful, they will contrive to give the impression that they are speaking on behalf of those who are opposed to theatre apartheid, that this is our considered opinion. If this is successful Equity may well agree to water down its resolution—it has happened before under pressure from South Africa. WE SHALL HAVE TO NAIL THIS LIE. The bodies that speak for non-racial culture must repudiate this appeal and make it clear that we stand for non-racial theatre now and always.

Our record of successes—minor though they are—over the past year prove that with a resolute stand we can go a long way to bringing down the curtain apartheid.

J. B. BOOTH

SPORT

NON-RACIAL sport forged ahead in 1962. And the racialists ran around in circles trying to throw up obstacles.

But the progress seen in past years was steadily maintained and there is lots more in the offing. And lots more difficulties.

A broad look at the sportsfields will show a host of things to celebrate. Among them:

- The warning from the International Olympic Committee in May that South Africa would be suspended in 1963 if her racial policies in sport were not changed. and the hardening tone of the Chancellor of the I.O.C. in his comments on the S.A. set-up.
- Genuine efforts being made by sportsmen in several codes to get together on a non-racial basis.
- This led directly to one further win when the Supreme Court of Natal found nine sportsmen of various groups not guilty of breaking the law by playing together. This established again that the old shield of "We can't play together because it's against the law" was a phoney one.
- The boxing tour by "Ageless" Archie Moore—on a segregated basis to boost sports-apartheid was flattened when Moore announced: "I am a fighter for racial equality and will not come to South Africa until things are changed."
- A U.S.A. University Swimming Team cancelled their tour—due in December.
- The setting up of a South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (S.A.N.R.O.C.) to press forward with the work for recognition for all South Africans—initiated by the South African Sports Association (SASA).
- And—perhaps the most important for the internal set-up—the growing strength of the non-racial sporting bodies and the organising of highly successful events, especially in soccer and weightlifting.

There are many other advances—e.g. greater unity in the lawn tennis field—but these are enough to indicate that progress is real and encouraging.

One other deserves mention: the putting out—for keeps—of South Africa from the Commonwealth Games. There are two significant features here: the vain attempt by Rhodesia to buy the support of the non-white countries for the next games to be in Salisbury (1966) by welshing on her promise to vote for South Africa's re-admission and the solid opposition of a large chunk of the Commonwealth against South Africa. The pay-off for this will come next year: the same countries will be present at **the Nairobi 1963 Meeting of the International Olympic Committee** to sit in judgment on the present racialist S.A. Olympic Association and the application for membership.

No Easy Passage

But we are not going to have an easy passage into international sport.

Innumerable obstacles are being thrown up and the next year is going to be the toughest yet.

The main tactic will be disruption of the non-racial bodies and interference with the organisation of sport.

Already we have Messrs. Carr (Johannesburg) Mathewson (Benoni) and the rest of the Municipal bully-boys banning soccer matches, uprooting goal posts and coercing non-racial sports bodies to join their special babies—the "Bantu" sports bodies. This is a clear attempt to drive wedges into the groups and force them to have their sport on strict apartheid lines. And because they have the weapon of being able to withdraw sports facilities, expel sportsmen and suspend clubs and unions, this is a serious threat.

They are also, of course, backed by the law. Apartheid laws can make it impossible for groups to play together on certain fields or in certain areas: and now, because a great deal of non-white sport is played on a Sunday, we are to have greater pressures for Sunday Observance Acts which will kill off organised sport.

The disruption takes other forms. Sportsmen are being "persuaded" to join "Bantu" or other exclusive racial groups. This is particularly noticeable in soccer, but is also found in other sports: Mlonzis who called for "Bantu" cricket, Pillays setting up Non-European weightlifting "National bodies" (consisting of half-dozen members!) The

(*Continued on page* 16)

POISON IN THE INKWELLS

by LIONEL ABRAHAMS

THERE is ignominy for any whole grown man in being put down as a moral fool and weakling in relation to merely human enemies and protectors. And this slur is laid, by inescapable implication, on every literate person in this country in the "silencing clause" which was enforced in mid-July against one hundred and two presumed political enemies of the regime.

Not only does this measure presuppose satanic intentions on the part of those it is applied against, but also it implies them to be possessed of fully satanic *powers* as measured against us puny innocent citizens who are still allowed to speak—powers that might demolish the state with an essay on architecture, plough down parliament with a poem, or pervert the volkswil with a witticism.

The responsible Minister has arrogated to himself alone the wisdom that can determine the innocence or evil of any utterance by one of these 102 mighty Satans, against whose super-subtle wiles the rest of us—in our witless incompetence—must solicitously be shielded.

A Sharper Indignity

That is the insult to South Africa's readership of which—by its mere compliance with the prohibition against publishing the words of the people in question—every publication in the country has become a vehicle.

And apart from being made agents in the dishonouring of the readership, the country's editors and publishers themselves have, through this restraint, been made the more direct subjects of an even sharper indignity: their taste, circumspection, knowledge and the good faith of their intentions, have been set at nought, and the autonomy of the selective function has been severely infringed.

These general dishonours unhappily do not exhaust the tale of evils flowing from the silencing clause. I am not concerned with the government's self-abasement into a sort of hear-no-evil monkey. That is politics. What I am concerned with is the literary and general cultural life of the country. And these I see to be deeply harmed.

The world of books is, in a certain sense, indivisible. Either you grant a special sanctity to books as such (and to do so has long been the mark of a civilised man) or you do not. To sanction or cause the burning or cutting of any books without a strong and vividly demonstrable reason is to reduce respect for all books, and to this extent to barbarise the people.

Locking Up the Books

It is in no metaphorical sense that I allude to a physical assault on books. In order to comply with the law most of the country's libraries are having to destroy, mutilate, or at best incarcerate numbers of books.

Vandalism is the order of the day among the law-abiding.

A well-known academician has been heard recommending to a bookseller the excision of a prefatory page, by one of the proscribed writers, from a text-book required by his students. (One ponders over the lessons they are likely to imbibe from the mark of that mutilation). Such manoeuvres have become every-day necessities of South African life.

Can anyone—can even the responsible Minister himself—maintain that civilised standards in this country are advanced thereby? Can he deny that they are disastrously lowered?

The silencing clause was not devised to the indignity and inconvenience of readers, editors, publishers, librarians and teachers, nor to the injury of books, nor as an assault upon culture. These results are incidental (I hope accidental).

By intention the measure is the political coup de grace against the 102 named people and possibly against the cause they serve. It is doubtless intentionally punitive as well as suppressive. Whether or not it succeeds in suppressing certain trends of activity remains for time to reveal (it certainly cannot reasonably be expected to suppress any trends of thought—more likely it will stimulate restless and revolutionary ideas among the ranks of the insulted and the injured), but its undiscriminating crudity and harshness give it distinct impact as a form of punishment.

Strangled Throats

This punitive aspect of the clause is odious firstly on the grounds of its viciousness—it strangles its objects in their intellectual throats without deference to the tendency or quality of their individual thoughts, it deprives them of recourse to public sympathy in any connection whatever, it annuls the careers of any literatti among them, short of their emigrating, and it deprives several of them of their livelihoods—and secondly on the grounds of its subversiveness: under the rule of law, any measure which is of punitive effect (e.g. taxation) is equally applicable to all citizens; otherwise, the intentional punishment of particular persons is only imposed after trial and in strict accord with the delivered judgement, and in reference to particular acts; in the present instance we see severe punishments imposed upon particular persons per se at the discretion of a cabinet minister who is accountable to no one in the land.

Like the world of books, the law at the level of principles is indivisible: you cannot alter it in part without altering the whole. And here is an alteration which is clearly a corruption.

The Name—Not the Opinion

There are other ways too in which the silencing clause subverts and harms the rule of law: by making it ludicrous, contemptible to the view of all intelligent men, and impossible to enforce. The time-honoured and thoroughly respectable practices of pseudonymous and anonymous publication provide loopholes through which the proscribed writers can (and doubtless will, since the prohibition placed on them is intolerable in certain effects) easily evade their suffocating proscription and undetectably cause editors and publishers (unwittingly or—if the item in question is 'harmless' why not? —otherwise) to break the law. This clause is a law apparently, against which you can only be deemed to have offended if you fail to disguise your offence: simply omit or replace the listed author's name, and no one can have any reason for asking questions, even about a pretty inflammatory or subversive piece of writing. It isn't the opinion that matters, it is the name.

> "I do not like thee, Dr. Fell", proclaims the nursery rhyme, but this is a model of sublime reasonableness compared to the spirit that confesses:
> "It isn't who they are
> Nor what they do, nor what they say
> It's just, you know, their names
> That rub me up the wrong way."
>
> (Anon.)

Precarious Defence

Doubtless any defence of the silencing clause that may be attempted will be based on the precarious logic that has supported that traditional but vanishing phenomenon of western civilisation—censorship—by which the suppression of certain pronouncements is justified on the ground that they are offensive and injurious to the whole community or to outstanding important groups in it. (It is especially precarious logic in communities of high cultural achievement where, inevitably, experience will have inculcated the lesson that very few pronouncements of religious or artistic or even scientific validity, are not sure to give offence in some influential quarter or other. But paradoxically, there is very seldom any correlation between offence and injury—so that censorship is the very millstone of mediocrity).

But the silencing clause does not qualify for this defence. It does not at all concern itself with pronouncements and their effect on the community but only with persons.

I am free to argue in print that the pillars of white rule in South Africa are greed, meanness, cowardice and cruelty and stupidity, or that it is better to be coffee-coloured than culturally constipated, or that the essential tradition of Afrikanerdom is liberalism.

(Continued overleaf)

LIONEL ABRAHAMS, editor of the Johannesburg literary magazine 'The Purple Renoster' has edited a new collection of stories by H. C. Bosman, due in the bookshops shortly.

SPONONO

This play by Alan Paton and Krishna Shah (based on three short stories by Alan Paton) takes place in and around a reformatory just outside Johannesburg. The time is the present.

Central character is Sponono, one of the bigger reformatory boys, aged 17 to 20.

The extracts reproduced below tell of Sponono and Ha'penny, a small boy of perhaps 10 years. This is a subsidiary theme in the play, but one which illuminates its meaning.

Green Badge

As the play opens on to the reformatory yard, Sponono has just won his green badge of freedom (the right to go outside the gate, except at night) and the Principal is watching the yard, full of noise and activity.

Little Ha'penny, craving attention, approaches the Principal. This is the moment he has been waiting for.

Principal: What do you think of Sponono's new badge?

Ha'penny (who always speaks shyly): It's nice, meneer.

(He is delighted when the Principal takes him by the ear, but this delight he also shows shyly)

Principal: You'll be getting one soon. And how's your mother?

Ha'penny: Well, meneer.

Principal: Have you had a letter from her?

(Ha'penny nods uncertainly, and the Principal does not pursue the matter, because many boys are ashamed when their mothers do not write to them)

Principal (using his fingers): And Richard? And Dickie? And Anna? And Mina?

Ha'penny: Well, meneer.

Principal: There's one thing I don't understand. You know in English, Richard and Dickie are the same name.

(Ha'penny says something but the Principal does not hear it)

What did you say, Ha'penny?

(He bends his head to hear better)

Ah, Tickie you say, not Dickie.

Ha'penny (relieved): Yes, meneer.

Principal: What's your mother sending you for Christmas?

(We see that Ha'penny is apprehensive. The Principal does not push the question. He gives Ha'penny's ear a break)

Goodnight Ha'penny.

Ha'penny: Goodnight, meneer.

(Principal goes. Sponono comes quickly)

Sponono: Hasn't the letter come yet, Ha'penny?

(He puts his arm round Ha'penny's shoulders)

Ha'penny: No, not yet.

(To Sponono and Sponono alone, Ha'penny tells these secrets)

Sponono (with sublime confidence): Oh it'll come! And how will Christmas be? I'll show you. Sit down here.

(He sits Ha'penny down)

And there's Richard.

(He sits him down)

Sponono: And Dickie. And Mina. And here is Mrs. Maarman . . .

(Sponono acts out the family's Xmas, with presents for all the children. He is watched by Walter, a tough hard fellow, with a record of violence who dislikes the reformatory, considering it a place for children. He is a seducer of small boys and has his eye on Ha'penny.

Walter breaks up the game with Ha'penny and accuses Sponono:

Walter: When I want my freedom, I'll take it. I won't go bumsucking round any bloody lanie.

(And to Spike, Sponono's friend, who enters:

You've got mates out in Victoriatown too. They're waiting for you, and they're waiting for Sponono. There's jobs to do.

Sponono: Tell them they can wait.

* * *

Fantasy. . .

Act One, Scene Three is in the Principal's Office, which Walter is cleaning as Mr. Mabaso, the head teacher reports on a visit to Mrs. Maarman.

Principal: Well, did you see Mrs. Maarman?

Mabaso: Yes, Principal, I saw her.

Principal: And what did she say?

Mabaso: I'm afraid I've got a shock for you, Principal.

Principal: Why, is she no good?

Mabaso: She's very good, but she has no relation to Ha'penny whatsoever. The whole thing is a fantasy. He adopted the family, but they never adopted him.

Principal: How did the fantasy start?

Mabaso: I suppose he wanted a family. According to Mrs. Maarman, he used to look in at the windows and watch them at meals or playing. Many a time she drove him away.

Principal: Would she take him as a foster child?

Mabaso: I asked her. She says under no circumstances whatsoever. She doesn't wish to receive any further letters from him. She has never written to him, and she doesn't intend ever to write to him. What's more, she says she's a Coloured woman and Ha'penny is a Mosuto, and she doesn't want any African child in her family. You know how it is, Principal. Some Coloured people regard themselves as superior to African people, to compensate themselves for being regarded as inferior to white people.

(He delivers this statement with a barely perceptible edge to his voice)

Principal: Tell me, what are the children's names?

Mabaso (looking at his papers): Richard, Dickie, Anna and Mina.

Principal: So it was Dickie after all.

(He is lost in thought)

What must I do?

Mabaso (correctly): It's for the Principal to say.

Principal:

(Gets up and walks round the office)

And it's for you to give advice.

Mabaso: Well, Principal, our job is to teach boys to obey the law. Nothing more. But if teaching them to read and write and build and make tables and chairs helps them better to obey the law, then teach them by all means. If they can obey the law better without a fantasy, then break the fantasy. But if it makes no difference, leave them alone.

Principal (sharply): I'm not thinking of the law. I'm thinking of Ha'penny. Do send him back to Victoriatown knowing that Mrs. Maarman doesn't want him and never will want him? Or do I send him back to live in a world that will never exist? Which way will be the best for him?

Mabaso: Are you thinking of his soul?

Principal: Seeing that you ask, yes.

Mabaso: I'm afraid I'm not metaphysical, Principal.

Principal: I'll say you're not. Well, if you want to know, I've made up my mind.

Mabaso: It was no doubt painful.

Principal: No doubt at all.

(To Walter)

Walter, you may go.

(To Mabaso)

Bring Ha'penny to me.

Poison In The Inkwells

(*Continued from page 5*)

And Robey Leibbrandt and J. K. Rudman, too, enjoy a pretty complete freedom of expression. Yet to publish a story by Alex la Guma, a theatrical critique by Cecil Williams, a limerick by Ruth Slovo, a comment on the Hollard Street gardens by Alan Lipman, or a report of a soccer match or a love-lyric by Dennis Brutus, would be a statutory crime for which, on conviction, the full prescribed penalty is obligatory. This is censorship born of childish wilfulness and spite, or perhaps of hysterical terror, certainly not of governmental responsibility.

Beyond Insanity

I have had it pointed out to me that on the South African statute book (tome of shame!) are to be found measures as unjust, more unjustifiable, nearly as crude in conception and rather more cruel in effect than the silencing clause. Cry, the beloved country! That is why it cries. But at the point where I have been aroused, it seems to me the fringe of insanity has been overshot. Here more than the heart and the mind are revolted. The spirit is grievously affronted in these 102 executions of minds. In this silent, sweatless, bloodless massacre, blasphemy is pronounced and sacrilege is committed: for we have here a direct assault upon the indivisible spirit of man, whose thought, whose essential life, is a life of words—an affront to the spirit of civilisation, which is the life of the understanding, and to which the Christian gospel accords the ultimate sanctification of "In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

SPONONO

The Biggest Lie...

Walter has heard all this. In the yard he picks a quarrel with Spike, expecting to marry Elizabeth shortly, and with Sponono, Ha'penny's protector, and in front of the boys Walter mimics the game that Sponono played with Ha'penny and his imaginary family and blurts out 'the biggest lie in the whole reformatory' . . .

Walter: There's no mother there. There're no brothers and sisters waiting for him in Klipfontein. It's all lies.

Sponono (desperate to save Ha'penny): It's not true!

Walter (to Ha'penny): Show us a letter then. Show us **one** letter you got from your Ma!

(Ha'penny leaves Sponono and takes a few small drunken steps into the centre of the stage. He stands alone in the circle. There is nowhere to turn. He puts his face in his hands, he crumples up and sinks to the ground. Walter still in the costume of Mrs. Maarman, falls on his knees, and puts his hands together, and calls out in Afrikaans)

O liewe God! My arme seuntjie! Wat het hulle vir jou gemaak? O dear God! My poor little boy! What have they done to you?

(With a cry of fury Sponono launches himself at Walter. He catches Walter on his knees, and falls on top of him. They fight fiercely. But Walter throws Sponono off. They stand up and glare at each other for a second. The crowd falls back. One boy standing near Walter calls, out, **Fix him, Sponono,** and Walter strikes him brutally in the face, with a crack that can be heard all over the yard. Then Sponono comes in to the attack again. Again he gets Walter down and again Walter throws him off. At first the fight goes in Walter's favour, but he begins to show signs of distress. Meanwhile the crowd shouts out encouragements. **Moor hom, Sponono! Murder him, Sponono! Mbulale, Sponono! Moor hom Walter, Murder him, Walter. Kill him, boy! Slaat hom! Champion! Champion! Mshaye! Ashila! Ivume** (for a good hit)! Sponono sees that Walter is tiring, but he knows that it is dangerous to grapple him. He adopts a spectacular technique. Walter is breathing heavily; and does not take the offensive. Therefore he does not interfere when Sponono, pushing the crowd aside, takes up a position about 10 yards from Walter. Then he launches himself like a battering ram at Walter, knocks him over, gives him a couple of blows, and then returns to his position. He launches himself again, with the same result. For the first time we see Walter is afraid. He knows he cannot stand another assault. As Sponono starts another run, Walter whips off his heavy belt, with its dangerous buckle. Spike and others cry, **Look out Sponono! pas op, Sponono! Pas op vir sy band! Look out for his belt!** There are angry cries of **Put down that belt! Los daardie band! Nou moor hom, Sponono! Now kill him, Sponono!** Walter whirls the belt round his head, and as Sponono comes near him, he strikes him over the eye. With a cry of agony Sponono drops to his knees, holding both hands to his eye. The blood pours down his face, and he calls on God and Jesus in his pain. In the open space is Sponono crying out and holding his eye, and Ha'penny in a motionless heap on the floor. Walter is sullenly putting on his belt. Running footsteps are heard. The Prefects enter. One kneels on the ground by Ha'penny. The other tries to see the damage done to Sponono's eye. Walter watches sullenly.

The lights dim.

Forgive... and Hate?...

Sponono pleads before the Principal for Walter to be forgiven: 'I decided to forgive him this, Meneer, so I cannot hate him. You cannot forgive a person and go on hating him . . . What good is it to forgive a person if you mean to punish him afterwards?', and then Sponono asks for an interview with the Principal.

Principal: All right, what's your business?

Sponono (earnest at once): It's Ha'penny, meneer.

Principal: He's dying, Sponono. In one day, two days, three days, he will be gone.

Sponono: We can save him, meneer.

Principal: How?

Sponono: We can get Mrs. Maarman here. He is not dying of sickness, meneer. He is dying because the boys laughed at him. He is dying because Walter said his mother was a lie.

Principal: You know what Mrs. Maarman said, that she would not be mother to a boy like that?

Sponono (coming closer): She does not know him, meneer. She does not know how obedient he is. She thinks he would be naughty. She does know how quiet he is.

(Pleadingly)

You know he's not naughty, meneer.

(Urgently)

Let me go to Klipfontein, meneer. I'll bring her back with me.

Principal: Mr. Mabaso has been to Klipfontein twice. Mrs. Maarman says she wants nothing to do with Ha'penny.

Sponono: Let **me** go, meneer. She'll listen to me.

(He looks antagonistically at Mabaso)

Principal: She says she is a Coloured woman, and she cannot take a Mosutho boy.

Sponono: Coloured! Mosutho! Meneer, that's nothing.

(He kneels and takes the Principal's hand)

Do that for him, meneer, so that the boys can see he didn't lie.

Principal: Don't you understand? He's dying.

Sponono: Even if he's dying, meneer, can't the boys see he didn't lie?

(He still has the Principal's hand, and Mabaso does not approve of this, and tries to get Sponono to release it and stand up)

Leave me alone, do you hear?

Principal: Sponono!

Sponono: Yes, meneer.

Principal: Stand up at once.

(Sponono stands up, sullen and resentful. He looks at Mabaso with hostility)

I'm sorry, Sponono, but I can't let you go to see Mrs. Maarman. What Mr. Mabaso can't do, I do not think you could do.

Sponono (bursting out): We could try!

Principal: I'm sorry, but you can't try.

(Sponono with an insolent gesture, starts to leave the office before he has been dismissed. At the door he offers a last piece of insolence)

Sponono (to Mabaso): My business is finished.

* * *

The Lanie...

Grief-stricken and angry at Ha'penny's death Sponono masquerades as someone else and robs parents waiting to see their son in the visitor's room. For this he loses his freedom badge.

Now Sponono and Walter rail together at authority.

Walter: So you lost your freedom, eh? You lost the pretty little bumsucker's badge. Don't be a bloody fool. What kind of freedom is that, that a lanie can give to you today and take away tomorrow? MY kind of freedom, no one can give it to me, no one can take it away. (He points to his chest) It's here. And it's mine. I give my own badges. I don't stand up in front of any bloody lanie and promise to obey the laws . . . (He mimics the Principal). Boys, this afternoon Sponono is standing here for his freedom. I am confident that he will never break a promise he has made. He will get better and better from day to day and when he dies he will go straight to heaven.

Sponono has listened to the mime with fascination which turns to admiration.

Sponono (jumping to his feet and raising his hand to his head in an electric quivering salute and speaking in an honest ringing voice): Meneer, I promise I'll be a good boy. When I work in the kitchen, I promise not to steal the food.

Walter (piously): My brothers' food.

Sponono: My brothers' food, meneer. And when I work in the store, meneer, I promise not to touch my brothers' tobacco.

Walter: Meneer, I promise when I work in the latrines, never to hold my nose!

(Sponono is overcome by laughter)

Meneer, I promise to be kind to all living creatures.

Sponono: Even all the bed-bugs in the yard!

Walter (now he gives the electric salute): Meneer, I promise to lick Meneer's boots . . .

Sponono (interrupting): With a brown lick for brown boots, or a black lick for black boots.

(They are both overcome with laughter)

Sponono: And a black kick for Mabaso.

Walter: And a black kick for the lanie.

(*Turn to page* 8)

SPONONO will be on the boards any day now, starting in Durban.

ALAN PATON of 'Cry, the Beloved Country' and other writing fame was once superintendent of Diepkloof Reformatory.

KRISHNA SHAH who collaborated in the writing of the play and has produced it, moved from Broadway to the rehearsal rooms of Union Artistes in Eloff Street, Johannesburg, to do so.

SPONONO

(*Continued from previous page*)

Sponono: And a—krkk krkk—(he draws his hand across his throat)—for Mabaso.
Sponono and Walter: And a—krkk krkk—for the lanie.
(They laugh a bit more, but now they are exhausted)
Walter (seriously): Are you coming back to the gang?
Sponono (laughing, but with a slight note of artificiality): Sure, sure. What do you think?
Walter: I thought you wanted to work for the **lanie.**
Sponono: Well, if I wanted to work for the **lanie,** I don't want to work for him now.
Walter: Why don't you run away from here?
(When Sponono does not reply, he continues)
Because you promised the **lanie?**
Sponono (sullenly, because what Walter says is true, but Sponono does not wish to admit it): No!
(boastfully)
I can get away from here any time I like!

Spike Dies . .

On Xmas Day Spike is killed under a Victoriatown lamp post. The Principal accuses Walter of having taken Spike a message that he must rejoin the gang. Walter charges Sponono with the killing. Sponono breaks out of the reformatory. He rushes to tell Elizabeth, Spike's girl.
Sponono: I can't stay there any more. The more I try, the more they hate me. And today . . . today they accuse me . . . of something terrible! It was the Principal who accused me. I always tried my best for him. But he accused me.
Sponono rapes Elizabeth, and the police break in.
Aghast at his failure with Sponono, the Principal leaves the reformatory.

* * *

Judgement . .

Act three takes place in Sponono's mind, as he sits in the vacant chair of the Principal. The chair becomes the Judge's Bench, the stage has become a court, and before it parade the characters. Sponono is the judge.
To the Principal he says: You are charged with desertion. You are charged also with having deserted the teaching of your own religion. There cannot be a greater offence.
(Ha'penny is led to the witness box)
Sponono: What's your name?
Ha'penny (just audible. His speech is always just audible): Ha'penny, meneer.
Sponono: What's your other name?
(No reply)
Have you any family?
(No reply) (Sponono leaves the bench and comes down to the witness box. His face is full of pleasure. He comes and stands by the box, not behaving like a great man)
Sponono: Didn't you have Mrs. Maarman? And Richard and Dickie and Anna and Mina?
(No reply)
In your thoughts?
Ha'penny (he smiles): Yes meneer.
Sponono: And you played with them in your thoughts?
Ha'penny: Yes, meneer.
Sponono: And you got letters in your thoughts?
Ha'penny: Yes, meneer.
Sponono (his voice shakes the court): And this man said to you, show me one of the letters that you get in your thoughts.
Ha'penny (nodding, but not audible. The question, and the loudness of Sponono's voice, have frightened him): Yes.
Sponono: And you could not?
Ha'penny: Yes.
Sponono: And you were afraid that if you couldn't, your thoughts would die?
Ha'penny: Yes.
Sponono (moderating his voice a little): And you were afraid . . . that if your thoughts died . . . then you would . . .
Principal (thundering): In God's name, what are you trying to do? What are you trying to prove? Must the child go through all this again? Didn't you call yourself the protector of the small ones? Must he go through this agony again?
Sponono (swiftly and angrily): Who made the agony?
Principal: I did it to save him from a worse one. I didn't want him to go back there and be rejected.
Sponono: Then why didn't you let me go and see Mrs. Maarman? Were you afraid I might do what you and Mabaso couldn't do?
Principal: I wasn't afraid. I believed you couldn't do it. So I decided to break his fantasy.
Sponono: And you broke his heart as well.
Principal: I wanted him to face reality.
Sponono: Keep your big words. We're talking about deeds here.
(But, confronted by the visitors he robbed, and, above all, by Elizabeth, Sponono cries to the Principal)
Sponono: And the time when I most needed it, you weren't there. Why weren't you there?
Principal: I was finished. You finished me, Sponono.
Sponono: How can you be forgiven? You deserted your duty. You deserted us and left us alone. But even if you had been there, would you have forgiven me? You always wanted a reward for your forgiveness. You would forgive me, only if I didn't sin any more. Who is as good as that? Are you as good as that? You deserted us. That will be your sentence too. Take him from here—(to the policemen)—and put the mark of Cain on his brow, because he did not know he was his brother's keeper.

STREET CORNER

by RICHARD RIVE

—Hallo Joe.
—Ev'ning Nick.
—All alone?
—Yeah! waiting for you guys.
—Meeting started yet?
—No! It's only half past.
—Seven?
—Yeah.
—Oh. Thought it was eight already.
—No. It's still early.
—Cigarette?
—Thanks. Thought you gave up smoking.
—Tried to ol' chap, but the spirit is weak.
—Secretary come yet?
—No-one but me.
—No-one inside?
—No!
—This brand's good. What you say?
—First class. Cheap as well. 1/9 twenty.
—Mmm. Say, you hear about Tom's brother?
—Yeah. Tom's bringing him tonight.
—The fellow's nuts! Dinno why he's bringing him.
—Oh, hello Bill!
—Hallo Joe, hallo Nicky. Meeting on yet?
—No!
—I guess I'm kinda early.
—Yeah. I was gonna ask what's come over you.
—What's 'e time now?
—7.30.
—Oh, time for a puff: Cigarette Joe?
—Smoking.
—Nicky?
—Smoking thanks.
—Cheap round this. You guys in form for Saturday?
—Hell no. I'm still limping after last week.
—That St. Anthony's forward got you a beaut, hey.
—Yea man, on the blooming knee. I want to protest about it tonight. That's the worst of playing types like those.
—St. Anthony's can't stand a lose. Never could.
—I think it's about time someone bloomingwell protested. It's types like those that bring the sport into disrepute.
—Soccer's going to the dogs.
—And now Tom wants to bring his brother.
—Say, yes! What's this I'm hearing about Tom's brother?
—He's bringing his brother to join tonight.
—Jeesus no. There's a bloody limit.
—Hell you chaps, make less row.
—Oh hello Steve, hello Archie.
—I can hear you guys jawing at Salie's shop.
—You don' say.
—True as God, Bill.
—Go away.
—Salie himself remarked 'Daai's Bill met sy groot bek.'
—I'll slit his bloody Indian throat.
—But what were you Jesusing about, Bill?
—Somar.
—Somar what?
—Somar Jesusing.
—Aw don't be silly.
—I'm not being silly, just disgusted.
—Why?
—Wouldn't you if a bloody nigger's joining our Club?
—Whose joining?
—Tom's brother.
—Who, Tobias?
—Same one.
—Hell!
Why the devil is he bringing him?
—Don't ask me. I thought Tom had more sense.
—So did I.
—Secretary come yet?
—No! He'll come at eight. Or 5 to eight.
—Real Coloured time, hey! Coloured people's meeting time.
—Prefer Coloured time to Kaffer time.

(*Continued on page* 9)

Now we'll have niggers too.
—Well Tobias isn't really a Kaffer, Bill.
—Looks almost like one and that's almost the same to me.
—Hell, think of it chaps. Tobias in our Club.
—I'm sure Salie can hear your loud jaw now.
—Here comes Kennie, our loving, dearest centre-forward.
—Hallo chaps. Hallo Steve. Hello Archie. Having a meeting outside?
—Kind of, but still waiting for our Secretary.
—Oh he's always just on time.
—Heard the latest Kennie?
—No. You haven't given birth again Bill?
—Worse than that my dear Kennie.
—So?
—Master Tobias Fredericks is joining Sussex Amateur Soccer Club.
—So what?
—Christ man, can't you see?
—No. I see nothing wrong in it.
—Dearest Kennie. Tell cousin Bill whether you would invite friend Tobias Fredericks to your dearest home.
—Don't talk rubbish, Bill.
—Come on Kennie, would you?
—I dunno. I never really thought of it. But I don't mind being in the same Club with him.
—In the same Club?
—But why not?
—Jeesus he asks me why not. Tobias with his ballroom hair and navy-blue complexion.
—Somehow I think you're being unfair.
—I could die, I could.
—Tell me Kennie. Would you invite him into your lounge?
—Look here that's beside the point.
—Would you Kennie?
—There are reasons why I wouldn't take him home, but I certainly have no objections to his playing for Sussex.
—And so say I, though I dunno what you're talking about.
—Oh. Hallo Gus.
—Evening chaps. What's the meeting on the corner in aid of?
—Gus. Tell me like an honest, upright Coloured man, would you like to affiliate to the local Bantu Union? Cause Kennie wouldn't mind.
—I never said that Bill.
—True as God he said so. Didn't he say so fellows? If he didn't say it, he at least mentioned words to that effect. And that's the same.
—What I said, Gus, and I hope Bill will stop exaggerating, is that I have no objections to Tobias joining Sussex.
—Which Tobias?
—Fredericks.
—Oh, Tom's brother?
—Tom's black brother. Why don't you say so, Kennie.
—My point is this, Gus. I prefer to ignore Bill. Our Constitution debars Africans and Moslems from our Club, but no-one else. Tobias is Coloured.
—Just about Kennie, just about.
—Shut up Bill. Let Kennie speak.
—O.K. But no darkies are joining Sussex Soccer Club.
—Well what I mean, Gus, is that if we accepted Tom we're bound to accept Tobias.
—I see your point, Kennie, but Tom's different. Tom's fair like ourselves. He's O.K. I don't know Tobias, and have nothing against him. But he's as dark as hell. It could be humiliating.
—We're a Coloured Club, Gus.
—Yes but there are Coloureds and Coloureds.
—Look here, Kennie.
—I'm speaking to Gus, not you, Bill.
—Look Kennie. Would you like the whole damn District Six to join our Club?
—Why not. If they're decent.
—You're speaking like a bloody Communist, Kennie.
—Maybe.
—Why don't you join the African National Congress or one of those things.
—You're talking rubbish, Bill.
—You don't answer my question.
—Which one?
—About Tobias sitting in your lounge.
—Look Bill. Oh hello Pete.
—Hallo Pete. Come and hear this one.
—Hallo chaps. Sounds like Sussex Soccer Club meeting under a lamp-post.
—Tom's brother Tobias is coming to join our Club and Kennie here is in favour of it.
—Tobias Fredericks?
—Yeah!
—Cigarette first fellows, while I tackle my learned brain.
—Here Steve.
—Same old brand, Joe?
—He was gonna give up smoking. Swore to God he would.
—How's the leg, Bill?
—Think I'm out for Saturday. St. Anthony's got me a beaut.
—Yeah why they keep them in the league I don't know.
—Should play in a District Six League, not with decent chaps.
—Say, here's a good idea, fellows. Why don't Tobias join St. Anthony's and Kennie can go along too. What you say Pete?
—I dinno what it's all about, Bill.
—Tom's bringing his brother Tobias.
—So?
—Do you know him?
—Saw him.
—He's dark as hell.
—Yes?
—It means we must be friends with him. Speak to him. Crack jokes with him.
—So?
—Do you agree?
—With what?
—His joining our Club.
—If Tobias wants to come I agree he should. Why not?
—Why not! Why not! Hell!
—Look chaps, we must be broad-minded.
—My girl will chuck me tomorrow, Pete.
—Oh to hell with Rosie.
—Really fellows. I could never give up those luscious arms. those ruby lips. Want to hear about last night?
—Shurrup! Here's trouble coming.
—Hallo chaps!
—Hallo Tom.
—Hallo Kennie. Why are you all so silent suddenly?
—The meeting is contemplating Rosie's arms.
—Almost time for the meeting isn't it?
—Yes Tom. How's things for Saturday?
—Alright. Smoke Joe?
—Smoking.
—Nicky?
—Busy.
—Bill?
—No!
—Steve?
—No thanks.
—Kennie?
—I'll have one thanks.
—Nice game Saturday. What do you say?
—Damn lot of skollies.
—Now come, Bill. I enjoyed the game.
—Yes.
—Anything interesting for the meeting tonight? It's ten to eight already.
—Yeah.
—Anything wrong fellows?
—Why?
—You acting kinda strange.
—Yes Tom. If you'd like to know there's a helluva lot wrong.
—I think I can guess Bill. Is it Tobias?
—Yes!
—Oh!
—Look Tom. Be sensible. We've nothing against you. You're O.K. We don't mind you. We invite you to our homes. Haven't we Tom
—You have.
—But don't you think Tobias will feel kinda outa place with us? We know he's your brother and all that.
—Yeah. He's my brother.
—Now Tom be reasonable. You know we're a lot of nice guys. Pals all together.
—So?
—But you know he'll feel out of place with us. He wouldn't like coming to our homes, or meeting our people, or going to bioscope with us.
—I don't think he'd mind.
—Yes, but damn it all, we do.
—I thought so.
—No, Bill is wrong. Not all of us Tom. I don't mind. There's one reason why I wouldn't bring him to my house. My people. But I don't mind.
—Thanks Kennie.
—Neither do I.
—Thanks James.
—Look Tom. Let me put it this way. We're respectable Coloureds. I mean decent Coloureds. We want to keep to ourselves. You wouldn't go around with Moslems and District Six types would you?
—Tobias is not a District Six type.
—O.K.! O.K.!! But Tobias is hardly the type who would join our Club.
—Is it his colour and his hair?
—Let's not be difficult Tom. We were prepared to be your pals, even if Tobias was your brother.
—So you're no longer my pals.
—Who said so Tom?
—But surely you're Coloured yourselves!
—There are Coloureds and Coloureds!
—So I'm all right because I'm light in colour and have straight hair?
—If you argue like that Tom, we mignt as well have Salie in the shop and everyone in District Six joining Sussex.
—Yeah and join the Bantu League.
—Our Club caters for Coloureds.
—But by Coloureds surely we mean our own types. Look Gus talk some sense to him.
—Fellows keep me out of it.
—Scared Gus?
—Not a damn. You go and fight it out.
—Tom. If Tobias comes tonight we vote him out.
—Then I resign fellows.
—If he gets in then we resign.
—Hear! Hear!
—Let me bring some sense into this argument.
—Hear! Hear! Kennie's going to speak sense. Going to plead affiliation to the African National Congress.
—No. You're a bloody lot of Coloured racialists!
—Don't bring politics into it Kennie! Keep sport out of politics.
—This is politics, chaps.
—Rubbish!
—Nonsense!
—Hurray! Our dearest Secretary has arrived.
—Come in fellows, let's get inside.
—Tobias coming tonight Tom?
—Yes, Kennie.
—O.K. Let's get inside.

THE ALIEN CORN

by LEWIS NKOSI

IN the houses along the streets Coloured people stood in doorways, or leaned upon fences, talking robustly to their next-door neighbours. The laughter carried warmly, arrogantly upon the dry crackling sun-lit air. In the porch of one of these houses sat a pot-bellied Coloured man who sang discordantly some phrases from the song, "March Away to Pretoria". As Ruth walked by the man seemed to struggle to focus his bleary eyes upon her passing shadow. Abruptly he stopped singing, rose unsteadily to his feet, and failing to support his corpulent body, he fell back into the rocking chair. Ruth heard the man swear crisply with something of a slum artistry and just that sufficient relish to make the four-letter words sound wildly comical.

"Shit!" the man said. "Shit!" and he collapsed.

Ruth continued to walk, aimlessly, and while she walked she felt no fatigue, only the need to exercise her limbs, to feel again sweat pouring out of every pore of her skin. Her sweat, when it came, reminded her of the black men she had seen at a railroad yard once lifting a giant bar so that their muscles coiled and rippled in the sun, their strong legs moving rhythmically in chorus, and she had seen sweat pour out of their tightly held bodies like rain-water rolling down the surface of dark rocks.

Then, suddenly, as she walked past many of the houses in the lower section of the housing project, she became conscious of the black men standing and lounging in the doorways, and something unspoken between her and the other world struggled to take shape, still, formless, subsided, still unspoken. First, she became conscious of the men in that way because they seemed not at all conscious of her, although she knew, instinctively, that they were watching her. For this same reason she found their presence, their silent brooding waiting, excessively oppressive, even irritating. They seemed to be staring right through her and beyond, and yet all the time she knew, by their silence, that beneath their heavily lidded eyes, they were staring at her. She felt their stares; she felt the shame of being engulfed by a secret uncommunicative kind of lust. It was their refusal to look at her candidly as men sometimes look at women, it was their unspoken lust, which defined her relation, not only to them, but also to the secret of their lives, of their kind of manhood, of the dark passions behind darkened curtains, of the sweltering violent nights behind beat-up wooden doors. Also, inexpressibly, it was their refusal to acknowledge her presence fully which defined the sense of disaster which seemed to surround her alienation from their black lust.

One narrow street led to another and another until one narrow street ended abruptly in a deserted plot where a single footpath carried on to the knoll of the hill and beyond. She followed the footpath until she came upon what appeared to be the ruins of a vast colonial house. The broken down walls were now covered with ivy. The bare parts were covered with scrawls of writing and obscene drawings. In one drawing the indecent vision of some pornographic artist had evoked the fleshy arms, legs and belly of a woman lying back in a state of utter exhaustion. Ruth was amazed, as she followed the unsteady lines, of the manner in which the amateur artist had captured a truth, perhaps *the* truth, about a certain kind of inner condition, not easily definable but familiar to Ruth's furious needs—a world of complete and immutable exhaustion. She wondered how much the outlaws, the pornographers, the rebellious must know about the peculiar exhaustion of those who led permanently satisfied lives.

She walked into the ruins of the house, inspecting the wrecked splendour, and she was, minute by minute, being sucked into the depths of its gaping caverns. Except for the rats which scampered away from the nooks and crevices as soon as she came in, the inside of the house was utterly quiet. She sat down against the wall, rested familiarly within the deep shadows, and felt for a moment, a sense of utter and completely enervating peace. Above her were the broken glass of a huge window against whose jagged pieces the sun broke into golden splinters. She had been sitting there exactly ten minutes when she heard the shuffle of feet in the next room. It was not the lack of caution, certainly not bravado, which paralysed her limbs, although her mind issued the warning. She sat hopelessly still, waiting for the feet to approach, waiting for the shadow to emerge, to break the silence.

When she turned, there he was, standing perfectly still, leaning, perhaps, against the jamb of the door, watching her with hawk eyes. He was dressed in a ragged suit whose pants did not properly fit his huge body. Ruth could not have read the expression on his face, so black was his skin; and now, standing here in the gloom of the room, the face seemed to merge with the rest of the shadows. Only his eyes, two points of glowing ember, shone out from the inscrutable darkness of his face; the eyes had a peculiar hawk-eyed gleam which seemed to hold everything they looked at in frozen immobility. The black man stood still as though he were waiting for her to make the first move; and it seemed strange to her that she thought of such a move as something that would have to be a gesture of conciliation although they were complete strangers. It occurred to her then that she was seeing this black stranger now, alone with her in the dark ruins of a house, as a threat to her, and therefore more tangible than the shadows of black men she had seen cluttering the pavements of the city, black men who were nothing more than a variety of human gestures responding to the commands, to beckoning fingers, like puppets. He was real because now what she conceived of as her safety seemed to depend on *his* goodwill, on his amiability, and friendship, something which was only possible between equals. If he was going to violate her physically she was prepared to beg him on her knees. That the man might not have been after her body seemed, on the balance, a least likelihood. There was a way in which he stood, his mouth curled as though with distaste, which seemed to indicate to her the only reason why he could have been there. He must have seen her enter the ruins. He must have followd her; and now she was being required to pay the price of her daring. In her mind the black man stood for a dark inscrutable chasm that she had all along been trying to push out of her mind without success. That world was now being concretised, being realised in this single black man's stance, a stance whose arrogance was a challenge not only to the privacy of her body but also to a world that was permanently locked to him.

It took her a little while to be frightened, but when she did eventually get frightened, fear rose in waves to her throat. He was now approaching her, walking in hesitant footsteps, his eyes leaving her not for one minute. She tried to rise against the wall, but her limbs seemed paralysed. She only wished the man could say something; she wished he could speak, which would have been one way of introducing a human element between them, or a basis upon which she might have been able to assess the extent of her danger. Now he was standing in front of her, looking down upon her body which was curled against the wall in fear.

"What do you want?" she stammered, her voice sounding like a stifled scream. "If it's money you want I can give it to you. Here's the purse! Open it! It's got lots of money. Well, take it and leave me alone!"

The man continued to look down at her. The expression which had come into his face was a mixture of contempt and mockery. His lips were still contorted; but his eyes seemed amused. Finally he spoke: "White people got lots of money to throw around." Ruth couldn't tell whether that was meant as a statement or as a question.

"I only want you to leave me alone." She still held the purse out to him. The man continued to stare at the purse with disdain: "White woman know nothing else to give but money." She let her hand fall, the purse still held firmly within clammy fingers. Her back hurt from leaning too heavily against the wall; her mouth was turned up at the sides, turned up really in a kind of contorted shape of fear which, to another man might have made the mouth look superiorly, attractively sensual. Finally she managed to rise upon rubbery legs and face the man directly, although there was no way of escaping from him because he was really too close.

Now she could smell him. He smelled of dry unwashed sweat. He smelled the animal odour of a human being who lived desperately from day to day, sharing sties with pigs, hummocks with thieves and beds with degenerates. His skin was ash-grey, the face looked as though he had not had sleep for days, and there was an outgrowth of a grisly beard on his chin that made his mouth look irredeemably unattractive. And yet his eyes

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LEWIS NKOSI applied for a passport to study and write abroad, and was refused one, so he left without one. Spanning Harvard in the United States, London and West and East Africa in the last year, he has almost completed his first novel, from which THE ALIEN CORN is an extract.

MABONGA

by MARKS RAMMITTLOA

MABONGO'S powerful body defied the fatigue and excruciating pains he felt in his joints. He had pushed his bicycle bravely through a milling and hostile group of Amalaitas. Once, he had been their champion, the "pinare" of Ndebele Amalaitas. He had commanded every single group which came from the areas nearest his home whether they were of his tribe or another. The "Kings" of other groups had on several occasions challenged him. Mabongo was fearless and took them on one by one. When he could not make his opponent withdraw in less than the time he considered long, he would batter with his head and send his opponent whirling around like a dying lion, and thereafter attack every one within his sight. When all had scattered he could batter his head against every object in his path until Sergeant Van Rooyen of the Marabastad Police Station lifted a hand and begged him to accompany him to an awaiting pick-up van, and delivered him to the Rooiveld Dairy where he worked.

He had won the love of Mathloare whom he treated with courtesy and politeness notwithstanding his violent temper and the coarseness with which he treated his half dozen other girls. When the Rooiveld Dairy opened another depot in Johannesburg they transferred him there to supervise the "native boys". On his Sundays off he visited his old "home" town, Pretoria, and it was there that he proposed to Martha's mother and suggested that she come to Johannesburg.

"You can already dress like a missus and Jo'burg girls dress like that".

"But you are no good for Johannesburg. Only cheap-line men go to the Amalaita fights".

"I have stopped!" answered Mabongo taking an instantaneous decision to place Mathloare before his second love.

He was breathing hard now as he walked along the passage to greet his cousin. His wife, who had been with the visitors next door, came in hurriedly towards him.

"Are you sick, Ntate Moipone?"

"I am only tired. I shall be all right very soon".

After washing his face and changing from his overall to a pair of Sunday trousers and a clean shirt, he went to greet his visitors.

"I am pleased you have waited". He pointed towards Mathloare, "that is my wife, and there is my daughter, Moipone, whom I should like to be married to your son so as to bring the cattle back home". He conducted the introductions as formally as though the visitors had just arrived.

"Moipone, have you greeted your father?" he asked. On seeing the frightened look on Moipone's face, he said, "Come here, Moipone. My rakgali-father's sister, your aunt, will not allow anybody to illtreat you. She loved me as her son".

"Pa, how can I love a man I have never seen? I would like to see him first".

They all laughed, and Tiny ran outside and announced to her playmates that Moipone was getting married, and they began practising wedding songs.

"Ho nyaloa lichabeng ho bothloko byang —to be married far away from home is sad".

"July", said Ndala earnestly. "I am very impressed with the manner your daughter has shown us during the few hours we have been here and I have thought to myself how good it would be if we got my son and your daughter to join each other in wedlock. I am certain my uncle will be very pleased and it would make my mother very happy".

Mrs. Mabongo lapsed into her usual habit of singing hymns: "Morena o mohau —the Lord has mercy".

"Cousy, we cannot guarantee that our children will respect the wishes of their parents. They agree to parents' suggestions and fail to carry them out. My daughter was born, and has been brought up in town.

"She may not well agree with a man born and bred in the country".

"Ntate Moipone", interjected his wife. "Moipone is a woman. She knows how to cook and she dresses like a woman. You want to spoil the marriage for my daughter. You men don't care about your children".

"My wife, I am speaking of what happens to a girl who has grown up in the town and a young man who has grown up in the country. The town girls want furniture, fancy dresses, nice shoes. They dislike the rough work which is done by country women, and a country man does not understand the life of one who has to buy food, coal, wood, and pay for the roof which he has to keep over his family. He does not understand the life of the town man who has to work for the whole of his life without possessing anything; a house, goat, fowl or cattle. He must always be on the run to go to work. If he loses his work, his children will go without food and be chased out of the house. Moipone must understand that my cousin's son will not like to stay in town. He wants to see his cattle and when he has built up his first home he might like to take another wife"

"There is only one law for the black man", intervened the old man. "If one marries a woman, one marries her for her parents, and she must go and stay with them until the younger brother marries. The first child belongs to the grandparents and will not live with his parents, and when such a child marries, it is the grandparents who will have the final say. It is wrong for you, July, to say what your daughter will not like. If you like the boy's parents, it is not for your daughter to decide. The boy or girl has no right to refuse the proposals of their parents. The magadi—dowry—might even be paid without the couple having met each other, and the bride can be taken to the man's parents even if she hasn't seen her man. What you should now say is that your cousin has to send other people to have a look at your daughter and these people will return to say how much magadi is wanted. Then women from the man's house will come before the magadi is paid to satisfy themselves of the looks of the bride. They may refuse the girl if she displeases them by her manners or if she cannot cook or wash well or keeps the house in dirt".

The discourse changed from a serious one to an amiable one. During the discussion, Martha and her mother were preparing the evening meal, and after they had all regaled themselves, a four gallon tin of skofana was placed at their disposal, a young man being given the charge of serving the grown men.

"Don't start scooping the beer until everyone is here", said the old man as he was about to dish out a scale.

"Ndala", said Mabongo, "it has been fortunate that you and I met in the street so that you came today to know my family and father and mother Mapena. My wife made this beer to entertain you and your friends".

Ndala passed the message to the other young man who was not serving, and he in turn passed it to the man who was serving and back again to the last man until the last man said, "Your children are very thankful for what you have given them".

They drank and the beer sank low to the bottom of the can and their heads buzzed.

"Cousy, you look sick. Your work does not give you time to rest".

"Yes, I have been working for years on Sundays without a break. My old baas used to give me some Sundays off. He was a very good baas".

"If he was good, he would have paid wages so that you could go home when you are sick and he should have left money for you before he died.

"Look you worked for him when your present baas was still a child".

"You are right, Cousy. I used to take him to school on my bicycle.

"Aha! Today he rides in motor cars, one in the morning and another in the afternoon and another for his wife".

"How do you know that he has many motor cars?"

"Rooiveld Dairy Company orders suits from our shop. I deliver them to his house. We send cartons of suits for him to choose. Sometimes he takes a dozen at a time and the same number of shoes and shirts, and at the end of the month I fetch an envelope and am told to be careful not to lose it".

"You have also been working for the same baas for a long time. Why doesn't he give you money to go home?"

"You see, he won't give money when others don't. He won't give his workers pensions, as they call it, because the workers have not come together to tell the bosses to pay good wages and to give holidays and to pay us when we take a rest after working for a long time".

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MARKS RAMMITTLOA is the secretary of the Shops and Offices Workers' Union in Johannesburg. This is an extract from his first novel.

Mabonga

(*Continued from page* 11)

"You are very clever, cousy. Who told you all about these clever ways? You speak like Makgato of the Congress who walked on the pavement in Pretoria and one day went into a white people's coach and was arrested and he told the Magistrate that Africa was for the black people and that the white people must go back into the sea. The Magistrate was angry and sent him to New Look prison and old Makgato worked for six months".

"I go to meetings every Sunday at the Market Square and at the City Hall steps. But they don't say we must drive the white people back to the sea. They say we must all live nicely together and be given the same job and pay like overseas where black people can stay and be paid the same money as white people. They say 'no colour bar'."

"But Cousy, if they say 'No Colour Bar' and you marry a white woman, who will wash for you, because white women can't cook or wash. They just sleep and say, 'Annie bring me tea, bring my petticoat and vest', and then they go out into the garden and tell a gardener. 'Boy, those flowers is no good, take it out. Go and water those flowers, and when you have finished come and help the girl to wash the dishes'."

"I don't like them too. They are lazy", answered his cousin with a lowered head. "But we must not be bad to them. Perhaps when they know we are all people, they will learn to cook and wash for themselves and stop calling us boys and girls".

The two cousins sat talking until it was dark. The younger men sipped their beer and the women busied themselves in the kitchen going over in detail all that had been said during the course of the afternoon.

The Alien Corn

(*Continued from page* 10)

remained the most powerful feature about him, memorable in their intensity; there was a strange incandescence about them; and Ruth was hopelessly enthralled by this mixture of desperation, ruthlessness and appeal contained within the single expression of his look. They were now both watching each other in a wordless, infinitely painful, unpredictable waiting, both seeking in this moment of impassioned imminence the courage to arrest or promote a deed that remained inexplicably possible.

"What do you want?" Ruth said fiercely, still watching him closely.

He smiled contemptuously and said nothing. He was being clever about it. By his refusal to commit himself one way or the other, he was able to remain neutral, neither villain nor saint; he was able to keep Ruth guessing as long as he wanted. He had not touched her even; and because Ruth was expecting his horny hand to reach out for her any moment, her entire body was poised between revulsion and expectation. She felt finally the overpowering fatalism of wishing to be touched, seized; but he was not really taking any responsibility, for he stood infuriatingly still; and although she now realised she could have screamed if she wanted, it seemed ludicrous after having waited so long. She wished the man would make up his mind what he wanted to do with her.

"Who are you anyway?"

Again he smiled at her with utter contempt, though this last smile was touched somewhat by affection, by friendlessness, a pity made Ruth less fearful but more furious with him.

"If I call the police, you'll be in serious trouble," she warned him.

He merely stared beyond her, peering across the desolate walls to the pale darkening evening sky . . . The human roar of the slums reached to them only slightly, like the pebbly sounds of the waves knocking repeatedly against distant shores.

"I hate the police!" he finally said. "I'll kill a policeman one day. They shot my mother! They let her run across the yard and then shot her. One day I'll kill a policeman. Easily."

"Do you live about here?"

"One day I'll kill a policeman," the man repeated. "All my mother ever done was brew a bit of home-made liquor and they shot her through the back! For breaking the liquor laws! I'll kill a policeman one day!"

Ruth didn't know why she suddenly felt at ease with the man, she didn't care any more what he did; and she didn't care because, instinctively, she knew he was not going to do anything to her. It was not because of any nobility the man felt, or honour; but the memory of what the police had done to his mother had made him look harmless suddenly, even winsome and pitiable. He stood now, fingering the thumb of the left hand with his right hand thumb and forefinger. His gaze was impersonal and remote; his huge body sagged; he looked no longer capable of violating a woman's body. Ruth was not sure of her feelings toward him. Now that he looked harmless she felt nothing but contempt and loathing for him. She even felt superior, inaccessible to him; again he was nothing but a black man who could be commanded. She wanted to call a policeman, to betray him precisely because he was now powerless to do anything to her. She loathed his very helplessness, his incapacity to violate her body; she hated the way his body sagged. The least thing she wanted to see was an emasculated black man. Finally the man turned and without saying a word, he walked briskly away, disappearing under the porch into the silence of the world outside.

Ruth let her body slide against the wall. She sat there, hopelessly drained of every feeling; the sadness, the desolation, and the pain was uncontainable. For a while she was unable to move.

SLIM JANNIE : The Smuts Story

ON the face of it, the career of Jan Smuts is the all-time success story of South African politics. Within a couple of years of his first public speech (of which more below) he entered Kruger's Cabinet of the South African Republic as State's Attorney. From then on almost until the time of his death in 1950 he played a dominating role in South African politics. He was Botha's right-hand man in the Transvaal cabinet, from the granting of responsible government until the formation of Union, of which he was one of the chief architects. He was a leading figure in the various Union governments—including several terms as Prime Minister—for more years, put together, than any other political leader of his time. With his appointment as a member of Lloyd George's Imperial War Cabinet during the first world war, Smuts moved from the narrower stage of South African politics to the role of Empire, and later World Statesman. From then on we find him engaged, well in the limelight, in portentous world affairs—History with a capital H—at the Paris Peace Conference, helping to draft the Treaty of Versailles, the Covenant of the League of Nations, the Charter of the United Nations. He died loaded with international honours on a scale not approached by any of our countrymen except Albert Lutuli.

Twelve Years After

Yet, reading this absorbing biography* of the first half of his life one begins to realise that in many most important respects the Smuts story is not a success story at all, but one of disappointment and failure. And this, not only in the grand perspective of world history, which reduces all but a very few to insignificance—already the brief but eventful twelve years since Smuts' death have served to shrink his reputation significantly—but also in the perspective of the grandiose goals which Smuts, in his boundless vanity and ambition, set for himself.

Not that Sir Keith Hancock sets out, in any sense to belittle his famous subject or to debunk the Smuts Legend. On the contrary, he clearly has the greatest admiration for Smuts and whenever he pauses to comment it is almost invariably to emphasise a merit or condone a failing. But happily he possesses this major virtue: he presents the facts and documents, skilfully and intelligently, and refrains from imposing his judgment on that of the reader.

General Smuts certainly did not belong to that category of men who have greatness thrust upon them. He pursued it all his life, consciously and deliberately, with all his considerable powers of intellect, with single-minded and ruthless devotion, and, let us add, with extraordinary good fortune. All the circumstances of his life, the very era in which he lived, seemed to conspire to urge him forward from the quiet backwaters of the Cape farmhouse where he was born to play a leading part in some of the most stirring dramas of South African and world history. Yet, in the end, true greatness eluded him in every field in which he sought it.

Great Soldier, Great Philosopher, Great Statesman. Such were the epithets with which the United Party newspapers used to laud him in those endless panegyrics during his lifetime, and there is no doubt that is how he saw, or wanted to see, himself. Yet Smuts was none of these things. There is a fantastic gap between Smuts' estimate of his own calibre in every field and his actual abilities and accomplishments.

The Soldier

The legend of Smuts the great soldier simply disappears under Hancock's dispassionate exposition of the facts. The celebrated "invasion" of the Cape Colony—which Smuts manoeuvred furiously to get under his own independent command rather than under the experienced professional, Beyers—came at the end of the Boer War and had no significant effect on its outcome. In fact, though skilfully and daringly executed, it was no more than a guerilla raid, involving a few hundred men, and nowhere in the same class as the brilliant and sustained epics of de Wet, de la Rey, and others.

The only serious military campaign led by Smuts in the period under review (the South-West Africa campaign was almost entirely planned and directed by Botha) was the war in Tanganyika (then German East Africa). Smuts pursued this campaign with his usual driving energy, personal courage, physical endurance, and efficiency. But it is clear that his strategy and tactics were wrong; he was outfoxed by his German opposite number, von Lettow, whom he was forced to leave undefeated in the field. The most crushing comment is quoted from the memoirs of his then Chief of Staff, Col. Meintzhagen (an Englishman, despite the name) who liked and admired Smuts personally very much indeed—

> "a bad tactician and strategist and an indifferent general."

Yet, such was the vanity of Smuts, that with nothing but this negligible and indifferent record behind him, he actually suggested himself as the right man to lead the American Army in battle in the first world war! This all-but-unbelievable episode occurred in 1918, when the Imperial War Cabinet was seriously perturbed at the prolonged failure of their American ally to move any forces into action against the enemy. In a letter to Lloyd George, Smuts suggested that the whole trouble was that General Pershing was too busy organising and transporting the US Army to take charge of its actual field operations. "Let the fighting command of the American Army be entrusted to another commander," he suggested, and went on to remark that an Englishman or Frenchman would probably not be acceptable to American national sentiment. His letter to the British Prime Minister continued:

> "I am naturally most reluctant to bring forward my own name . . . but I have unusual experience and qualifications to lead a force such as the American Army will be in an offensive campaign."

Apparently either Lloyd George or the Americans were unimpressed by this astounding offer, for no more was ever heard of it.

The Philosopher

The same extraordinary blindness to his own limitations—or to the possibility that he might have any at all—attended Smuts' flirtings with the muse of Philosophy. His training was that of a lawyer, and though he liked to read Kant and other philosophers he never undertook any serious philosophical reading or studies either at Stellenbosch or Oxford.

That didn't prevent Jan Smuts from writing a book (two, in fact—the first was never published) on philosophy. Nor was he content merely to publish a minor excursion into some field related to his own special reading and experience. A new world, nay universal, system of thought, no less, designed to mould the thoughts of generations of thinkers was what he aspired to. Holism—an ugly word, derived from the Greek 'holos' meaning *the whole*: it consists of thoughts about and around the concept: *the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.*

Professor Hancock devotes an entire chapter, which I recommend warmly to all readers anxious to pursue this theme further, to an attempted elucidation of this apocalypse. It is obviously a very earnest and well-meant attempt to put the best face possible on this facet of his subject's many-sided brilliance. It excuses (and all we amateurs cannot but sympathise deeply with this revolt against the tyranny of the specialist) Smuts' unprofessional semantic blunders, his vagueness and verbal imprecision. It tries very hard to make out the case, such as it is, for Holism.

However, the facts—recorded with remorseless integrity—stick out like a mountain peak above the clouds. They are:

(1) Smuts' oldest and dearest friend in the philosophical world at Oxford couldn't get past page 45 of his *magnum opus* in manuscript—pages which he punctuated with caustic, and increasingly terse and intolerant, marginal notes.

(2) Since then not a single person of recognised intellectual distinction—inside or outside the field of academic philosophy—has attached any major serious significance to Holism.

In other words, Holism failed to shake the world. In fact it sank like a stone.

The Statesman

If there is one field in which, to his contemporaries, Smuts' claim to greatness might have seemed securely entrenched, it is that of Statesmanship—in the Transvaal, in South Africa, in the world at large. Indeed, the legend lingers so strongly here that one can almost hear angry murmurs against this impious reviewer. Once again, one can only say doggedly—look at the facts, as laid bare by the dispassionate and well-disposed historian-biographer, Hancock.

One may judge a politician, perhaps, by his success in attaining high office; in this sense of course no one can question Smuts' outstanding achievements. But statesmanship demands a higher standard of valuation—here one must look at real and enduring achievement and measure their

(*Contniued on page* 14)

*SMUTS—*I. The Sanguine Years: 1870-1919* by Sir Keith Hancock, Cambridge University Press. R6.05.

The Smuts Story

worth in terms of their ultimate value to the people and to mankind.

Smuts' name, in the period covered by the volume under review, is inextricably bound up with four major events in the history of this country and of the world at large—the Treaties of Vereeniging and Versailles; the foundation of the Union of South Africa and that of the League of Nations. Each was built on sand and now lies in ruins.

Of course the responsibility for the unsoundness of each of these imposing-looking but shaky edifices must rest on all the architects and not one alone. But, as Sir Keith Hancock patiently unravels the tangled record, it becomes abundantly clear that Jan Christiaan Smuts played no minor part in making, and flawing, the portentous documents which bore his signature.

When the British conquerors met the representatives of the Boer commandos at Vereeniging in 1902 it was not, in their view, to negotiate a treaty but to arrange terms of surrender. But even that had to be embodied in a document, and over the terms of that document—subsequently dignified by the name Treaty of Vereeniging—the Boer leaders could and did negotiate.

British imperialism entered the Boer War, so it told the world, not merely to grab the gold of the Witwatersrand and protect sordid commercial interests, but in defence of the poor Africans who were so badly treated under the Republics and, above all, denied the franchise. This pious aim—though deferred until the eventual concession of self-government to the Transvaal and Free State—was embodied in the original draft treaty submitted by the British, as follows:

> "The Franchise will not be given to Natives until after the Introduction of Self-Government."

Smuts, as chief "legal adviser" on the Republican side, was not satisfied with this formulation. He worked hard on it and eventually came up with the following, accepted by the British:

> "The question of granting the Franchise to Natives will not be decided until after the Introduction of Self-Government."

As Professor Hancock comments: "This form of words left it completely open whether or not the Natives would ever be given any voting rights at all. When Kitchener, Milner and the British government accepted the new article they threw away their country's case on what has remained . . . the most crucial issue of South African politics. Surrender was not all on the Boer side."

The Making of Union

Hancock's narrative makes it clear that General Smuts was the dominating and central figure at the National Convention of 1909 which formulated the Act of Union. But the Union itself was not shaped at the Convention, but in the protracted negotiations and correspondence between the White statesmen of the four self-governing colonies beforehand, on which the Convention merely set the formal seal of approval, dotted the i's and crossed the t's. And in these negotiations as well, as Botha's right-hand man in the Transvaal (Botha himself was no great hand at negotiations and correspondence) the dominant role was played by Smuts—"Slim Jannie," as people were more and more, some admiringly, some mistrustfully, beginning to call him.

Much of the correspondence was occupied by matters which history has shown to be essentially of minor importance: the degree of centralisation and the remaining powers of the provinces; the delimitation of constituencies, and so on. What Hancock rightly calls "the most crucial issue of South African politics"—African voting rights—was usually avoided or delicately skirted. The whole matter had, in essence, been settled as early as 1906 in an exchange of letters—of absorbing interest—between John X. Merriman, then Premier of the Cape Colony, and Smuts who at that time (before "Self-Government" in the Transvaal) was merely an aspiring politician.

Merriman was no liberal (though he must be turning in his grave at the use of his name by the "English-speaking branch" of the Verwoerd Party) but rather an old-fashioned Tory—with the old Tories' healthy contempt for the capitalists and Hoggenheimers of the Rand. Nor did he pretend to have any particular sympathy with the rights and aspirations of the African people. In fact, he bluntly wrote to Smuts: "I do not like the natives at all and I wish that we had no black men in South Africa . . . But there they are . . . the only question is how to shape our course so as to maintain the supremacy of our race and at the same time to do our duty."

Smuts, by contrast, expressed the most democratic and humanitarian sentiments. Yet Merriman believed in and advocated the extension of the non-racial Cape franchise to the whole country; Smuts inflexibly opposed it.

"What struck me at once in reading your admirable remarks on liberal principles," wrote Merriman (it sounds like cutting irony: but surely he must have realised the imperviousness of a man like Smuts to irony) "was . . . that you ignore three-quarters of the population because they are coloured." He went on to oppose total disfranchisement of non-Whites as ill-advised and short-sighted. "These people are numerous and increasing. Education they will get . . . They are the workers and history tells us that the future is to the workers(!)" He went on to console Smuts with the thought that in any case, with due care, very few non-Whites would qualify for the voters' roll. "If you had our franchise with the educational test I wonder how many coloured names would appear on the register. I doubt if there would be a hundred."

Smuts' reply is perhaps the most revealing document in the whole of Hancock's 600 pages.

"In principle I am entirely at one with you on the native question," he wrote. "I sympathise profoundly with the native races of South Africa whose land it was long before we came here to force a policy of dispossession on them." These noble sentiments are followed by further remarks on the need for "justice for the natives . . . wise and prudent measures for their civilisation and improvement." Then, abruptly, shatteringly:

> "But I don't believe in politics for them . . . I would therefore not give them the franchise."

In contrast with this hypocrisy, Merriman's blunt but honest racialism is positively refreshing!

Smuts concluded this letter with a remarkable confession of bankruptcy of statesmanship on this cardinal issue of our country:

> "When I consider the political future of the native in South Africa . . . I look into shadows and darkness." He preferred ". . . to shift that problem to the ampler shoulders and stronger brains of the future."

In other words, "Let's dump the whole mess into the lap of posterity" (That's us! And instead of ample shoulders, etc., we got Verwoerd.)

Faced with this adroit sidestep, Merriman seems to have abandoned the whole argument as hopeless. The result was the patched-up, dishonest compromise of the 1910 Constitution, with its leaky safeguards, which has inevitably led our unhappy country, step by step, to its present unenviable state: the polecat of the world. And that, as much as it can be ascribed to any single individual, is the handiwork of World Statesman Jan Christiaan Smuts.

The Sidestep

It's hard (I haven't managed it in this essay) to write about Smuts without returning often to the imagery of the stage and the actor. And that's because Smuts himself, far more than most men, appeared always to be playing a part in a grand epic drama of his own creation, in which he was at the centre, and his country and the whole world of living men and women but the backdrop. Even his early love-letters to his bride-to-be read curiously as if they were also meant for other eyes—perhaps in his biography (which they are).

Yet, every now and again in his career, Smuts was jerked from this all-absorbing epic and brought rudely face to face with some great, real human and moral issue, demanding seriousness and responsibility, not mere play-acting, from the statesmen and leaders who are entrusted with the destiny of us common folk.

We have seen how he dealt with this sort of situation in his correspondence with Merriman—he merely sidestepped the whole enormous question of the African people: then as now the basic population of the countnry.

A similar situation arose at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, which preceded the Treaty of Versailles. Smuts was by no means a major figure there: he had resigned from the Imperial War Cabinet and—Botha being present—he was merely the second delegate from South Africa. Wilson, Clemenceau, Lloyd George were the dominating figures. Yet Smuts played some part—not particularly sympathetic to Germany—in the drafting and particularly the reparations commission.

Suddenly, as the Treaty took shape, Smuts realised the boundless iniquity and unfairness of the whole thing . . .

> "Germany is being treated," he wrote to his wife, "as we would not treat a Kaffir nation."

He rebelled against it with genuine human indignation. He would not, he declared, he could not put his signature to such a document.

But all the same, he saw and he insisted, Botha had to sign. For South Africa not to sign would mean excluding this country from the peace settlement and the League of Nations. It would mean losing the Mandate for South-West Africa. But how could Botha sign and Smuts not? It would look as if there were a split between them (there wasn't: Botha was even angrier about Versailles). Smuts sidestepped. He signed. The whole issue was forgotten, obliterated as if it had never been, as he swept forward to the next act: a hero's welcome in South Africa and still further triumphs in the future.

The Smuts Story

The Politician

The one thread that runs consistently through Jan Smuts' career is his devotion to power: to his own political ambitions and to the men of wealth and property who wield power and dispense offices.

His first-ever political speech (Kimberley, October 1895) was a passionate defence of the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, Cecil Rhodes—against an attack launched by Olive Schreiner and her husband who had called upon "all South Africans, irrespective of race or colour, to join forces against Rhodes." Smuts called for white unity against "a vast continent peopled by over 100 million barbarians," and "defended the policy of Rhodes on every front."

Two months later came the Jameson raid, followed by the defeat and disgrace of Rhodes when his complicity in engineering this fiasco was exposed. Smuts left the Cape for the Transvaal and attached himself firmly to the government of Paul Kruger.

In his electioneering days for "Het Volk" (forerunner of the South African and later the United Party) Smuts vigorously attacked the capitalists and mine magnates, personified as "Hoggenheimer." But, no sooner elected to office, he started that touching love affair with the mine owners that lasted to the end of his days. As Hancock puts it:

> "Smuts soon discovered Hoggenheimer to be a fictitious animal. Within twelve months (of taking office) he had established frank and cordial relations with Lionel Phillips (of the Chamber of Mines.)"

In the very first year of its office the new Botha-Smuts government brought British Imperial troops into the Rand to help the police put down the big strike of 1907. That was the consistent pattern of every Smuts government: with the rich and powerful, against the poor and the oppressed. In 1913 he illegally deported striking workers' leaders to Britain—thus setting the precedent for Vorster and all the other infringers of the rule of law. In the 1922 Rand strike, at Bulhoek, in the African miners' strike of '46, General Smuts displayed his military prowess by leading his armed troops and police in shooting down working people struggling for their bread. It was Smuts' cruel persecution of the Indians that first brought Mahatma Gandhi into the political field.

All these, and many other harsh things, can and must be said if we are to speak truly and justly about the history of our country.

And Yet . . .

And yet, when all this has been said, there was a certain loftiness and largeness of vision about the late General Smuts, all the more striking because of its complete absence in his narrow-minded, hate-obsessed successors.

Aspiring to greatness, he could recognise it in others; dwelling on the heights he often had glimpses of far-off vistas. He was in many respects magnanimous, above the petty vindictiveness of a Vorster or a Verwoerd. Bitter though his clashes of principle with such as Olive Schreiner, Emily Hobhouse, Gandhi and others greater than himself, he recognised them as rare spirits, harboured no grudges, and maintained friendly correspondence and other relations with them for many years. Even to his most implacable opponent, Bill Andrews, the Communist, he sent greetings on his seventieth birthday—the old man reciprocated in kind.

At times, in his later years, Smuts even showed signs of overcoming his lifelong deafness to the claims of the African people for political rights. Or perhaps it was the ominous rumblings that he heard, from Africa, from Asia, from the United Nations. It was at some such prompting that he summoned African leaders to Cape Town to discuss—in the most vague, cautious and non-committal way possible—some form of more effective political representation for them. Looked at from the point of view of a real statesman it was a step in the right direction—though far too little and much too late.

But looked at from the point of view of White South African jungle politics it was a fatal blunder that Slim Jannie made. With savage and joyous whoops of "Kafferboetie!" the Nats. rushed in to sweep Smuts and his party from the scene.

* * *

However that is in the scope of the second and concluding volume of Professor Hancock's biography, to which readers of this splendid first half will look forward with impatience.

A.N.

CHOCOLATES FOR MY WIFE

by TODD MATSHIKIZA

An extract from the book banned in South Africa

The show was ready and Rupert went around selling it. For us. He went around all the big music people in Johannesburg and they told him, "We can't give you all that much money, man, are you mad? Besides you're spoiling these boys, they're used to playing for five bob a night."

That time onwards began the most arduous time of my life. Every night I dreamed I was surrounded by pale skinned, blue-veined people who changed at random from humans to gargoyles. I dreamed I lay at the bottom of a bottomless pit. They stood above me, all around, with long, sharpened steel straws that they put to your head and the brain matter seeped up the straws like lemonade up a playful child's thirsty picnic straw. I screamed, yelled myself out of the nightmare, and fell off my bed each night I saw the brain straws. I dreamed Black names were entered from the bottom of the register and White names from the top. And when a black man told a white man to go to hell, there was no hell. And when a white man told a black man to go to hell, the black man did go to hell.

But it wasn't a dream when I said to Arthur Goldreich, "Tell them to stop writing me in the register from the bottom, and having meetings without me although it's about my music."

Arthur said, "Come to the meeting on Sunday at the Eloff Hotel de Luxe."

"How on earth can I, Arthur? You know I'll be thrown out."

"They won't touch you. Harry will be there and he's a lawyer. It'll be you, him, an' me to see the man from England about selling him the show for London."

They didn't throw me out at the posh, flower-decked foyer of the Eloff de Luxe, I think because I was only in shirt sleeves and khaki trousers, so maybe they thought I was a carry boy. The lift came and shucks I can write home now an' tell them I been right inside there where Dr. Malan has been. Seventh floor. Room seven six four. We waited in the passage while the man from England was fetched from the lounge. While waiting, I took a peep into the backyard of the Eloff de Luxe and saw the scruffiest, slummiest backyard I'd ever seen. Tall, brick walls dripping muck from top to bottom. Didn't fit the glamour of the foyer with glossy, diamond-studded wall frames. I said, this is cheating. It's like a man in a starched, white shirt and spruce bow tie and when he takes off his tail-coat the back of his shirt is like a tramp.

Busy thinking like this when the bottom of the long, dingy, stuffy passage of the Eloff de Luxe produces a tall, scraggy, bony boer. He hesitates while taking stock of Harry's formidable looking brief-case. Then he sums up Arthur's prolific beard and moustache. Then he stalks up slowly towards us and I whisper to myself, "This is *it*."

He comes right up against us and says, pointing at me; "What's this one doing here?" cross and gruff like the billy goat.

"He's with us."

"He's not allowed in here."

"Who on earth are you?"

"I am the hotel detective."

"Go and call your manager. How d'you think we entered this place from the ground floor to the seventh without being detected? Go call your manager."

"I'm telling you he's got no business in here. He's not allowed I give him five minutes to clear out of here."

Harry and Arthur lean their heads back and laugh, "Caw, caw, caw, caw, caw."

The man from England came just as the boer's tail disappeared between his legs round the corner.

"Caw, caw, caw, caw!"

"Come inside, come inside." We entered the room and thought if this tiny monastic bed and breakfast, this dingy nook, that iron bed and coir mattress . . . all behind a flashy neon light . . .

We finished our business and sighed relief as the sunshine outside welcomed us again. The foyer whispered as we went out, "Crack . . . skul . . . kaffir . . . shit . . . neck . . . break."

"Will you write to us from London, man from England?"

"Yes, but keep the show going, make the improvements I suggested. Rehearse like mad. Only the best is good enough for London."

We rehearsed like mad. The cast and the band for London. The creators and the producers for a nervous breakdown.

* * *

One night way past midnight I stood waiting for the bus specially chartered to take everybody home after rehearsals. There

(*Continued overleaf*)

Chocolates For My Wife

was fifteen minutes before the bus came so I wait on the corner to be the first one in.

I wanted to grab me the front seat so that I'm comfortable with the large box of choice chocolates, luxury size, that Patricia had asked me to take home to Esmé. Standing all alone on the badly lit street in the factory district where life was limited to shunting locomotives and men on the run, I waited. Aha, there she comes. Two lights glimmering in the distance. I must hold this large box very carefully. No, that's not the bus. Why do they put the searchlight on. It's the pick-up van. I had better stand here, stay put. If I try to get back into the warehouse where the rehearsals are going on, they'll think I'm running away, 'specially with such a large parcel on me. The spotlight, the searchlight, the police van is coming up faster now, they've seen me.

From out of the shadows a voice came, "Yeebo Fana!" (Yes, young man!) That's the voice the African nightwatchman puts on when he's going to beat you up with his large stick, 'specially when he sees the white boss coming, then the watchman beats you up good and proper. Make it easy for the police to effect the arrest without too much struggle. Nightwatch beats you up hard. Flogs you down to the ground and puts his foot on your neck as he says, "Wenzani kwa M'lungu?" (What do you want on the White Man's property.)

"Please, Mkhulu don't hit me, God of my father."

"What is it then? You standing outside while the others are singing inside. Explain."

How can I explain to this man whose body is mutilated with tribal incisions, earlobes pierced inches across and plugged with decorative earpieces. How can I tell this vigorous, weaponwielding servant of the white man, that I am on the brink of a nervous collapse because I have been listening to my music and watch it go from black to white and now purple.

The screeching brakes halt opposite me and pour out of the van, six young tacklers called police in khaki uniformed dynamite-spitting revolvers. They shout at the night-watchman, "Is it awright, awright, okay Jim?" They fling their young rugby bodies in my direction and say the familiar password, "Ja, jong, Ja," which means "Declare your damned self, Jong."

How does one declare oneself out of a withered, crumpled, shapeless near-discoloured overcoat; out of a sleepless bundle of a jumpy mass, frightened of your papers which are several and none of them in order. The last time I had paid the obnoxious Poll Tax was ten years ago. Had refused to pay, under protest. And now here were the tax-gatherers confronting me at this hour of night.

They came bouncing towards me. "Speak fast, jong, haven't you got a blerry tongue? Where's your pass?"

I released one hand from the large box and whipped out of my inside pocket the little blue cards printed, "Bearer . . . . is a member of the King Kong cast. Members of the South African Police are kindly asked to allow him to go home after rehearsals which usually stop about one o'clock a.m. Thank You."

"Oh God, this one of the King Kong kaffirs. Okay an' what's that you got in the parcel, jong?"

"It's choc'lats, baas, choc'lat's for my wife. I jus' got them now from a friend."

"Oho, Jesus, Piet listen to this one. Of all my night shifts I never met a baboon like this one." They gathered around me.

"Please, baas, don' break the box."

"Ha, ha, ha . . . caw . . . caw . . . caw, ha, ha, ha," until they split their sides with laughter. "The monkey got choc'lat's for his wife . . ." They laughed into their big police van and their echo drifted into the night, echoing long after they had gone. "The maid is now called wife, caw, caw, caw, and choc'lat's for her!"

* * *

I crawled into bed beside my long suffering wife who had not slept for many nights, exhausted with King Kong happenings. Lay on my back gazing into the ceiling where the flickering candlelight danced ever so gently, drawing images of travel and freedom.

"Darling, let's try somewhere else."

"Mh .. ."

"England."

"America."

"Anywhere else on earth is better than here."

"We leave tomorrow. Run across the border."

"And the children, Marian and John-Anthony?"

"Yes. They can't run. We'll have to get passports and clear out before they take them back."

Hurried applications to Pretoria. "You'll have to give us your birth certificates, marriage certificates, photographs, savings account certificate, testimonials of character, Native Reference Books, Bankers Guarantees, and one hundred pounds each in case you get stuck over there and you got to be brought back."

Five days later, "Here they are, my Crown."

"Oh, no, my boy. We must have them in triplicate."

Rush round the corner and a friend triplicates them fast during lunch while the bosses are out.

"Good, my boy. Now go to the Special Branch. See if they'll give you a police clearance. Are you a member of the Communist Party? African National Congress? Ever been in trouble with the police? Anything to do with Huddleston? Any liquor offences? Rent up-to-date? Which Church d'you belong to? By the way, you the one making fun of the South African police in your Hong Kong play, an' you want us to give you a passport?" The machine-gun rattled at us like that for nine long months.

* * *

In London my favourite pub is the Bull and Bush where I go and meet my pal Fred. He's going to find us a nice London home. When I first met him I asked him where the African people live in London, like in Joh'burg they got locations for us.

Fred said earnestly, "Well, looking at it that way, I know the zones go something like you'll find the English in British West Hampstead, the Jews in Goldschtein's Green, and the Indians in Belsize Pakistan. The other races are scattered all over the place."

Bringing Down The Apartheid Curtain in SPORT

(*Continued from page* 4)

non-white boxers are being offered the sop of a trip (as individuals, not as members of a team) to America. Prediction: This is one fight that will be called off.

As the external pressures mount against apartheid-sport, there will be efforts to offset this by importing overseas sportsmen.

The British team at the Commonwealth Games, with their customary duplicity, will be coming to South Africa for apartheid sport immediately after the Games, where they have expressed fervid opposition to our set-up: a British Universities team is due here early next year, and Yugoslavs Pilic and Javonic are coming to take part in a racialist tennis tournament—in spirit of protests to both of them and their national body. Otto Mayer of the I.O.C. has rejected an invitation to visit South Africa—offered jointly by the white Olympic body and "Die Transvaler", but Sir Stanley Rous, boss of the World Soccer Body, will be here soon—and will be suitably feted. Already Messrs. Fell, Marais and Co.—organisers of racial soccer in South Africa—are confidently predicting that he will lift the suspension imposed last year by FIFA and re-imposed this year.

These counter-pressures will make heavy demands on our non-racial organisers. Unfortunately, it is not certain that all of them will have the stamina. As the pace gets hotter, there are already signs that some of them are beginning to crack. But with the growing demand of the rank-and-file sportsmen for a square deal, these men will have only two choices: to carry on the fight—or make way for others who will.

Facing the new year, we are faced with two main demands:

To tighten up our organisations and make them efficient for the coming showdown; and to see that the sportsmen of the world are fully informed of the position here and take their stand on our side against racialism in sport.

If we can take care of this, 1963 promises to be our biggest year in sport ever —Apartheid in sport is on the way out!

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