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TALK

JULY, 1957

JUNE 26

By ALFRED HUTCHINSON



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THE NATS CAN BE BEATEN

"THE RISING TIDE" by L. Bernstein

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"I WAS DEPORTED" by Mary Louise Hooper

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SHOULD THE COLOURED SEATS BE BOYCOTTED?

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NEW CALABASH FOR OLD by Ruth First



NURSES AGAINST APARTHEID

A MONTHLY JOURNAL FOR DEMOCRATS

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Editor: RUTH FIRST.

FROM THE SIDELINES

This month's writer:
CECIL WILLIAMS

I should not be shocked, I know, but I invariably am to discover again and again just how anti-human is the tribe of ignorant bigots who make up the Nationalist party. With sadistic relish they increase the number of crimes for which whipping is the penalty: with grim-faced, hypocritical seriousness, they give the order to the police to shoot first and ask questions after: with a filthy snigger they say the country cannot afford to pay a couple of coppers a day to give some nourishment to impoverished African school children: with vicious determination they drive men, women and children out of their homes on to the bare veld and tell them to ‘get on with it’: they prevent employers from voluntarily increasing wages: day after day with gratuitous cruelty they crucify the Christ in man.

A further example of their indifference to the fate of the people of South Africa is afforded by the Minister of Mines’ reply to the question asked in the Assembly by Alex Hepple on the dangers of radioactivity in our atmosphere. The Minister replied that since the explosion of the first recent British H-bomb there had been an increase of 10 per cent above the normal radiation in the atmosphere, which ‘does not materially increase the radiation hazards to which man is exposed’, wherefore, ‘it is not considered necessary to take steps to protect South African’.

In April 1956 the American scientist, Libby, a member of the United States Atomic Energy Commission, estimated that ‘if the tests continue and the radioactive cloud grows, permissible standards of safety will be reached and passed.’ Since that date a dozen tests have been concluded. But the blood-shot eyes of the Nationalists see no danger. To them all other lives but their own are cheap, dirt cheap.

Althea Gibson, the Black Venus of lawn tennis, who is expected to be the women’s singles champion of Wimbledon this year, is an American Negress. ‘My job as a Negress’, she says, ‘is to make good in tennis, to prove by my own performance that we are the equals of anybody. It is wrong that we should so often get that feeling of ‘not belonging’ and ‘uncomfortableness’.

One feels admiration for and sympathy with this clever American woman, but how sad the commentary on racial discrimination. There should be no need whatsoever for anyone to make good at his job merely to prove to the rest of the world that he is a human being, the same as all the others.

Surely our struggle is aimed at the creation of conditions within which every human being shall have the opportunity to develop to the full his abilities, for his own well-being and for the well-being of mankind in general. God forbid that we should ever view the achievements of a Mongol, a Caucasian or a Negro as we view the cleverness of a bear riding a motor-bike, an elephant trundling timber trunks or a dog walking on his hindlegs.

It is good to remind ourselves that last month a World Peace Assembly was held in Colombo and that at the end of this month the World Youth Festival is being held in Moscow. As a fortunate South African who has attended a Peace Assembly and a World Youth Festival I can assure you that the experience is a glorious one. Away from South Africa’s separation and segregation, watertight compartments, hostilities and violence, it was like “into cleanness leaping”. For all were brothers of the world; colour, race, language, religion, ideology barriers were down, flattened into the ground and there was the sweet and wholesome atmosphere of friendliness, co-operation and a common humanity.

I despise those White South Africans who are afraid of our soon-coming and inevitable future — the future of equality for all. Their fear-blinded eyes cannot see, their atrophied emotions cannot feel the joy and the balm that will descend on this country when, as Nazim Hikmet said to me in Warsaw, ‘all the many-coloured flowers shall bloom together in peace and amity’.

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Our Cover Picture

NURSES DEMONSTRATE AGAINST APARTHEID

“Disease knows no Colour Bar” read the banners carried by African nurses who marched against Nursing apartheid. The nurses in both Johannesburg and Cape Town defied threats that disciplinary action would be taken against them. On the steps of the Johannesburg City Hall they took the Florence Nightingale vow, their lamps raised aloft.

J U N E 2 6

Cold skies and drizzle. The closed shops in Market street. The closed stalls at the Indian market. The solitary watchman at the closed factory gate. An air of desolation hangs over the city. Not the bustling morning crowds leaving the city stations and the bus stops. Not the coffee drinkers at the coffee carts. But empty trains and empty buses. The workers have stayed at home.

It is June 26, 1957 and Protest Day. It is a day of protest and demand — protest against the intolerable pass laws and the monster of apartheid, and for a minimum wage of one pound a day. There are holidays in the country marking some event or other but June 26 is the truly national day, a day that has come to mean so much in the lives of the people of the country. It is the day of “prayer, mourning and dedication.” It was on this day in 1950 that the general strike against the Nationalists took place. It was on this day in 1952 that the first batch of volunteers went into action and launched the Defiance Campaign that shook the citadel of apartheid to its very foundations. It was on this day that the Congress of the People meeting at Kliptown adopted the Freedom Charter and laid the foundations of a just South African society of the future. Later generations will remember June 26, 1957 as the day on which the workers stayed at home in the year of the bus boycott, in the year of the treason trial, in the year when the people hit back. June 26 is the peoples’ day, born of travail and tempered in the heat of struggle. On that day the people dedicate themselves anew to the struggle for freedom.

* * * *

One pound a day for the factory worker who today cannot buy what he makes. One pound a day for the miner who earns his phthisis and goes home broken and to die. One pound a day for the farm labourer who today ploughs the bitter furrow of misery. One pound a day for the builder of mansions who lives in a shack . . . A minimum wage of one pound a day for all the workers in the land. One pound a day. Five pounds a week. More food to eat, clothes, warmth. A little light in the deep night of poverty. Freedom from pass laws; freedom from the midnight police terror. Freedom from “ghost squads” haunting the street corners. Freedom from prisons and forced farm labour — the horned fingers and welts ploughed into sorry flesh. Freedom to walk without fear as the companion of the heart . . .

* * * *

It is now routine practice that whenever the people protest, the police rush in uninvited to “protect” them — with bullets, batons, handcuffs. Whenever the people protest it is seen as the work of agitators and trouble-makers. The bus boycott showed what the gratuitous police action means. Mr. Schoeman saw in the bus boycott a trial of strength between the government and the African National Congress. If, indeed, it was a trial of strength, then the people have scored a resounding victory.

And, like the Government that gave the cue, the Transvaal Chamber of Industries saw June 26 as a trial of strength. Like the government, too, it resorted to threats and intimidation and decided on a “tough” line against the workers. “Leniency and indulgence at this juncture would be followed by dire consequences”, the Chamber warned. Absence from work on June 26 would constitute a serious breach of contract; illegal absenteeism would be dealt with by way of summary dismissal, and banishment from urban areas would be visited on those guilty of misconduct and disregard of the law. These were no idle threats. Sackings and victimisations have followed in the wake of June 26.

The press did everything in its power to water down the peoples’ protest. It tried to sow nettles of doubt and despair in the ranks of the people — and failed. It appealed to a fictitious loyalty of the worker to his firm — in vain. For the worker owes no loyalty to a firm which pays him starvation wages — and can owe none. Nor does the worker belong to the bosses, though the Chamber may rail at those so-called agitators who would pollute “our labour force.” OUR labour force! The impudence of it. The worker is a worker in his own right, owing loyalty to his people and his fellow-workers. And so the workers stayed at home.

* * * *

By “How many came to work today?”

ALFRED
HUTCHINSON

“Kuze — None”. Not One. The outspread hands of the watchman at the closed factory gate.

(Continued on page 14)

The granite hard facade of the Nationalists has begun to crack. Vigorous new forces are rising in the country, says this review of the last parliamentary session and the approaching elections.

THE RISING TIDE

By L. BERNSTEIN

Another evil and disastrous session of Parliament has ended. And with it has ended the second five-year term of Nationalist legislation. From here until early 1958, the verbal cut and parry between an undistinguished opposition and a fanatic Government shifts to the vote-gathering platforms of the forthcoming election.

Already, in the dying days of the recent session of Parliament, attempts have been made to shape the outlines of that contest. Already, all the hoary platitudes of Nationalist Party electioneering — of which even Parliamentary dotards grow tired between elections — have been dusted off and trotted forth for the multitudes to gape at. Already in his final and characteristically bloodless oration to Parliament, Mr. Strijdom has returned to the tried and tested 1953 formula of simultaneous United Party sabotage of South Africa and United Party plotting of Black-White equality, as the keynote of the coming months.

On the surface it would appear that once again the election is to be fought in an empty void of policy, parroting the victorious slogans of the 1953 campaign which have long lost their freshness and reappear now faded, lustreless and insipid. For such an election the stage is being carefully set by the Government, in the hope of producing only another, more tedious, more enervating repetition of the dreary contest of 1953. From such an election, with all the real and vital issues of South Africa's future confined like skeletons in a cupboard into which the public may not pry, there can result only a new Nationalist victory, with perhaps an increased majority.

A Break with the Old

If there is a lack of enthusiasm for the coming election amongst the supporters of the opposition it is because already the deadening possibility of such an election is paralysing their initiative, and giving rise to an air of pessimistic defeatism. There is a tradition in South Africa that electoral campaigns centre around trivialities and eschew deep issues of policy; and it is possible that those who are already gloomy of the future realise the difficulty of breaking that tradition while the United Party remains the cornerstone of the electoral opposition to Nationalism.

But if that tradition is not broken, the Parliamentary system in South Africa will continue to decline, until it passes quietly away into the history of the past. If it is to be broken, this is the time to do it, for during the past six months the apparent granite-hard facade of Nationalism has begun to crack, and the real weaknesses and instability of the house that Strijdom built have been revealed. The Wassenaar breakaway was a straw in the wind. Before that there had been the revolt of the Pretoria University Professors against the packing of the Senate; and after it there was the more significant dispute within the Dutch Reformed Church over the so-called "church clause" of the Native

Laws Amendment Act. These were the symptoms of the weakness, and not the source of it. By themselves these sporadic outbreaks of dissension amongst the former 'hard-core' of Nationalism changed little and accomplished little. Self-deceiving politicians sought to attach greater meaning and significance to them than they merited; but in doing so they glossed over the really significant process that has been going on, unremarked, in the thinking and outlook of South Africans of all kinds, which has created the atmosphere in which these minor revolts and about-turns become comprehensible pointers to a change that is growing to maturity.

New Life

There are many who think that South Africans, especially European South Africans, have become so ossified and fixed in their ideas that they alone, of all living creatures, are no longer capable of growth and change. How strongly the past six months have contradicted them.

Life has forced the most hidebound from the cast-iron shells of their former prejudices. August University professors lead demonstration marches through the city streets under a battery of Security Branch cameras. White nurses join with Non-White to strike a political blow against Government policy. General Selby and flag-waving Senator Heaton Nicholis join with Bishop and Race Relations Institute President to sponsor a Defence Fund for a varied collection of Congress leaders, trade unionists and Communists accused of treason. That venerable pillar of traditional South African liberalism, Senator Edgar Brookes casts aside a life-time of belief to proclaim that the "necessity of gradualness is now less important than the necessity for some immediate action" in regard to enfranchising Non-Europeans. Churchmen of many denominations, steeped in the tradition of "rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's" openly proclaim their intention of breaching the spirit of the Native Laws Amendment Act. The tiny remnants of a Labour Party, eclipsed and almost forgotten since 1948, discover again the militant crusading spirit of its early founders, and emerges with its tiny group of M.P's to become the real spearhead of the Parliamentary opposition, approaching close to the position of spokesmen for the Non-European liberation movement in the seats of the mighty. Secure, sheltered ladies from middle class homes proceed from their first cautious "sashing" of Cabinet Ministers to forthright denunciations of passes for African women, and stand tolling the bell in public demonstration against Nationalist apartheid legislation. Conservative European trade unions, mummified in an apartheid straitjacket of their own tailoring, find breath to make a stinging denunciation of the Native Labour Act and of the very sections of the Industrial Conciliation Act which they themselves supported two years ago. The Liberal Party members emerge from the ivory towers of academic debate about "qualifications" for the franchise, which

characterised their first three years of life, to take an active part in women's multi-racial demonstrations against pass laws and to support the Treason Trial Accused. From the heart of the seemingly changeless citadel of White South Africa, the United Party, Sir de Villiers Graaff breaks with the past to proclaim the United Party's intention of amending the Suppression of Communism Act (which his own party, under the leadership of Strauss, declared did not go far enough) of narrowing down the definition of "Communism" and restoring the right of everyone accused under the Act to trial before the courts. One of the pillars of Nationalist strength, the Dutch Reformed Church begins to talk of a multi-racial conference to reach basic agreement on fundamentals of policy; and thousands of nameless, unorganised European men and women change the brands of their cigarettes because the Congress movement has called for a boycott of an allegedly Nationalist controlled cigarette and tobacco manufacturing concern.

Sign of the Times

Cynics will claim — with some justification — that for all that, the burgeoning forth of new ideas and new outlooks has accomplished nothing and changed nothing. During the very period of this growth and development, the Nationalist Government has carried through perhaps its most sinister, far-reaching and reactionary legislative programme of any Parliamentary session. True. But that fact cannot obscure the other truth of this period; and that is that during this session, for the first time during their ten years of office, the Nationalist Government has been impelled to withdraw two major pieces of ideological legislation — the proposed steeply increased poll tax for Africans, and the section of the University apartheid measure which would have closed the doors of all existing "mixed" Universities to Non-White students. Whatever the technical explanations produced by the Government to explain these second thoughts, the fact remains that, like the outbreaks of dissension amongst the Nationalists themselves, *these are the first temporary results of the new directions in which South African citizens are beginning to seek the answers to their country's problems.*

It is this atmosphere of radical departures from the past that prepares the ground for dissension in the ranks of the Nationalist Party, for the opening of a miniscule breach between government and church, for the outburst in Parliament by Nationalist member Basson against the incompatibility of apartheid at home and good relations with African states abroad. And it is also in this atmosphere that the 1950 Nationalist dreams about "apartheid for the next five hundred years" begin to disappear into mist, and the Government comes face to face with the hard reality that already the tide is running the other way.

Playing Safe

If the Government now seeks to turn away from the deep controversies which have rocked the country during the past year, and to campaign on the safe and stultifying platitudes outlined by Mr. Strijdom, it is because they hope to divert the tide of new ideas, of awakened militancy and of democratic awareness which is rising throughout the land. There is officially inspired rumour that the most fa-

natic of the cabinet, Dr. Verwoerd, will be jettisoned to save the Nationalist ship. These are diversions, designed to trap the opposition and to lead the United Party astray. Already there are signs that they may succeed, and that the United Party will turn away from the vigorous new forces which are rising throughout the country, and fall back on the old, well-worn and eternally hopeless patterns of the past, the patterns of appeasing the most backward of the voters in their most backward outlooks. The markedly traditional, ultra-conservative tone of de Villiers Graaff's platteland speeches, contrasting so sharply with his Johannesburg attack on the Suppression of Communism Act and call for a "native middle class" with a modicum of property and legal rights, is signal of the danger that the United Party and the opposition may yet be induced to enter the election on the Government's terms. That way lies disaster, and the frittering away of the glittering possibilities of Nationalist election defeat which now exist.

There are some in the Congress movement, and many amongst the Non-White peoples, who disregard the elections and the whole electoral struggle as inconsequential and of no concern. From the right premise — that the history of South Africa cannot be made without the Non-White peoples — they draw the wrong conclusions — that anything not done by the Non-White people themselves is of no importance. It is time to knock that false conclusion on the head. *The truth is that the whole rising tide of new ideas amongst White South Africans has been engendered by the militant upsurge, the mass struggles and the uncompromisingly democratic claims of the Non-White peoples.* The liberation movement and its Congress-alliance spearhead has set the stage in which the new currents of White opinion have begun to run. It has produced the mass ferment in which the timid hearted amongst the White opposition have taken courage, in which the ideas which yesterday seemed wild-eyed and radical appear today sane and sensible, and in which the progressive and decent aspirations of White South Africans begin to take shape as the weapons of a possible victorious electoral assault on the Nationalist Government.

It is customary in these days for there to be talk of electoral "united fronts" against the Nationalist Government. Certainly, at the moment, there is room for some non-aggression pact between the United Party, Labour and Liberal candidates, or even for a unity agreement, based on an equitable division of seats. But for the Congress movement to think and talk, at this stage of South African development, of a "United Front" which will enfold Congress extra-parliamentary struggle and United Party electoral campaigns in a single camp, would be unrealistic and visionary. And yet this is not the time for Congress to fold its tents, and leave the scene to the electoral machines of the Parliamentary parties. The Congress movement has started the whole European opposition on a forward surge. This is its contribution to the possibility of electoral defeat for Nationalism. *And during the coming months, that unique contribution will be enlarged by the extent to which the Congresses carry the whole Non-European people forward into wider action against the Government, and in so doing, lift the European movement forward towards possible electoral victory, as the comet carries its flaming tail.*

ALGERIA

The Mollet Government in France was brought down by the very factor which kept it in power for so long: France's disastrous war in Algeria. A Socialist Government, it was maintained by the support of the right-wing parties, because early on it had surrendered to the settlers' policy of brutal repression. It was overthrown because France has become increasingly unable to pay the bill for this policy.

In this article, DESMOND BUCKLE, a frequent contributor on African affairs to this journal, describes the methods used by the French occupying armies in Algeria and the furore created in France by the exposure of these facts.

One night towards the end of May over 300 men of the Grande-Kabylie village of Melouza were massacred, and only a day later 37 Muslim farm workers of the Oranais district were brutally killed. These incidents were seized upon by the French Government to justify its army-occupation methods in Algeria, and to discredit all those Frenchmen calling for negotiations with Algerian leaders to bring the ghastly two-and-a-half year old Algerian war to an end.

The French Foreign Ministry claimed that the Melouza massacre confirmed what the French have said so often at the United Nations and elsewhere: that a French withdrawal from Algeria would lead to a "veritable blood-bath" in that country. (This did not explain however, how it was the Melouza blood-bath took place while 60,000 French troops were in Algeria!)

FLN-MNA Rivalry?

The killings have been attributed to two causes: intense and bitter rivalry between the FLN (Front de Liberation Nationale) and the only other important Algerian national movement, the M.N.A. (Mouvement Nationale Algerienne); and sanctions said to have been declared by the Liberation Army, the military force of the FLN, against all villages which rally to the French. These sanctions were said to be part of a directive which, very conveniently it seems, fell into the hands of the French forces six weeks before the Melouza massacre. According to the directive, the troops of the Liberation Army were to

"burn all villages seeking the protection of the French forces and destroy all males over 20 years of age living in them."

Le Monde made much of the rivalry between the FLN and the MNA, claiming that Melouza was situated in an area where MNA influence was strong. This paper claimed that the FLN had taken a decision to exterminate the forces of the MNA which were under the command of one Si Haoues. However, at a press conference in Tunis, two days after the appearance of this article, the FLN delegation in Tunisia dramatically produced Si Haoues who turned out to be a member of the Liberation Army operating in the Grande-Kabylie region.

This Melouza massacre has been used to divert attention from the charges of torture and maltreatment which have been laid against the French forces in Algeria, and which have rocked France over the last few months.

White-wash Commission

The charges were first made by *L'Humanite* last year and were dismissed by the Mollet Government and its supporters among the press as "Communist propaganda". However, other newspapers began publishing similar reports and soon denunciation of the behaviour of the French troops came, though in a more indirect but no less unequivocal manner, from the archbishops and cardinals of France. The matter could no longer be hushed up. So on October 26 last year the National Assembly appointed seven members of the Commission of the Interior to go to Oran and inquire into the alleged maltreatment of certain detained persons. No Communist was included in this commission although the Communist Party, with 150 seats, is the largest in the National Assembly. Reaction was, however, well represented in the person of M. Isorni, an unregenerate Vichyist.

For two months the commission, which was headed by the Socialist M. Provo, did not budge from Paris. Then it spent a few days in Oran and after another three months issued a truly remarkable report. Only 6 out of the 7 members of the Provo Commission signed the report. The seventh, the Radical M.P., M. Hovanian, re-

fused to support what he described as "a collection of facts . . . which appear to be proof of police methods incompatible with the true mission of the police."

Despite all the reports and statements made by reservists and others who actually witnessed the torturing of Algerian prisoners which were appearing daily in the French press, the Provo Commission claimed that there were no signs of torturing in Algeria.

The Provo Commission paid warm tribute to Robert Lacoste, the Resident-Minister, and the men under him. They were men upon whom circumstances had imposed a particularly harassing task. They had taken on very heavy responsibilities. Tell us of jobs serving the interests of the country which are carried on in equally atrocious conditions, was the Provo Commission's final challenging flourish on behalf of those operating the policy of "pacification".

The Provo Commission's report did not silence the protests about the methods of the French authorities in Algeria, nor did the confiscation of issues of French newspapers and the banning in Algeria of all except the publications of the extreme right.

Eye-Witness Accounts

Le Monde published extracts from a book by M. P-H. Simon in which the author gave eye-witness accounts of soldiers, officers, priests and of victims of the tortures. It included in all their horror details of beatings, of the application of fan electric current to the eyes, ears and sexual organs of the victims, and blows with a horse-whip on the soles of the feet and other tender parts of the body.

These revelations were confirmed by M. Servan-Schreiber, a journalist on the staff of *L'Express*, who had served his term as a reservist in Algeria. And General de Bollardiere, in command of a sector in Algeria approved Servan-Schreiber's articles after the Minister of Defence had ordered the latter to be prosecuted for "demoralising the army". For his own offence the General was ordered to be confined in a fortress for 60 days, after which he was to be sent to a remote command in French Equatorial Africa.

But that was by no means the

end of troubles for M. Bourguès-Maunoury, Minister of Defence in the Mollet Government. He received a letter from Professor Peyrega, Dean of the Faculty of Laws at Algiers University, describing the shooting of an unarmed Muslim by a parachutist in an Algiers street which he had witnessed. Professor Peyrega also wrote to the Minister of Education asking to be relieved of his post.

Reports of terror, multiple executions, horrors perpetrated in the concentration and detention camps, arbitrary arrests and the sudden disappearance of people poured into France despite the strict censorship.

Suicide Shock

In March came the report of the death by suicide of Me. Ali Boumendjel, a noted young Algerian advocate, Member of the World Council of Peace, who had been held for six weeks by the parachutists of General Massu. Me. Boumendjel was said to have jumped to his death from the sixth floor of the special prison in which he was held and where he had been subjected to constant and prolonged interrogations. He was said to have made a previous unsuccessful attempt to take his own life about a fortnight before. So the parachutists make arbitrary arrests and have their own special prisons in which they "interrogate" their prisoners! Only a few weeks before Boumendjel's death, Mohammed Larbi Ben M'Hidi, one of the Algerian leaders, had been found hanged in his cell in very suspicious circumstances. Yet Mollet at a press conference in New York claimed that no one had yet brought him details of what were called the "alleged atrocities committed by our troops."

Boumendjel's death cause a profound shock throughout France. Since his arrest in early February his brother, an advocate at the Paris Bar, had made several representations to M. Mollet asking for his release or for the charges against him to be made known. M. Mollet had never even replied.

On receiving news of Boumendjel's death M. René Capitant, a former Cabinet Minister, and a leading jurist whose pupil Boumendjel had been at Algiers University, decided to break off in protest the course of lectures he was delivering at the Faculty of Laws in Paris. In his letter to the Minister of Education, M. Capitant complained of the use of

TREASON TRIAL PROFILE by VIC EDDY

If anything was needed to round off the fact that the 156 people on trial at the Drill Hall are a thoroughly representative lot, it is the presence of accused number 6, Pieter Beyleveld, a "ware Afrikaner" if ever there was one.

National Chairman of the Congress of Democrats, burly, genial Piet was born in the Orange Free State in circumstances that do not normally earmark a man for a career in the field of progressive politics. He grew up in the plateland among the bigotry and reaction normally associated with such places. However, it was our good fortune that Piet decided to join the army at the outbreak of World War II, when so many of his neighbours were violently opposed to South African participation in the war against Hitler. Obviously he was even then a man capable of thinking for himself—a gift that was to stand him in good stead in later years.

After a time of active service in the field he was appointed to run the Afrikaans section of the Forces Radio Station in Cairo—a job he fulfilled with considerable success.

Returning to the Union in 1945 he saw at once that the enemy he had been fighting for the previous five years not only remained but, as far as South Africa was con-

Pieter Beyleveld

cerned, continued to flourish, whether in the open like the Ossewa-brandwag or in the concealed silkiness of a Transvaler editorial. Piet saw even further, that a society based on racial exploitation and cheap labour politics would lead inexorably to naked fascism, whether under the name of baaskap, apartheid or White civilisation.

He joined the Springbok Legion and quickly rose to leadership. In 1953 he left his job to become national organiser for the Labour Party during the critical days of the general election. Some time later he joined the Textile Workers' union as full-time official and there continued that union's tradition of militancy with unabating vigour.

As chairman of the Congress of Democrats, Piet Beyleveld's dossier at The Grays grew into quite a sizeable document. He now sits with his fellow South Africans to answer a charge that he, Beyleveld, who has devoted his life to the welfare of his country, is guilty of treason to the state. He is a family man and the trial has hit him hard, but his faith in the future is unbounded. As we used to say in the old Legion days: "The Afrikaners are a great people; we've got Piet Beyleveld to prove it."

tortures to which "even at the height of the war we never subjected German prisoners".

Many distinguished Socialists wrote to Mollet pointing out that his actions were an insult to the memory of Jean Jaurès. One of them, M. Oreste Rosenfeld, Member of the Council of the French Union, has resigned from the French Socialist Party. France, he says, has no enemies worse than those who are forcing her to place Algeria under "a military occupation regime, an occupation that is unrestrained by the laws of war."

In the face of the protests of scores of leading educationists, scientists, lawyers, doctors, men of letters, and other public figures throughout France, the Mollet Government had to yield. A month before its fall it decided to appoint a "Commission for the Safeguarding of Individual Rights and Liberties in Algeria."

It was Clémenceau who once said: "When you wish to do nothing, you appoint a commission." It appears it is for the purpose of doing nothing that this Commission has been appointed. For Mollet, in a broadcast and both *Le Figaro* and *Le Populaire* which supported his Government, have all emphasised that the main task of the Commission is to interrogate all accusers, forcing them to prove their charges or face the consequences of failure to do so.

The spokesman of the Algerian National Council of the Revolution (FLN) has called upon the United Nations to investigate the Melouza affair and the general situation in Algeria.

It is clear that the Algerian situation is now beyond the control of whatever French Government is in power. Only through international action can an end be brought to this cruel war on the Algerian people.

— ON BANTU AUTHORITIES — NEW CALABASH FOR OLD

By RUTH FIRST

It happened in Sekhukhuniland some months ago, on December 19 to be exact. The men of the Pedi tribe squatted on the ground before 17 European officials, among them the Native Commissioner of Sekhukhuniland and the Chief Information Officer of the Native Affairs Department.

The officials addressed the tribe "... We have come to introduce this railway bus, secondary school, the clinic, post office and telephone ..."

Four sub-chiefs stood, one after the other and said the people wanted these things.

The Paramount Chief said: "I also stand for these things on condition that you people are not trying to trick us into accepting the Bantu Authorities Act."

Mr. Prinsloo, the Chief Information Officer stood up "Here is water, but your calabash is leaking. I've got a new one that doesn't leak."

The Chief asked what he meant.

Mr. Prinsloo said: "I give you a light if you do not see."

The Chief: "I will mend my calabash. I don't want yours."

Mr. Prinsloo: "I understand what you said and am pleased you accept these facilities."

Then he shook hands with the Chief and photographs were taken.

Mr. Prinsloo said he was thankful that the Chief was accepting the Bantu Authorities Act. The Chief said he was *not* accepting the Act ...

* * *

As blantant as all that? In essence, yes.

The version of the Native Affairs Department is a great deal fuller, graced with guile and fanciful idiom, yet the same horse-trading and bare-faced trickery peep through.

Dr. Verwoerd's last Christmas message to "the Bantu" hailed 1956 as "the year of the great tree" of Bantu authorities whose growth had to be nurtured. As the new year opened N.A.D. officials, together with officials from other government departments and certain "well-meaning" White and Bantu friends invaded Sekhukhuniland to "bring the Pedi the great harvest which would mean their new dawn." The tale is related with "pride and joy" (the rapturous language of the official journal 'Bantu-Bantoe', not mine.)

By their acceptance of Bantu authorities said this journal 50,000 Pedi, one seventieth of the population of the African areas, was assembled under one tribal authority. Only another 69 such efforts, the department exhorted its officials in an editorial "Shoulder to the Wheel" signed by Dr. Eiselen, and *all* the Bantu areas would be under tribal authorities.

"Follow the example of Pediland, the N.A.D. is standing by to help!"

Like a group of starry-eyed nature lovers the official government party had driven into "Pediland." "Our thoughts went back eight months when we travelled to the kraal of Chief Moroamocha Sekhukhune to admire the beauties of the country, to

get to know the people better and to drink from the clear fountain of the great past of this tribe ..."

The Day Will Break . . .

There is the visit to the local tribal school, with the passing propaganda for "development along their own community lines" that these future fathers and mothers of "the children of Thulare" are so privileged to get, and then the artfully timed requests from the Chairman of the Bantu School committee and half-brother of the tribal head for some of those things whose absence darkens the horizon of the tribe: a police station, better hospital services, schools, roads and transport.

The officials explain patiently that these things are all part of Bantu development plans and it is to make this clear that the official party has come.

At the chief's kraal, Sekhukhune is surrounded by his councillors and a great assembly of tribesmen. The speakers go straight to the point.

This December 10 would be the dawn for the Pedi. "*Laat die dag breek en laat daar lig oor die Pedistam wees, dan sal Stamhoof Sekhukhune sien dat Pretoria naby hierdie hoofstaat is.*"

To arch propagandist Prinsloo, a fluent Pedi linguist, was left the most ticklish operation. "There is one question that I must ask you. Only one, but you must give an answer to this question today. The question is: if you want to fetch water, will you use a calabash with holes? All the water for which you thirst, primary schools, a high school, a clinic, and all the good things that people from the capital have informed you about, can be created if you would only take the calabash to carry the water." The tribe has been shown the calabash — the tribal authority. "*Daar is die water en hier is die dop.*"

The tribe could not get all the things it had wanted so long until the tribal authority was registered under the Act. "How can the government recognise you if you do not want to be recognised?"

The tribe grasped at the promise of schools and roads. To the Native Affairs Department acceptance meant acceptance of the Bantu Authorities Act. The Government team departed jubilant at its triumph: Sekhukhuniland was left behind mulling over the baffling procedure at the meeting which dropped into its lap the very Bantu authority it was objecting to, and seething with discontent at the deportation of two leading tribesmen whom the government subsequently victimised for their opposition to Bantu authorities.

* * *

Passed in 1950 the Bantu Authorities Act provided for the setting up of "tribal authorities" consisting of chiefs and headmen with certain administrative, and judicial authority over their communities. The new authorities were not only to be tribally based, even in areas where several tribes have up to now come under joint authorities, but the whole system was based not on elections but nominations.

By 1953, fifteen new tribal authorities had been created, among them those of Rustenburg, Sibasa

and Marico districts of the Transvaal, of Thaba Nchu and Witzieshoek in the Free State where the authorities replaced the Reserve Boards which existed previously.

Mr. C. B. Young, Under-Secretary for the Bantu Areas described the Authorities as the government's great gift for the Bantu people, the law which recognised the traditional form of Government of the Bantu and which gave the Africans back their inheritance.

Talk of tradition and inheritance obscures the really telling facts about Bantu authorities.

Behind Every Chief an Official

The powers of the new authorities include the levying of rates not to exceed £1 on each male adult African in the area, which will leave the authorities completely unable to adequately finance education, health, social, agricultural or any other services. For any advancement at all, the authorities will have to approach the government, cap in hand like street beggars, for the financial wherewithal.

Though it is said to do the opposite, this new variation of indirect rule will kill real chieftainship and tribal independence and self-rule, for in practice the authorities are a thin and transparent disguise for rule by the Native Affairs Department itself.

Behind every chief stands N.A.D. officialdom and nothing that the Department disapproves of will ever be tolerated.

Under-Secretary Young made this clear enough: "Chiefs who desire to accept the law should go to the Native Commissioner and tell them who their counsellors are. You may appoint new men who know about the things that are strange to the older people. But there is this stipulation: they must be men of the tribe who live and work among the tribe and they must not be breakers and resisters of the laws of the tribe and the country. The government must approve of them as law-abiding men who will be a real help to the Chief. If they are not suitable the government will not recognise them."

The Arm of the Government

Not only are the authorities emasculated of any real power (and what substitute, however "traditional", can there be for direct political representation in the governing bodies of the country?), but the chiefs and their councillors are to be turned into the mere instruments of apartheid. The Bantu Authorities are to be the long arm of the government among the tribes collecting the hated taxes; enforcing the cattle culling; making Africans pay for their own services; putting the pressure on the African women to queue for pass books. Conversely, when dissatisfaction mounts the anger of the people will be directed against these same Bantu Authorities, the closest and most familiar representatives of the tyranny.

Not that all this is yet clear in the countryside. Many of the areas that accepted Bantu Authorities were ensnared by the fanciful talk, mesmerised by these verbal juggling balls that the well-trained Verwoerd official flourishes in the air at the tribal indaba. The N.A.D. carried many of the tribal assemblies with it by sheer sleight of hand and artful manoeuvring.

Other gatherings fell for Bantu authorities because the overall scheme is so intangible, so nebulous

and vague, especially in its still early stages. As one tribesman put it: "What is this strange egg that the government brings us? Will it hatch scorpion or snake? None can tell till it is hatched." Many were credulous enough to believe the egg might, after all, be edible.

The Bag of Tricks

There is yet another technique carried in the N.A.D. magic bag. That is the use of the dissident elements within the tribe, the men with their eyes on position, intent on elbowing the chiefs out of the way or on winning promotion in the teaching profession, or currying favour with the government. BANTU is littered with the fawning adulatory tributes to the work of the government wrung not from the heart but from the sixth sense some men develop for furthering their own ends.

In some areas Bantu Authorities were hoisted on the backs of their most unpopular and despised chiefs.

In yet other areas chiefs were forced to recognise that they had little free choice in the matter. In too many cases the price of saying NO to the government has been deposal and deportation. So the tribes, through their chiefs and headmen, agreed to accept Bantu Authorities . . . but that by no means implies that they welcome them.

Stripping it Bare

If 1956 was earmarked by the N.A.D. as the year of great advance for Bantu Authorities, 1957 may yet turn out to be the year of the great disillusionment. Sekhukhuniland and the Pedi people are simmering with anger; the Zeerust area is up in flames over the deposal of Chief Abraham Moiloa; in the Pietersburg Reserves in the Northern Transvaal strong opposition to the imposition of passes on women is spreading; and in Rustenburg even some of the chiefs who have for long sided with the government have asked for the suspension of passes for women.

Many others areas are outwardly calm but the slightest spark could set off new fires.

Yet the Native Affairs Department continues undaunted with its rural pilgrimages, singing its own praises.

It is rather like the fairy story of the Emperor's new clothes. Beguiled by the boasts of his unscrupulous tailors that they could sew garments which to the stupid would seem invisible, and which only the wise would be able to see, the Emperor ordered a gala day on which he would parade in his new finery. Fawning courtiers never told him the truth for fear they would be judged foolish and they bowed and scraped before him as he swaggered down the streets — stark naked.

The loudly trumpeted gains of the Native Affairs Department will turn out to be equally illusory. The Department believe only what it wants to believe. From Minister Verwoerd, through all its subordinate ranks, the N.A.D. has practised a complete self-deception on itself. It has convinced itself that it has built a great empire of support among the African people in the rural areas. But the titters from the crowd as the naked Emperor parades through the streets are already becoming audible, and in time the gales of laughter may force the government to confront its naked self in the mirror. But by then it will be too late.

The writer is the American woman who was arrested and confined in the Johannesburg Fort to be deported under escort from the Union. An urgent application to the Supreme Court obtained her release. Her case and an action for damages against the Minister of the Interior are still to be heard in the courts. This article was written from Salisbury after Mrs. Hooper had left the Union.

'On the Wave of the Future'

By MARY LOUISE HOOPER

Farewells are always sad, when parting from dear friends and a loved land. I have not lived here long: a little less than two years have passed since I first touched these shores.

Despite their brevity, these months in South Africa have been the busiest, some of the happiest, and surely the most informative of my life. I have never crammed so much "learning" into a few short months before! And most of the "learning" has been with my heart, not so much with my head. Learning about "bans", and midnight arrests, and police provocation at peaceful demonstrations; about "women's passes" and child labour; about the one pound ten or two pound "wage" for African farm workers and the true conditions in the mines; about the criminal cruelty of "Group Areas", and the monstrous threat of the new "Native Laws Amendment Bill." Learning!

Till We Meet Again . . .

This kind of learning, which has made the struggle of the Non-White people of South Africa my own, does not come about through the study of books, but through love for *people*. And it is the love which I bear to many, many individuals — of all races — in this land that has given me the insight which prompts me to say, not "farewell" to South Africa, but "au revoir".

No land can possibly *fare well* which is virtually ruled by its Cabinet Ministers, who possess arbitrary and in some cases dictatorial powers. The bans and banishments imposed at will by Minister Swart, the dictatorial rule of Minister Verwoerd in the Department of Native Affairs, the arbitrary power of summary deportation possessed by Minister Donges —

all these are illustrative of the sinister and ever swifter sweep toward dictatorship and a Nazi-like "police state" in this fair land of South Africa.

I might mention in passing that I lived for six months in Nazi Germany, just before World War II, and to me the ever-closer similarity of the two regimes is frightening.

My Deportation

Take my deportation case, an example with which I have had "personal experience". Every European alien, every British subject, no matter if domiciled in this country for 20 or 30 years, if he or she has not become a South African citizen, would do well to stop and consider the direct implications of this case in their own lives. They, too, could be arrested without warning, having done absolutely nothing against any law of the land, be lodged in jail without a charge of any kind being preferred against them, and be deported "under escort" (as my letter from Minister Donges ordered), without a chance to pack a suitcase or adjust their business and personal affairs, if the Honourable Minister should so order it. His discretion in the matter of a deportation is absolute, limited only by his "bona fides"—which "good faith" cannot be proved or disproved, since it is a matter of the mind and heart.

I might add, for the information of "prospective deportees" who may in some fashion displease the Hon. Minister, that the "loophole" in the law which made it possible for me to be freed from "The Fort" (after 5 days of imprisonment in the same cell with a murderer), has been firmly closed by amendment of the law, just a short time ago. The next candidate for deportation will remain in jail — if the Hon. Minister so decrees!

I quote the above example of a deportation case — my own — because I have had first hand experience with it, and because it well

illustrates the arbitrary and dictatorial powers of Cabinet Ministers in South Africa: which powers especially in the cases of Dr. Swart and Dr. Verwoerd, are rather growing than diminishing. And I repeat: I cannot say, with any sincerity, "Farewell" to a South Africa in which such conditions flourish, for it cannot, and will not *fare well*, and "au revoir" ("till we meet again") is so much more apposite.

How do I know this so surely? There are two simple but potent reasons for my conviction that great and radical changes will take place in South Africa within the next few years, which will — among much more important things! — make my return to my home here a certainty.

One World

In the first place, a great and radical change in the pattern of South African life will come about because it is not possible to isolate this land — however hard the Nationalists try — from the strong trend towards social equality, economic integration and non-racialism now sweeping through the nations "outside." This has truly become "one world", as the late Wendell Wilkie so aptly said; the tempering influence of the more progressive and "liberal" cultures of other nations cannot be negated by even the present desperate attempts of the Nationalists here to retain "White domination" at all costs. Through the world press, the wireless, literature, honest education, travellers from abroad, South African students and citizens travelling abroad — through all these avenues liberalising and integrating influences will seep in, slowly and unobtrusively perhaps, but none the less surely, and bring about social, economic and political change which will fit South Africa to take its proper, proud place among the other free nations of the world.

Secondly, a change will surely come, because it is also not possible.

(Continued on page 14)

A hundred schools contend

A description of the debate in China on literature, art and the sciences is given in these extracts from an article by Chang Chih-ching, editor of a leading Peking newspaper.

PICK UP any newspaper or magazine in China these days and you will read of clashes between different views in literature, art and science.

What is the real value of the poems of Li Yu? He was a tenth-century emperor who lost his kingdom while he revelled in music, dance and women. His early verses were about the gay life and loves of the court. His later ones, written in captivity, were full of yearning for his native land. One school of thought denies hotly that Li Yu has anything to say to the Chinese people of today. What is there in common, they ask, between the joys and woes of a feudal ruler and those of the working folk? And Li Yu's later poems, they argue, were only the sighs of a monarch who had lost his domain.

The other side takes the opposite view. No one can dispute, they say, that Li Yu's poems are beautiful and moving. They have inspired patriotism in generations of readers. The love poems breathe genuine feeling. Just because the feudal system provided princes with harems, there is no reason to assume that such men had no real personal attachments. Two or three years ago, very few people would have said publicly that poems written by a dissolute emperor were anything but "feudal culture" to be swept away.

This debate involves two questions. What is the proper attitude, in our socialist society with its Marxist historical-materialist ideas, toward the classics of China's past? What is the relationship between the ideas of an author and the artistic value of his work?

IN SCIENCE, dogmatic preconceptions are being blown away by free, hard-hitting exchanges of ideas based on fact. There is a resounding debate between geneticists of the Michurin outlook and those of the Mendel-Morgan school, once not given a fair hearing or amount of research facilities. The issue is whether acquired characteristics (in plants and animals) can be transmitted by inheritance. It has obvious practical significance for agriculture and stock-breeding. Now that the wrong, arbitrary labelling of Michurinism as "Marxist" and Mendel-Morganism as "bourgeois" has been abandoned, it is possible to argue their merits in deliberate scientific fashion, carefully examining the results obtained by each.

Historians are debating various versions of the development of Chinese society, ancient and modern. The Communist Party has announced that it will produce no "authorised" version of its own history; instead it will publish material from its records. Professional historians, both Party and non-Party, can do the writing.

On May 2, 1956, Chairman Mao Tse-tung issued the call: "Let flowers of all kinds bloom together, let diverse schools of thought contend." On May 26, Lu Ting-yi, another member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, explained the policy further to a large body of China's leading intellectuals. Among these were hundreds of scientists and scholars assembled in Peking to draft a 12-year programme for the development of natural and social sciences. Lu advised his hearers to "study Marxism-Leninism and learn bet-

ter ways of applying it to the conditions in China." But, he said, "idealists opposed to Marxism-Leninism can voice their ideas too — they have every right to say what they like . . . the way to take is that of free discussions, a battle of ideas, a battle of theories. We are not afraid to accept the challenge . . . We combat the idealism of the bourgeoisie through free discussion."

IN A RECENT article published in the Peking People's Daily, Prof. Cheng Hsin of Peking University, a follower of Kant in philosophy, spoke of the mistake of automatically "linking idealist philosophy and ideas with reactionary politics."

Naturally, it is the desire of every person to reconcile his philosophy with the things of which he approves in action. Without open contention, people like Prof. Cheng could not argue things out in the way they wished.

Some intellectuals, on the other hand, confined their reading to a few Marxist-Leninist works. In the sciences, they consulted only those published in the U.S.S.R. Building engineers in Wuhan, which has stiflingly hot summers, constructed houses according to specifications used in the Soviet Union, where the chief problem through most of the year is to keep in the warmth. Parrot-minded people applied the epithet of "idealist" to critics of the scientist T. D. Lysenko when his ideas held sway in Soviet biology. When Lysenko was criticised in the U.S.S.R., they cried down anyone who still thought he was right in many things.

"People are dogmatists in scientific research because they are too lazy to think," Lu Ting-yi said. "They fob us off with quotations in place of hard work."

Now facilities are being provided for every kind of useful research. Scientific journals and books are being brought in from all countries and translated into Chinese on a large scale. Publishers and editors are urged to print varying views on scientific subjects, and to do so promptly.

STILL ANOTHER QUESTION was how far contention should go in the universities. Should not teachers keep their disagreement to themselves until one side or another was conclusively proved right? Was it right to expound un-Marxist theories to young students, unequipped for correct analysis?

The answer has now been given. Courses on the philosophies of Kant, Hegel and Bertrand Russell, all of which are the opposite of Marxist materialism, have been set up in the main universities. In preparation are courses on classical Greek philosophy and modern idealist schools like positivism and neo-positivism. China's juridical faculties will teach Roman law and examine capitalist legal theories. This does not mean we accept the assumptions of idealist, or bourgeois schools of thought. It does mean that we intend to study and analyse the works of these schools, discuss them freely and critically, and absorb their useful and rational elements. This will broaden and stimulate our scholarship.

The book-work and class hours required of university students are being reduced to give them time for independent reading and thinking. Marxists are confident that, in open contention with other types of outlook, their viewpoint will win, be enriched and strengthened and attract more adherents.

SHOULD THE COLOURED SEATS BE BOYCOTTED?

In the June issue of Fighting Talk Mr. Alex Hepple, M.P. contributed an article in which he said "NO!"

YES!

write SACPO President GEORGE PEAKE, and
LIONEL MORRISON.

The whole basis of the vote in South Africa is one of discrimination, apartheid and deceit. Even before their transfer to a separate roll the effectiveness of the Coloured vote had dwindled steadily, especially since 1945 when compulsory registration for White but not for Coloured voters was introduced. The latest census registers 200,000 Coloured men of 21 years and over, but of all the potential Coloured voters in the Cape, there are only 47,874 registered and of these only 31,158 actually voted. It is common knowledge that the vote tests are not fairly carried out, and the property, language and education test qualifications turn the vote into a mere crumb for the Coloured people. The background of discrimination and the history of the Non-European vote, the registration procedure the prospect of losing a day's work and pay and other factors have made the Coloured people apathetic to the vote. But the terms of the 1956 Separate Representation of Voters' Act will probably be the greatest deterrent of all.

Apathy and Disgust

The Coloured people as a whole have shown their apathy and disgust at their removal to a separate roll. The A.P.O. a Coloured body with mass Coloured support, as early as 1909 demanded the extension of the vote to the other provinces. Interference with the Coloured vote resulted in the formation of the Franchise Action Council, which had the support of most of the Coloured people. In March 1951 this F.A.C. organised a successful mass demonstration against the proposed franchise legislation. In 1953 SACPO came into being as a result entirely of the threat to the Coloured vote. Statements by SACPO, the Non-European Unity Movement and influential Coloured leaders were issued; big demonstrations resulted and successful court cases took place.

Surely all this is evident of the strong and uncompromising feeling the Coloured people have

against their removal from the common voters' roll and the establishment of Coloured seats.

A Platform?

When do we participate in a body like parliament? That depends on the political development of the people concerned, the time and the place. If the African National Congress in 1936 had decided to boycott parliament when the African people were not so well organised and when parliament could still be exploited, it would have been disastrous. But as the people more and more realised the ineffectiveness of parliament, as it became more and more a clique of big landowners, mining magnates and Nationalist farmers, the use of parliament as a platform for our ideas and to carry the fight into the ranks of the enemy was lost. More and more the people turned to extra-parliamentary methods. Already in the A.N.C. strong groups are advocating the immediate implementation of the 1949 Action Plan which calls for the boycott of all such bodies as parliament. The putting up in 1936 of Native representatives was politically right. The campaign had the desired effect of strengthening Congress organisation, of making use of parliament to spread Congress ideas, and of exposing the ineffectiveness of parliament.

To use parliament again at this mature stage of development of the African would be foolish and retrogressive.

The Coloured people have, by hard experience, learned the simple truth that what happens to the African people today, happens to them tomorrow. The vote is no exception. Just as 20 years of representation has on the whole brought very little success to the African people, so the Coloureds know that 100 years of separate representation will bring them no good.

However, the Coloured people are in an even better position today than the Africans were in 1936. They have developed a strong objection to voting on a separate roll and putting up "separate" candidates.

Some of us are so imbued with the idea of exploiting all avenues of representation that when parliament is immediately involved, we run amok with our ideas of "taking the fight into the enemy ranks and putting up candidates."

The political forum gained in using parliament today is not worth the slave mentality that will be instilled among the Coloured people. They are conscious today that separate representation is the scheme of the Herrenvolk to keep us in perpetual submission and apply the system of divide and rule.

The Stooges

Mr. Hepple and other "progressives" are most worried about the harm the stooges can do. Harm to whom? To the Government? To parliament? Or to the Coloured people?

Who are the four stooges going to bluff? Most probably the Whites, the disillusioned M.P.s and most likely, the world. BUT NOT THE COLOURED. Even if 40,000 odd Coloured people vote for them, does it mean they represent the million odd Coloureds?

Mr. Hepple writes as though all the Coloured people are going to vote. The Coloured workers who form 90 per cent of the million odd Coloured people have not the vote, never exercise it and are quite conscious of the fact that whoever gets into parliament does not represent them but a few privileged middle class Coloureds.

The whole issue revolves round the Cape and not the whole of South Africa. In the Cape it is not only SACPO that stands for a boycott of the Coloured vote, but also the Non-European Unity Movement which does in effect have a certain following in the Cape. Already in the Cape the people are instilled with an overwhelming boycott consciousness. We do not agree with N.E.U.M. in certain respects but on this one issue we are in agreement.

So that in the Cape a maximum amount of support for a broad and representative Coloured front

against this particular measure could be formed.

Mr. Hepple says we must be ensured of complete success before we embark on any boycott or campaign. Since when do we presuppose complete success before we embark on any campaign? If that was so we would be waiting today for the Defiance cam-

paign to start. Many similar campaigns would never have come off.

We embark upon boycotts when we are sure the time is ripe and people are opposed to the measures concerned.

Only a determined, organised and positive boycott can serve the necessary political purpose: strengthen SACPO organisation, and thus heighten the political

consciousness of the Coloured people; and secondly, prevent stooges

Let us remind people what Mrs. Ballinger said in Parliament. She said that after 20 years in parliament she had achieved absolutely nothing for the African people. And now, after all this time, the same sort of representation has to be foisted on the Coloured people.

YES!

says
MYRTLE
BERMAN

I disagree with the conclusion reached by Mr. Hepple in his article "*The Coloured Seats: Should They Be Boycotted?*"* He says it would be wise for the Coloured peoples' organisations to reconsider their decision to boycott the forthcoming election. I feel that the boycott decision is a correct one.

My disagreements with Mr. Hepple stem from a different assessment of the role of parliament in the struggle for equal rights. For the Coloured people parliamentary representation, and therefore parliamentary democracy, is now a sham and an illusion. *Only because it is a meaningless force is it tolerated at all by the Government.* The Coloured people must look to the liberatory movement to free them from their oppression. Only the liberatory movement and its allies can effectively and consistently put forward the economic, political and social claims of the Non-European people. For this reason the government has done everything in its power to silence the peoples' organisations. They have not succeeded yet and I don't believe that they ever will. Similarly they have tried very hard to discredit these organisations — also unsuccessfully. I do not believe that an additional four government mouthpieces in parliament would be any more successful in "undermining the genuine organisations of the Coloured people."

No Real Platform

The African people have, in the past, had good and bad parliamentary representatives. They have had no hesitation or difficulty in rejecting their representatives' statements when necessary. Si-

* June Fighting Talk.

ilarly they rejected the governing political parties' representations of their desires and requirements. I am sure that the Coloured people will not secure any major alleviation of their disabilities through parliament as at present constituted. Therefore I disagree with Mr. Hepple that if opportunists had to capture these seats "it certainly would not fulfil the real purpose of parliamentary representation, providing a platform for dissent." Parliament was never supposed to provide a political platform for the Coloured or any other Non-European people. The Coloured people in the past were given the minimum political rights that the White parties felt they could get away with. Coloured women have never had the vote. No Coloured can be elected to Parliament or the provincial council.

There is definitely some value in having an additional four sympathetic members of Parliament who would render, in Mr. Hepple's words "a worthwhile service to the Coloured peoples' struggle." However, I feel that their value is limited. A too vociferous champion can at any time be removed by the government. In fact it has the strength to remove all the Coloured and African representatives whenever it chooses. But more important, the value of the Coloured representatives must be assessed against the following factors.

Peoples' Militancy

SACPO has taken the decision to boycott the elections. Whilst I do not hold that one must always agree with and not criticise the decisions of the peoples' organisations, I do feel that a great deal of weight must be attached to their decisions. In this case, resentment amongst the politically conscious section of the Coloured people is running high. There is no doubt that these people agree with Hepple that a full-scale boycott of the elections would be a proper way to demonstrate rejection of this inferior form of representation. The SACPO decision is a reflection of this feeling. *The need to capitalise on and not dissipate that mili-*

tancy outweighs all the disadvantages of a boycott.

Boycott Candidates

I do not dispute the validity of Mr. Hepple's arguments about the difficulty of a successful boycott and of the defeat a partial boycott would be. It is because of these arguments that I should like to put forward for consideration the tactic of putting up boycott candidates — a procedure adopted by the Irish Republic. Such candidates would give undertakings not to participate in parliamentary proceedings. They would make the minimum appearance required to retain their seats. This would prevent opportunists from gaining the seats and at the same time provide the psychological and political satisfactions of a boycott.

In the final analysis only the peoples' organisations can decide on the best boycott tactic. In this case it would depend on the degree of awareness and level of organisation of the Coloured people at the time. A 75 per cent or more complete abstention would be a victory even if four more Nationalist spokesmen went into parliament. If at most a fifty per cent boycott was anticipated then boycott candidates would be a better answer. Such candidates might get the support of those people who feel that they should vote. To get such candidates in would be a victory and the empty seats would be a permanent political demonstration of opposition.

I certainly agree with Hepple that an organised boycott requires no less activity than an election campaign. The boycott must not be allowed to degenerate into passivity.

To me there is no distinction between the proposed Union Council of Coloureds and Parliament. Both must be boycotted. Finally I would say it is the Coloured people by means of the boycott, and not as Mr. Hepple stated, Coloured representatives in Parliament who must show up separate representation for the travesty of democracy it is.

(Continued from page 3)

Seven tickets sold at Westbury station that morning.

Some statistics. An 80 per cent stay-away. No, 85 per cent. The figures spent Industria deserted, the machines still, the laundries and furniture factories whimpering to a stop. No tea in the offices. The 1 o'clock and 3 o'clock reminders of Black men carrying and fetching — for White men — and the yawning absence. The clamorous singing and dancing in Sophiatown streets as 5,000 pranced to a strike-day meeting. It all slipped into place.

* * *

No assault by the government on the Non-European people can cow them. No police brutality can frighten them. Every fresh attack calls for a counter-attack. Each blow struck is returned with good measure. The perpetual attacks of the Government have bred a will and determination to fight, and swell the ranks of those pledged to destroy it. A chain of unity is being forged link for link between the various racial groups

which must moor this country to safety in its drift towards the rapids.

There is expectancy in the country; a great waiting. But waiting not with folded arms, waiting for the moment to act. People are talking of freedom; working for freedom. There has grown up a readiness to sacrifice for the greater cause. The people have woken suddenly to their invincible might — and their enemies tremble. It is the sign of the times that people walked so far and so long during the bus boycott, and walked to victory. They now know that if they fight — no matter how long or bitterly, they will fight to victory. In the not too distant future is the June 26 which will be the consummation of all these Days: the shining goal of all the struggles waged. And so the people march each bitter mile on the hard road to freedom — but they march. They will look back, one day, on June 26, 1957 and remember, remember how on that cold, grey day they stayed at home to strike another blow for freedom.

'ON THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE'

(Continued from page 10)

sible to hold back the normal and inevitable development already well under way of four-fifths of the total population of this land. The Non-White people of South Africa have seen the light of Christianity (despite the tragic way in which at times its light has been obscured by the behaviour of the White man!); they have tasted the solid food of modern education and technology; some of them, in experience outside the walls of their "Union prison", have even sipped the strong wine of freedom. They are already stirring, not content to remain serfs and wage-slaves in the land of their birth. There must come a change, and such a change is already in the making. The persistent, patient pressure of determined but non-violent resistance from ten million voiceless, rightless human beings will bring about the change!

The Wave of the Future

It is not for this present gov-

ernment of South Africa to say whether such a change shall take place, or not: it will take place. It is not even for them to say *when* it will occur: events on the "wave of the future" (to quote Anne Lindbergh) have a way of choosing their appointed time! But it most gravely *is* the responsibility of this government to say *how* this inevitable change shall take place. Shall it be in blind passion, strife, and bitterness, leaving a legacy of hatred and division for our children's children in this lovely land? Or shall it be in a thoughtful arbitration, inter-racial co-operation and growing friendship, so that, when the change is complete, the same great hope can be cherished for the South Africa of the future that Abraham Lincoln expressed for the sadly divided United States after their Civil War:

"One nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all!"

books

Is the infatuation of the Afrikaner worker with apartheid a temporary aberration — or should it be written off as beyond redemption? Will the scales of deception fall from the Afrikaner's eyes or will he always remain a sworn enemy of democratic trade unionism?

These are questions not without practical relevance today and Solly Sachs' "Garment Workers in Action" sheds some useful light on the forces which have moulded the outlook of the Afrikaner worker.

During the industrial revolution of the 1920's, thousands of Afrikaner workers deserted the poverty of the platteland for the slums of the cities. Lacking skill or training they were paid starvation wages. Many of the newly-urbanised Afrikaner women workers entered the manufacturing industries — especially the clothing industry — where they were victims of low pay and unemployment, and lived under a cloud of impoverishment and frustration.

Between Two Poles

Against this backdrop, a bitter struggle was waged for the allegiance of the Afrikaner worker. On the one hand the Nationalist Party, aided by the Dutch Reformed Church and cultural organisations, sought to "save the souls of the Afrikaner workers from the corruption of the foreigners, imperialists, communists, Jews, liberals and kafferboeties"; they crusaded against trade unionism and told the workers that their salvation lay in a united Afrikanerdom. On the other hand were the trade unions who preached unified, organised, militant struggle for better conditions.

To counteract the gravitational pull of "Werkerseenheid", the Nats issued an appeal for "Volks- eenheid". Between these two magnetic poles lay the Afrikaans workers in the Garment Workers Union. Sachs exposes the Nat conspiracy to destroy trade unionism by fifth column "white anting" from within and attacks from without. He shows how the vast majority of Afrikaner workers repudiated the "Reformers" and the "Blanke-werkersbeskermingsbond" with their Nazi methods. Although the Afrikaner workers were not free from racial prejudice, they showed

APARTHEID AND THE AFRIKANER

no sign of unhappiness at belonging to the same union as Coloured and African workers.

Nationalist ideology has today bitten deeply into the consciousness of the Afrikaner worker, but it is still possible, says Sachs, to rid him of racial prejudice. This requires "tact, hard work, clear and courageous leadership". More to the point is his observation that "when the 250,000 Africans who have had some contact with trade unionism, become effectively organised, the division between Black and White in the trade union movement will largely disappear . . . once the African workers have become strong, the European workers will seek their friendship and co-operation."

African Catalyst

If one agrees that the Afrikaner worker in particular and the White workers in general are not irretrievably lost to the cause of workers' unity, and that the problem is what best to do about it, surely the theme of how a strong African trade union movement can act as a catalyst in bring about a transformation in the attitudes of other workers is worthy of elaboration? Isn't the development of class consciousness among the African workers the key to solving the problem of the apartheid-infested White workers? It is a pity that Sachs discards this fertile line of argument.

Indeed, a major failing of this book is that Sachs ignores the dynamic role of the African working class, and suggests by implication that they have no role to play in carving out their future.

Were this book no more than a socio-historical treatise on the Garment Workers, one would perhaps refrain from political criticism. But since it makes a number of proposals for the extrication of South Africa from her present troubles, comment is called for.

White Man's Business?

The first that springs to mind is the remarkable undertone of "politics is White man's business" that pervades the analysis. The book seems to regard the attitudes, views and prejudices of the European worker — not to mention the Afrikaners — as meriting prime attention in any solution. Its ar-

guments are slanted towards the White worker, manufacturer and industrialist in an attempt to talk them into a change of heart.

One example will suffice: the exploitation of "cheap, inefficient, semi-slave labour," predicts Sachs, will reduce the Afrikaner within a generation "to a state of poverty, compared with which the conditions of Poor Whites in the past will seem a paradise". If decent rights are not accorded to the black serfs, the argument goes, the White worker will suffer. True. But surely the case for a free South Africa rests on a more universal foundation that simply what is good for the Whites? This pro-White orientation (a tactical argument perhaps?) may flatter the vanity of the European workers who consider themselves to be of royal proletarian blood, but is hardly an effective method of ridding them of race hatred.

Conversely, the book does not show much faith in the ability of the Non-European peoples to bring about a change in their conditions. Sach's call for "intensive industrial development and the application of modern methods of production to every part of the economy" as a magic elixir for our ills contains the tacit assumption that a new approach by the capitalist is the best medicine for South Africa. A good tonic it may well be. But is it *the* paracea? And are the persons who must administer Mr. Sach's prescription capable of ever getting to the root of the trouble?

The Decisive Role

Returning to the question of the Afrikaner worker, Sachs adopts an exaggerated assessment of their importance, at the expense of other groups and the working class as a whole. "The task of all who love liberty is to arouse the fine feelings of the Afrikaners . . ." "the Afrikaners who must play a decisive role in South African affairs can still be won over to the cause of progress."

Arousing the "fine feelings" of Afrikaners can hardly solve a problem which only the united forces of democracy and progress can solve. Nor for that matter do Afrikaners play a "decisive role" in South African affairs: that role is played by the oppressed and freedom-loving masses of

South Africa under the leadership of the Congress movement (which is not, incidentally, mentioned in the book).

This type of reasoning betrays a rather curious bias and blindness as to the nature of the embattled forces whose conflict will decide the future of South Africa. Certainly it is important to win over the Afrikaner people to the cause of freedom: but the success of the struggle does not hinge on this.

Lest these criticisms be misunderstood, let it be said that Sachs in no way belittles the sufferings of the Non-European people or is remiss in denouncing the wickedness of racialism. On the contrary he is full of compassion for the oppressed, and sensitive to the duty "of every true South African patriot to render maximum support to rid the country of the present government". He convincingly shows how the wheel of history is moving in favour of the oppressed and how the fantasy of apartheid is rapidly becoming a nightmare. He makes an eloquent plea for greater opportunities for Non-European workers.

Where Sachs errs is in his unconscious pessimism arising from his obsession with the fact that: "Of the new generation of trade unionists, the majority of White members are violently opposed to the Nationalists and would give anything to get them out of power. Yet I doubt whether even five per cent are free from race prejudice." He has done a useful job in directing many of his arguments at this group, but one feels he could have written a vastly more fruitful work had he given proper emphasis to the role of the working class as a whole in the struggle for freedom, and to the vital interconnection between building African trade unionism and demolishing the false god of Christlike-Nationalism at whose shrine the misguided Afrikaner worker today worships. — C.B.

"Garment Workers in Action"
by E. S. Sachs. Published by McGibbon and Kee. 23/6.

GUILTY MEN

"CAN WE HELP YOU?" wire-
lessed the staff of an Egyptian airfield to approaching planes, unaware that they were British bombers seeking Egyptian targets. Back came the reply: "Yes, please

beam us in.”—and then the bombs fell. That was Suez, or part of the story. The Cypriot story was not very different. Cyprus was turned into a military base for aggression, and from where Britain hoped to retain control of the Middle East. Cypriot lives and freedom were disregarded.

Anger, shame and the desperate realisation that Tory imperialism must be ended if Britain is to survive as a first-class power prompted Michael Foot and Mervyn Jones to write “GUILTY MEN, 1957”, a record of the treachery and brutality of British imperialism in Egypt and Cyprus, and of Britain’s attempt to murder her way back into Egypt last year.

Vividly Foot and Jones present the facts. They show that rule today by the imperialists is the velvet glove concealing the iron fist, but a fist that can no longer beat down the peoples of the colonial countries or crush their now formidable forces for independence.

SUPERFICIAL

The writers, however, do not penetrate beneath the surface of world politics. To them diplomacy is the crux of the problem. The Suez conflict was a “product of Tory philosophy”, and there need be only the removal of the few dozen men who guide this outlook.

Foot and Jones do not see that Eisen-

hower and Dulles were shocked by the attack on Egypt, not because peace was threatened, but because the Americans were afraid that their British competitors for Middle East control and oil might re-establish themselves in Egypt again. America’s stand against the aggressor, Britain, made it possible for her own oil interests to take advantage of Britain’s devastating loss of prestige in the Arab world.

The writers offer the fallacious solution that Britain must again become a Great Power by rejecting “sabre-rattling” diplomacy and instead searching for “new ways of being great, new modes of pioneering, new fashions of thought, new means of inspiring and igniting the minds of mankind”, and thus preventing the Soviet Union from becoming the champion of the countries demanding independence!

Although the book loses much of its value because of its superficial analysis of world events, “GUILTY MEN, 1957”, enhanced by the telling Vicky cartoons, is an urgent appeal for international peace. It holds information that all should read.

JACQUELINE ARENSTEIN.

GUILTY MEN, 1957, by Michael Foot and Mervyn Jones. With cartoons by Vicky. Published by Victor Gollancz. Price, 14s. 6d.

TIME WALKED

THIS is a beautiful story, true to life, its characters real living people. The story of six-year-old Serioja could be the story of six-year-old David or Jan—its theme is ageless, timeless, universal: handled with a warmth and deep understanding, sympathetic, sensitive. The author’s skill enables the reader to see with the eyes or Serioja, think with the mind of Serioja, and yearn with the heart of this small boy. You share the joys and frustrations of his first bicycle, the mingled pride and

doubt in his “new Father”, the excitement and fear at his first encounter with death, the unwilling adjustment to his new baby brother. You play with him through the seasons, feel the sun warm on his small brown back in summer, gaze with him in wonder at the cold brilliance of the stars in winter. And all through, the love and understanding of step-father Korostelev glows like a light for this small boy to see in those moments of utter desolation that are so real to the very young. The reader is rewarded with an ending as poignant as it is joyous.

D.S.

Time Walked by Vera Panova. The Harvill Press. 12s.6d.

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