

FIGHTING TALK

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**The Peace Movement speaks today
with the confident voice of the
World's Peoples.**

See *"The Turning of the Peace Tide"*

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GIVING THE GAME AWAY

COMMENT

AFTER Mr. Strydom's repeated declaration to the Nationalist Party Congress that "justice" must be done to Non-Europeans, there was a refreshing honesty about the speech of Mr. Ludwig Japhet, honorary life president of the Transvaal National Sporting Club. Mr. Japhet would, doubtless, protest bitterly if one called him a Nationalist. But, like so many anti-Nationalist White South Africans, he has managed to pick up all the worst racial thinking of the apartheiders. He thinks, for instance, that "there should be two sets of world (boxing) titles—for Whites and Non-Whites. In fact . . . there should be complete segregation in all sports." Not because Mr. Japhet is racially prejudiced, you understand. But he wants a fair deal for the White sportsmen. "A Non-White enjoys a big advantage . . . Better physical and nerve structure." He might have mentioned the poorer food, leakier houses and fewer sports facilities, which can also be counted amongst the "big advantages" which Non-Europeans enjoy. But little things like these don't count in Mr. Japhet's "sporting" circles.

More important, it seems, are the nonsensical racial theories Mr. Japhet has picked up from the lunatic fringe of the Nationalist Party. "A White man is liable to smash his hands on the heads . . . of the tough Negro fighters." Jesse Owens triumphed at the pre-war Olympic games because "Non-Whites' sinews at the back of the heel were built differently to that of a White man." In its way, this type of reasoning serves the same political purpose as the "scientific" dissertations of Stellenbosch professors about the inferiority of Non-Whites: it serves to justify apartheid, on "scientific" grounds, and so to cover up the sinister and oppressive motives. There is more in Mr. Japhet's theories than an altruistic desire to see justice done to the Whites. Like Mr. Strydom's baaskap, it helps to do good business for those who sit on the right side. White and Non-White world titles would "... be good for business, as more titles will be in circulation." Fortunately, in the fields of international sport, the whole wide world is out of step with Ludwig Japhet.

BANNING BOOKS **A**NOTHER refreshing burst of honesty led the Department of the Interior to explain why books are being banned—at the rate of some eighty a week. From the statement it appears that "literature with a stimulating sex-theme or tendency towards bloodlust" would be tolerable in most countries. But not in South Africa, "with its heterogenous population." White men, in the eyes of the Department, need not be protected against "... sex-stimulating illustrations, blood thirsty descriptions, brutal treatment of women, technique of crime" or similar themes in literature. But the Department is concerned with preventing such works falling into the hands of the Non-White section, children and adolescents." They must also be protected against "Communist propaganda."

Dr. S. H. Skaife, who is one of the readers who advise the Minister whether books are good, bad or indifferent for our "Non-White section, children and adolescents" has added another category, which the Department has bashfully omitted—Unesco pamphlets. "The Unesco pamphlets," he says, "all deal with the same theme—the difference between the races are so slight as to be negligible. They prove their point by scientific argument and, on the whole, are irrefutable." While Dr. Skaife does not think that scientific books should be banned, the Department does. And bans them. Theories that race differences are negligible are too dangerous for our "heterogenous population."

And that proves another point which is irrefutable. Censorship of horror-comics and pornography is *not* the Government's aim. It is a cover for a more sinister purpose, for the blacking out of scientific thought on race-relations, so that the mumbo-jumbo of apartheid can go unchallenged; and also for the blacking out of advanced social and political ideas, which prove that races are not only essentially the same, but also that they can live peaceably and happily side by side, as equals. Censorship of books is part of the price that all South Africans, Black and White, are paying for the maintenance of White supremacy.

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VIOLENCE

By

HILDA WATTS



“Violence is a political weapon. It is the weapon of desperate, fearful, frightened men. The extent to which it is increasing in our land is . . . a measure of the despair of those who, made not one whit wiser by history, believe that with violence they can stem the surging flood-tide of freedom.”

VIOLENCE is a political weapon. However haphazard and unrelated individual acts of violence may appear, if we examine them over a period we find they fall into a pattern consistent with certain political trends and policies. This does not mean that every individual who commits an assault is necessarily aware of anything other than his anger of the moment; it means that certain circumstances encourage violence, and in fact bring about conditions under which the acts take place.

I am not referring here to ordinary crimes of violence arising directly from economic conditions, but to two other categories of violence that are obviously on the increase in our country: the first, assaults, mostly racial in character, committed by those who (so the phrase goes) “take the law into their own hands,” meaning that they disregard any laws; the second, acts of violence committed by the police.

Compared with these two categories, the few, isolated cases of mob violence that have occurred during the past years become conspicuous by their very scarcity. Widely quoted to show that the people of this country are not fit to enjoy democratic rights, they prove in fact the very opposite—the extraordinary moderation and self-control of the people under most provocative circumstances. Violence is a common feature in the lives of the African people, through police raids, liquor searches, mass arrests, yet the people themselves rarely use violence. There are many who pride themselves on their liberal outlook, who will tell you they cannot support social change because they shrink from the possible violence that may be used. Yet as a general rule, it is not the people who use violence, but their rulers—look at the evidence!

Into Their Own Hands

Take the citizens who “take the law into their own hands.” The violence follows a very close pattern: the victims are usually African farm-workers, sometimes convict labourers; the accused plead that the victim refused to carry out orders, or did not work hard enough, or was “cheeky”; the violence takes the form of beating to death, often with hosepipes (shades of the Storm-troopers!) or shooting.

A selection of such cases taken over the past year or two makes bitter and terrible reading. One needs a very strong stomach indeed to go through even a few of them. The brutality is on a par with the crimes committed by the Nazis under Hitler, and the mentality of the perpetrators is the same.

They believe they can hold power by brute force, by terrorising people. They set themselves up as the

master-race, whose duty it is to “civilise” the savage. The results are the exact opposite. *The wielders of violence become the savages.* The rule of whip, hosepipe, sjambok and gun permeates their minds. The man who uses brutality is himself brutalised and degraded, not only in this single act, but in all his life’s acts, and in all his relations with other human beings.

These acts of violence are usually only brought to the courts when the person concerned misjudges his strength and the victim dies. For every one of these cases it is an indisputable fact known to all but those who do not wish to face facts, that there are thousands and thousands of smaller acts of violence, varying in degree, committed month in and month out.

What is the “punishment” meted out when the cases come to court? The *Rand Daily Mail* recently commented editorially on two cases of assault. In the first case Mr. Justice Ludorf made this comment: “I do not know why this case was brought before the High Court. As soon as there is an assault on a Native there is great excitement and the case must be brought before the High Court.” Verdict: common assault; sentence: a £5 fine. A week later the same judge had a similar case. This time the victim died as a result of violence, after having been terribly kicked and beaten. Verdict: common assault; sentence: a £5 fine.

A man in Westdene was also fined £5 after being convicted of assault. He and a crowd of young men chased some Africans, overtook and killed one of them.

Charged with murdering a labourer, Shabalala, in the Standerton district, a farmer, Bedwell, stated he was a very poor worker and demanded wages not due to him. Bedwell came out of his house carrying his rifle at the ready with his finger on the trigger. Shabalaka picked up a stone. “I was determined he would never throw that stone at me. As he bent down to throw, I fired at him.” Verdict: not guilty of any crime.

Five Europeans fatally assaulted an African in Bertrams. Verdict: culpable homicide; sentence: 4 months imprisonment each, of which 3 months was suspended!

Three men assaulted an elderly African employee, who later died in hospital. They had decided to “punish him” for not doing his work properly. Verdict: assault; sentence: two were fined £15 each, one £7 10s.

A boiler attendant named Pienaar, of Hartebeesfontein Mine Power Station, pressed the nozzle of a high pressure compressor hosepipe against the body of a sleeping African, Mtetwa. Mtetwa jumped up and ran a short distance before collapsing in agony. He died of injuries to the intestines. Sentence on Pienaar: a suspended one.

A Bethlehem tractor mechanic, Erasmus, was accused of "deliberately killing a Native cyclist by driving his car into him from behind." He had previously been convicted of reckless driving, but the judge decided not to take away his licence as the farming community would suffer. Sentence: six strokes, and suspended sentence.

A Salisbury farmer did not do so well. He chained his boss-boy to a tree and beat him to death with a rubber hosepipe and fan belt. He continued beating until "the bossboy cried until he was unable to cry any more." The farmer was fined £100, and given one year in jail.

Another farmer was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for shooting and killing two African herdsmen who were driving some of his cattle to a pound after they had been found destroying crops on a neighbour's farm.

Among dozens of other cases, two stood out in recent months: The Gouws case and the Snyman case. Public opinion was horrified at these cases, and the evidence given by the elder Snyman in his own defence is never to be forgotten. After some beating of the victim with a hosepipe, the son said to the father: "Pappie, it is not worth while to bring this boy back to the lands." The father said: "No, my child, this is a strong, healthy, brutal kafir, and we must make him work . . . I gave him a couple of blows with the hosepipe and he walked in a slow, insolent way and stood again . . . I hit him again and again. He fell in the same way as before and just lay on his side. Then it was clear to me that this was a habit of his. As he lay there I hit him again. I said 'Magtig, man, work!' and hit him again. It then occurred to me that this kafir felt nothing with the sack he was wearing, and I told a Native to remove it so I could hit him on the thighs and see if he could feel anything . . . I said to Jantjie: 'Man, hit the kafir until he listens.' I was very tired . . ."

In the Hands of the Law

In the second category, violence in "the hands of the law," I have room to mention only a few newspaper headlines. Let any African who has ever been arrested on any charge, testify for the rest!

"Warder tells how he shot convict." "Assaults on prisoners must stop, says judge." "Death of Native: gaol and strokes for Constable." "Native says police kicked him and hit him with hose." "Coloured youth alleges assault by police: claims £200 damages." "Native died: policeman on charge of homicide." "Often found blood in police storeroom, says Native constable." This last case was interesting. The constable said they often found blood in the room, and he did not think it necessary to report it. He ordered a prisoner to wash it off. There was obviously nothing unusual in the police assaulting prisoners, only in this case the victim died.

These cases of police violence must be taken together with the growing number of officials, police and public servants, who are being found guilty of various crimes. Tax collectors who steal money from Africans; pass officials who take bribes; high-up police officials involved with bottle stores and bribery; railway police, civil servants . . . *the same degenerate moral standards must inevitably seep through all their actions and lives.*

At the beginning of the year, after publicity in parliament, the Commissioner of Police, Maj-Gen. C. I. Rademeyer, rushed to the press with a statement that

the S.A. police force was comparable to the finest in the world. "Yesterday and today," he said, "the public were told that 837 policemen were convicted during 1954. I say what about the 19,000 who were not? . . . I cannot see that the fact that 284 members of the force were convicted of crimes of violence is anything to make a fuss about."

We also say: "What of the 19,000 who were not convicted!" Although we do not feel quite as surprised as Rademeyer about this. But on top of this from official quarters come cries for more and more violence. That being used already is not enough. "Prison officers told to shoot at escaping convicts," says one headline. A former director of prisons advocates public hangings as an effective deterrent to crime. Swart issues his notorious "Shoot to kill" instructions. The wives of police officers are photographed practicing "shooting it out."

The Peoples' Answer

If, then, the people can expect those who commit acts of violence will go unpunished, or lightly punished, and if official policy encourages greater harshness, what then is the answer of the people?

There is only one answer: organise to win democracy. For the violence, and the type of punishment it gets is built on our whole system of racial oppression, and can only be brought to an end when the people obtain their rights. There is no other way. These acts are committed to keep the oppressed in his place.

This can be clearly seen if we look at America, where lynching has been used as a means of trying to prevent the Negro from exercising democratic rights. The reason for an individual lynchings was always some alleged crime, or "cheek," or alleged rape. The truth is that the lynchings were a method of terrorising the Negroes whenever they seemed to be in danger of using their rights.

After the war, there was a wave of violence against Negro veterans returning to their homes in the South. The design was obvious. These men, who had fought for democracy as men, and who looked and walked like men, had to be taught that they had now returned to their former places in life. The immediate cause in each case were different—a veteran refused to move to the segregated section of a bus; a veteran had an argument with a shopkeeper over the repair of his radio; and so on. But the real reason is plain.

Over the years, claim the American writers who prepared a document "Genocide," thousands have been "beaten to death on chain gangs, in the back rooms of sheriff's offices, in the cells of our country jails, in precinct police stations and on city streets, have been framed and murdered by sham legal forms . . . Negroes have been killed, allegedly for failure to say "sir" or tip their hats or move aside quickly enough . . . *but in reality for trying to vote or otherwise demanding the legal . . . rights and privileges of United States citizenship . . .*"

So with our own victims. The people demand their rights. The answer of the supermen who claim the people are too backward to understand democracy is—violence.

Violence is a political weapon. It is the weapon of desperate, fearful, frightened men. The extent to which it is increasing in our land is a sign of the increasing strength of the peoples' demands, a gauge of their growing power, and a measure of the despair of those who, made not one whit wiser by history, believe that with violence they can stem the surging flood-tide of freedom.

Bantu Education Makes its Bow

By TITSHALA

IN No. 8 of the "Bantu Education Journal" published by the Native Affairs Department appears the draft Higher Primary School Course proposed for introduction into all schools for African children at the beginning of next year.

Teachers and "all interested persons" are invited to submit "comments, criticisms and suggestions" to the Native Affairs Department. Frankly, I imagine that few teachers in African schools will care to take advantage of this invitation. The proposed conditions of service for African teachers which forbid comment on any Government department and the whole set-up of the Department is hardly one to encourage criticism from those most qualified to make it — the teachers who will have to conduct this course.

Teaching Children "Their Place"

The most cursory examination of the syllabus itself, however, reveals that the Native Affairs Department has little enough reason to congratulate itself, as it does so often, with a warmth more appropriate to a Springbok Radio commentator than to a professedly educational body. In the first place, it should be noted that the course itself is based on a grossly unbalanced time-table, heavily weighted in favour of the Department's well-known predilection for keeping the "Natives in their places." Much of the school day is to be devoted to such matters as Tree Planting and Soil Conservation, needlework, handwork, homecraft, gardening, religious instruction and "social studies" (of which more later). In general, of the total school week of 24 hours only one-third will be spent in the study of subjects (English, Afrikaans, Arithmetic, and Nature Study) which are part of the normal (non-Bantu) educational course.

The syllabi themselves (to be stretched or amputated in the Procrustes' bed of the N.A.D.'s patent time table) reflect the psychopathic conditions of the N.A.D. educationalists. Hardly a subject but returns again and again to their morbid obsession with "race." "Bantu," "Bantu," "Bantu" . . . they are in love with the word, that convenient euphemism for Kaffir . . . it jingles and jangles throughout every course. The child is never to imagine that he is a young human being in a school; never to be allowed to forget that he is a "Bantu" in a Native Affairs school; it is to be dinned into his formative mind in every class, again and again, that there are no human beings, only Europeans and "Bantu" until—God forbid—he becomes as mad as the Nationalists themselves.

In the "Religious Instruction" he will be taught that "Even primitive peoples have a dim knowledge of God," and "Those even of savage race have their codes of law." In English he will be instructed how to write a letter to "a headman or Bantu authority." "Work ennobles," says the Introduction and to make sure that the lesson is not lost the children will have plenty of opportunities to enoble themselves sweeping and cleaning the classrooms and school grounds, working in the garden and (especially for girls) washing and scrubbing up, making the fire, and so on, which seems to form the greater part of the "Housewifery" course. Indeed, when it comes

to the section on physical exercises in the "Health Education" course, the syllabus expressly warns that "taking into consideration that pupils devote an average of one hour per day to manual work or to practical subjects, these exercises should not be too strenuous."

Indoctrination

There is neither History nor Geography to be found in the Bantu Education course. Instead both these subjects, together with two other subjects labelled "Citizenship and Good Conduct" and "Safety First" are lumped into a course called "Social Studies." It is in this syllabus that the N.A.D. most blatantly reveals its hand.

"Knowledge and understanding of the factual content of this subject will have value only when connected with the achievement of the following aims:

"The realisation by the Bantu child that he is a member of a particular community . . .

"He should be convinced that he must work . . . He must realise that laws are necessary . . . consequently teaching should lead the child to do naturally, and therefore willingly, what society has prescribed as correct, good and commendable."

In other words, don't worry about getting the child to know and understand the facts. Your job is to teach him he is a "Bantu," he must work, and do what "society" (that is, the Government and the Native Affairs Department) "has prescribed as correct, good and commendable."

Thus in history, the children will learn "how the different races came to live in South Africa" and "Physical appearance and any other special characteristics of the various peoples." (Perhaps some experts from the Census Department will come down to explain how to reclassify Coloured people.) They will also be taught the "contribution of the State to the development of the Bantu," and "the effects of mining, commerce and industry on the life of the Bantu—the creation of opportunities for work; new professions and trades; movement of people to cities; need for influx control." In "Citizenship and Good Conduct" the child is to learn "Why we need the services of (inter alia) the headman, the chief, the policeman, the school committee, the stock inspector and the location superintendent." And "how we can assist these officials . . . in their work." There will also be instruction and guidance in the "Personal Reference book — why and how used; the Labour Bureaux and how they work; Control Measures in the Labour Areas," "Influx Control and Reason for this" and "The Curfew."

There is no doubt that this syllabus bears no resemblance to education. It is indoctrination, naked and unashamed. The child "must realise"; he "must understand"; he "should be convinced"—this is the language not of the educator but of the political propagandist.

It would take a volume to analyse all the crude errors implicit in this syllabus. Undoubtedly the greatest error of all is the belief that the African people, once they find out what is intended, and they are finding out very rapidly—will submit their children to be indoctrinated with this abominable rubbish.

AFRICAN TEACHERS

By E. MPHAHLELE

BANTU EDUCATION will depend a great deal for its working on the African teacher. Where will our teachers' first allegiance lie — with the Native Affairs Department and Verwoerd's plan to educate African children into inferiority—or with the future of the people fighting against the influences of Bantu Education and for freedom?

The present African teacher, the "old stock," has been fashioned after an established missionary pattern in which the emphasis has always been on religion and what the missionary referred to vaguely as "character-training." Few missionaries have the faintest idea what they are dealing with when they speak of character. For instance, there are missionary teacher training institutions where journals like *New Age*, *The Torch* and *Fighting Talk* are banned for students. Even *The Forum* has joined the objectionable list. Books on eugenics may not be read, nor of course books of "sexy stories."

Students are encouraged to spy on one another, and to report on the activities of their fellow students outside the classroom. Prefects and monitors are selected for these requirements, and so the student-teacher develops the wrong impression that to be a leader a man must sell his people to higher authority.

The Village, Tribal Outlook

The missionary, often because he himself is thoroughly out of touch with reality or because he consciously defends the morals of the ruling class to which he belongs aims at producing a type of pupil teacher whose world does not go beyond the boundaries of a village community, with a village social code. His teachers are supposed to help children produce handicrafts out of crude timber, clay, grass, reeds and so on. His system fits teacher and pupil to an environment set by the ruling class instead of helping them to overcome and crush that environment.

The pupil-teacher has been trained for a life he may never live and in fact should not live. As a student he finds himself in a school debating society that is only allowed to discuss subjects like "Town life is better than city life," or "A witch-doctor is better than a medical doctor."

Right through his career, the African teacher walks about with blinkers, and when he comes out to practise his profession, he finds a totally strange world.

Into The Real World

He is faced with pupils who come to school before they have had any breakfast because there is no food at home; who have to carry passes from their homes to school. He finds he has to teach history from a book written by a White "historian," who refers to "Kaffir Wars" as the black "barbarians" resistance to "White civilization" and Christianity; not, as they primarily were, the Black man's resistance to White invasion and land and stock rape.

He has to teach Afrikaans from novels that talk of African "outas," or "aias" or "meide" and of "kaffers." Novels whose Non-European characters are always blundering idiots and objects of fun; novels that depict the Bushman as a subhuman creature.

The teacher has to teach English from a grammar

book that gives such examples as "The Native stole a knife." He may even teach in a farm school where the White farmer can come any time to school and fetch a batch of children to work on the farm.

Emancipating The Teacher

Their training and their absolute dependence for their livelihood on the approval of the authorities has produced a generation of African teachers that, with few exceptions, accept their "place" with humility. Yet teachers are becoming increasingly perturbed at Bantu education, at the mountain of regulations restricting their every activity, and at the way teachers were victimised during the Bantu Education Act boycott.

We who are outside the classroom must consciously help the teacher to emancipate himself. We must see his own position in history, and in turn interpret the outside world faithfully to the child.

First of all, the teacher must realise that he is a human being: missionary training deprives a man of his individuality.

Study groups and parent-teacher associations are a powerful instrument in this re-education. We cannot leave things to drift and say that "history is on our side." If the teacher gets to accepting Bantu Education in his own mind, the position will become worse—perhaps irredeemably so. He and the pupil will be like the Roman slave gladiators who had to fight to the death to amuse their masters.

In The Classroom

In the classroom? Once the teacher has shed his slave mentality, it will be easy for him to adopt a critical attitude to the history textbooks, English, Afrikaans and Vernacular set works. He will find numerous examples of conscious and subtle white supremacy propaganda in the books he handles with the class. He must guide the children towards independent thinking by refuting any suggestion they find in their reading that Non-Europeans are inferior or depraved, or thieves and so on. The pupils themselves should be constantly impressed with the fact that they are capable of forming sound judgment.

In an "ethnic grouping school," the teacher must make it plain to his pupils *why*, if they are Basotho, they are being kept away from Zulus, Xhosas and Shangaans, and that in a new South Africa there is no room for such primitive divisions.

In teaching the subject that goes under the ridiculous name of "environmental studies" the teacher has a golden opportunity of exposing social evils, the real causes of crime, starvation, disease and so on. The teacher should correlate his subjects so that at every turn his aim should be to build up a tolerant attitude and enquiring mind in the child.

There is a great deal that a teacher can do, even in conditions where he is watched and spied upon. Verwoerd should know that he cannot harness the minds of our children to the wagon of slavery. Once a child reads the printed page, his mind becomes even more restless, turbulent and unyielding than before he started. We dare Verwoerd, with all his demoniac host, to subdue the minds of our children.

A MEMBER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY WRITES ON

HILLBROW AND AFTER

DR. FRIEDMAN has, after all, lost Hillbrow. Why? Chiefly because, although almost 45 per cent. of those voting were prepared to, the majority were not yet prepared to make a break with the United Party; so strong is the loyalty built up over the years.

At the beginning of the election, with Dr. Friedman's stand on principle and his resignation fresh in the minds of all, the support for him was overwhelming. Had an election been held within two, four or six weeks, he would have been returned by at least as large a majority as the official candidate obtained on September 14. But with every passing week his chances faded; his organisation was good, the canvass adequate (though not perfect); but as fast as one voter could be persuaded to stand firm for principle as opposed to expediency, another was lost to the U.P. arguments of "Don't rock the boat" and "What can one man do?"

We all recognise the fallacy of these arguments; unfortunately not enough Hillbrow voters as yet do.

It is of course regrettable that Dr. Friedman lost; it certainly sets back the time scale for the progressive movement in South Africa by some months, perhaps by a year or two; a victory NOW would have guaranteed further victories for progressive candidates in similar urban constituencies later, as and when by-elections cropped up; and it would have given cheer to those who in their secret hearts supported Dr. Friedman's stand, but had lacked the courage to do as he did; it might have precipitated by-elections, whereas now there is a hurrying and a scurrying back to the U.P. fold. It may be that now we will have to wait till 1958 before we can see an accretion to the progressive forces in Parliament.

Flowing Back

Support came for Dr. Friedman from several sources; members of many of the so-called "splinter" parties, Liberal, Labour, Federal as well as from a whole group of ex-U.P. workers, who with Dr. Friedman had reached the point of no return; all rallied to his cause, though by their standards he might appear conservative, and they threw their whole weight in behind him on this one

moral issue; recognising its cardinal importance, as a water-shed which would divide the flow of South African political thought into the progressive and reactionary streams. In this respect the stream still flows back, the tide still ebbs; and no "progressive" U.P. candidate will succeed in obtaining nomination for legislature, provincial or municipal council for quite some time now. Dr. Steenkamp will not be the first rural "import" to the towns; there are many ex-senators for whom seats must, and will, be found, by a more and more reactionary U.P.

It was thus unfortunate that several persons and organisations, instead of devoting themselves to the always decisive "official" canvass, frittered their time away at meetings of both sides and raised issues, verbal and written, of, inter alia, the Natal Stand, the courts, the extension of the vote to other groups, other provinces, or all.

Wasted Effort

This effort, however laudable in ordinary times, was wasted, diversionary and irrelevant, if not hostile, to the Hillbrow struggle; it might well have been critical with 325 votes which went the other way; progressive forces cannot afford gross political opportunism; it is tactically bad, and unfair to the larger cause.

Hillbrow is not the first, nor the last crisis which a moribund United Party will have to face; there will be other Hillbrows, this year, next year; more and more, as the United Party marches along the paths trodden by White nationalism, will it antagonise those progressives remaining within its ranks; some will swallow their

pride, their principles, their very purpose within the party; others will reach their particular points of no return, and, in revulsion perhaps, save at last their own political souls.

Let us therefore be ready for the opportunities so presented; let us be ready with a plan, not with mere opportunism; if there are to be canvasses to "educate" the electorate; then let these start now: in Yeoville, Hospital, Parktown, Houghton, Orange Grove, Johannesburg North there is ample scope for a three-year canvass; but when the by-election occurs, then is the time to sink differences in degree, recognising only unity in direction, and to support whoever it is whose intestinal fortitude is such that he, or she, can no longer stomach the ever clearer copy of Nationalism that the United Party is yet to be.

Bringing Pressure

Let pressure be brought to bear, now, and at all times, on those whose consciences still trouble them; but when they pick their day to say "This far and no further" then, for heaven's sake, let us give them wholehearted support.

I have said that there will be more Hillbrows; I have said that the loss of this one puts back the clock some months or years; always we must remember that the progressive cause fights two battles in South Africa; the battle against prejudice and the battle against time; at this juncture the battle against prejudice is the more important; the passing years will make the battle against time more vital; when the next occasion offers, let us not forget that we have to win both battles to succeed. A.B.

BY WAY OF REPLY

WHAT happened to the Friedman campaign that the "overwhelming support" which endured for four, perhaps six weeks after his resignation trickled away in the weeks thereafter? It is not good enough to claim that time is the enemy of the progressive cause; or to say, as A. B. says, that as fast as the progressive movement persuaded one voter, the United Party dissuaded another. If these were truths, the progressive movement would be truly bankrupt,

and on the verge of extinction.

And yet it lives, and acts and flourishes. Perhaps the facts could be better stated. In my opinion they are these: that the dramatic gesture alone, no matter how admirable or praiseworthy, is not enough. In the first weeks after Dr. Friedman's resignation, progressive people had high hopes that here was a real break with the disastrous traditions and principles of the United Party. Had they been
(Continued on next page)

HILLBROW AND AFTER — OUR REPLY

"If the issue of the extension of the vote to other groups was not the issue of the election, what was . . . principled statement of belief in democracy is the only way forward . . ."

asked to vote then, they would have voted solidly "for"; but when the gesture began to recede into history, what was there that was new? What did Dr. Friedman have to say that gave hope of a new progressive advance? Did he propound a new, democratic faith and programme? He did not. He reiterated, time and again, that he stood by the policies and programme of the United Party, but against the compromise of Mr. Straus. The gesture began to be revealed, not as the "waterbed" of a new progressive stream, but as a tributary of the old. Not without significance is the fact that a tremendous proportion of the registered voters did not vote—a silent "plague on both your houses" declaration.

A.B. describes as "diversionary, and irrelevant, if not hostile" the action of those groups in Hillbrow who frittered their time away by raising "issues" which he presumes to have been outside the scope of this election. Amongst these issues is "the extension of the vote to other groups." The reference is clearly to the Congress of Democrats. But if the extension of the vote to other groups was not the issue of the election, what was? It may be claimed that the issue was the retention of the present voting rights of the Coloured people of the Cape. But here, in essence, there was no dispute. Both candidates spoke for the retention of these rights; the only difference being on the promises to be made by the United Party of its future course of action when these rights are cancelled by the Government. In truth, the real issue which should have emerged in the election was the issue of the extension of the vote, of democratic rights generally, to those who have none. Only by making this the issue could Dr. Friedman have hoped to break with the disastrous traditions of the United Party and rally around him all the democratic and progressive voters and groups. For the source of Mr. Straus' compromise

does not lie in his personality, but in the fact that his party has always treated the right to vote not as a democratic principle to be fought for at all times, but as an expedient method of winning a certain number of border-line Peninsula seats. Once Dr. Friedman decided not to attack this unprincipled expediency, and to reject every suggestion that voting is a right of all citizens in a country which claims to be democratic, he frittered away the very opportunities that his own, dramatic resignation had created.

The Right Way

In the circumstances, the Congress of Democrats did the right thing, and Friedman the wrong. Friedman polled 2,658 votes, but, in A.B.'s phrase, "set back the time scale . . . by some months, perhaps a year or two." The Congress of Democrats persuaded some Hillbrow voters that democratic principles are worth working for and fighting for; and consequently they advanced the time scale of the progressive movement of South Africa by just that much. It could have been more. It should have been more.

Fall To Expediency

But Dr. Friedman and his supporters missed a glorious opportunity to help make more converts to a thorough-going democratic faith. They fell back on the oldest of South African illusions—the illusion that democracy can be made safe from fascist white-acting by the European electorate alone, in the Parliamentary sphere alone. Their campaign failed to spread any understanding amongst the electorate that democracy is indivisible, and must be available to all South Africans, and must therefore be fought for and upheld by all South Africans of all races standing and working together. Instead the campaign dashed the high hopes of those who had hoped for so much from the Friedman revolt against expediency; and so it lost.

Perhaps in future elections—and outside of elections as well—more people will see that this principled statement of belief in democracy is the only way forward, and will join in to advance it further, more rapidly. L.B.

FROM WARSAW, CECIL WILLIAMS WRITES ON

Nazim Hikmet — Poet of Turkey's Freedom

NAZIM HIKMET is a Turkish poet, aged 52 years, seventeen of which have been spent in Turkish jails for political "crimes." His "crimes" were that he wrote poetry, wrote for the people of Turkey and for the oppressed peoples of the world. He gave and continues to give form and expression to their inarticulate sufferings and indignities and to their deep longings for security, happiness and an end to exploitation.

He was first imprisoned in the early thirties; off and on he spent four years in jail. Then he started his stretch of thirteen unbroken years in confinement—the best years of his life were spent away from the fresh air and the trees and the land he loved so well; away from the company of the men and women, whose ultimate happiness meant more to him than his own freedom.

In 1950 he was released. His release was a unique event in political history, for the Turkish authorities were compelled to surrender to the clamour throughout the world demanding Nazim's release. He says it is important for people to know this. So often people add their voices of protest against some cruelty or injustice in another part of the world. Too often the protests are in vain or the protestants do not learn of the successful result. In 1949 the campaign started. In the United States and in France the protest was so strong that the Turkish Ambassadors were afraid of the crowds. In Istanbul Nazim's blind mother walked through the streets, carrying a poster "Release my Son." So great were the crowds waiting to sign her petition that traffic was completely disorganised. Nazim himself undertook a hunger strike, which ended on the seventeenth day, as the world-wide protests achieved their objective.

He rejoined his beautiful wife, but twice in less than twelve months attempts were made to kill him. Three months after his son was born he escaped and took political asylum in the Soviet Union.

Today he remains a tall, upright, fine figure of a man. His open face carries many lines, not only those

etched by the acid of imprisonment, but those creased in by laughter. For he is a man in whom the streams of love, confidence and joy flow copiously. His large bright blue eyes are always alight and his lips often in a smile. His clipped slightly grey moustache suggests the retired English Major, but the effect is undone by his mass of wavy, wayward hair.

The effect of the hardships of prison life, the strain, the monotony, the frustration, has been to develop angina pectoris. But only as you ascend the stairs with him are you given any indication of his condition. At all other times, as he greets everyone, as he welcomes all-comers into a quick intimacy, there is no hint that he carries with him the perpetually painful and dangerous malady.

The other evening two Scottish girls fell on him in admiration and awe. They knew his poems and loved them. They recalled his poem "Angina Pectoris" (in which he wrote that the disease arose, not from the conditions in the prison, but from the

massacring of Greek patriots in their homeland, from the warlike killing of Korean civilians and so on). They asked me to ask Nazim how his health was. I asked him. Speaking in French, which they did not understand, he replied, that the condition, if anything, had deteriorated. But then he added, "don't tell them—that's not for the young people."

There is already a volume of his poems translated into English. Some of you will have read his poems on Hiroshima. Here in Warsaw I have read a folio of his poems, freshly translated by a Scottish poet. From them all I have chosen one fragment, for it is so apposite to the Bantu Education Act.

THE ENEMY

*Fruitless branches our arm;
The enemy is ceaselessly shaking
them ceaselessly shaking as
And the better the more at his
leisure to get at our fruits
He puts the chain not on our feet
but in our heads.*

From Hikmet — To Us

Cecil Williams asked Nazim Hikmet to send South Africans a message. He wrote:

"South Africa can become a veritable garden with different flowers, different colours, different perfumes. It will be a garden where happiness will abound, where friendship will flourish among the various races, where indeed will blossom the osseous of all mankind.

Today, unhappily, in your far-off land there is only one kind of flower. Only the white flowers can come to full bloom—and, I believe, not all of them.

I know that freedom cannot be found in oppressing others. For all White South Africans to achieve genuine freedom, it is necessary for

all the other races, the Africans—the superb people—the Indians and the Coloureds to be free and happy. They must feel themselves of and in their homeland, but not in a vast prison.

As the Non-White peoples of South Africa continue the struggle for their equal rights, so are they struggling also for the true liberty of the White people. Without the full freedom of the Africans and the Indians and the Coloureds, South Africa will wave in the eyes of the world a flag that is tattered and dark with the stains of blood.

I love all the races of South Africa. I believe that all the races united make up the South African People. To the South African PEOPLE I send my best wishes for joy and happiness."

THE JAPANESE FISHERMAN

*The Japanese fisherman slain by a
cloud
Was yet but a youth as he sailed in
its lee.
I heard this song sung by his friends,
not loud,
As the yellow light went on the
Pacific sea.*

*I
We fished a fish, who eats it dies.
Who touches my hand, of that he
dies.
This, our boat, is a coffin cold,
Who steps on board, in boarding
dies.*

*We fished the fish whose ether
dies,
Not all at once, but bit by bit,
His flesh goes black, breaks sores
and rats . . .*

*We fished a fish, who eats it dies.
Who touches my hand, of that he
dies.
This hand that served me once so
well,
Bathed in salt and round with the
sun.*

*Who touches my hand, of that he
dies,
Not all at once, but bit by bit,
His flesh goes black, breaks sores
and rats,
Who touches my hand, of that he
dies . . .*

*II
Forget me, love, with almond eyes,
This, our boat, is a coffin cold,
Who steps on board, in boarding
dies,
The cloud has passed and told our
doom.*

*Forget me, love with almond eyes;
My race, you must not kiss my
lips,
Death would wander from me to
you.*

*Forget me, love with almond eyes.
This, our boat, is a coffin cold.
Forget me, love with almond eyes;
The child that you might have of
me,
Would rot within, a rotted egg.
This, our boat, is a coffin cold.
The sea we sail is a dead sea.
Oh, mankind, where are you,
where are you?*

Review of the Helsinki Peace Conference

THE TURNING OF THE PEACE-TIDE

JUST as the Summit Conference at Geneva marked the turning point in the post-war relations of the great powers, so the Helsinki Peace Assembly in July marked the turning point of the world-wide peoples' movement to force peace upon their rulers.

It was not just that the Assembly gathered in a different political climate to earlier great conferences of the Peace Movement. True, there was no immediate, overriding necessity to act speedily to bring an end to bloodshed; there was no raging war in Korea, no conflagration in Viet Nam as there had been on previous occasions. But the difference lay deeper than that. For here at Helsinki, the world-wide peace campaign came of age. This was a gathering not just of the Peace Movement and its active workers, but of people and peoples' leaders many of whom have no connection with the movement, who belong to none of its organisational sections, and who often do not accept the movement's decisions on policy.

From All The World

But yet they were here, to talk of peace and of how to win it. For here, in July 1955, was expressed the understanding that is now so general and profound that it no longer bears argument — the understanding that the cold war policy, the division of the world into rival power blocs, the piling up of armaments and atomic weapons is insane folly; the understanding that co-operation and peaceful co-existence of nations is not only possible but essential. The emphasis was on construction and co-operation, on the exploration of every possibility of peaceful co-existence, reflecting the impatience of people everywhere of the obstacles and the delays and the pretexts which hinder them from coming together and tackling the problems of peace and progress as a joint concern.

And because this is the mood of people everywhere, participation at the Assembly was wider than ever. The delegations from South Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Japan were larger, more representative than before. To those who have attended

before were added senators, diplomats, religious leaders and military leaders of many countries, bringing their

By
SPECTATOR

delegations to the nationally representative character that has, up to now, been seen only in the delegations from China, the U.S.S.R. and the Peoples' Democracies. The undue preponderance of the left-wing had been replaced by more nationally representative delegations from many lands. Messages came from General Cardenas, from Queen Elisabeth of the Belgians, from M. Herriot and Mrs. Rameshwari Nehru. For the first time, the International Red Cross and the United Nations Association were present; and so too were right-wing French parliamentarians, and Scandinavian pacifists. If there were gaps, they were from Africa and the colonial countries of Asia, where Government restrictions and repression make participation difficult; from America, where passport restrictions are more rigid than here; and from the Labour and Social Democratic groups of Germany and Britain, who have placed a voluntary isolation on themselves.

There was, of course, consciousness that the threat of war had not passed. There was awareness, reflected in the discussions, of the still threatening shadow of atomic weapons, of West German remilitarisation, of American bases in Taiwan. But there was an over-reaching determination to find the way to peace despite the dangers which still threaten.

H-Bomb Horror

Bertrand Russell, speaking as one outside the Peace Movement, initiated the discussion around the H-bomb. His proposal for a declaration by scientists and a conference of scientists, to disclose the full horror of the H-bomb to the public, was supported unanimously. There was some slight dissent from his suggestion of a world federal government as the ultimate solution to the problems of international relations—slight because delegates concentrated on the com-

mon ground revealed by his immediate proposals, and left the discussion on longterm ultimates to another day. But there was a strong challenge made by Professor Joliot Curie and others to Russell's view that H-bombs can utterly destroy all human life on this planet. Curie argued strongly that this might be *technically* conceivable, but to become feasible would require such a vast devotion of human and material resources that mankind would never tolerate it; that to fail to stress this side of the question would encourage passive acquiescence by mankind, and so bring the danger of all-out H-bomb destruction closer. Curie also challenged Russell's view that all war will inevitably develop into atomic war; no doubt it was a well meant warning against a real danger, said Curie, but it is inconsistent with experience in Korea and Viet Nam; and it can be used to justify the present preparations of atomic weapons, or even future use of such weapons, since it argues that the other side will use them anyway sooner or later.

The final report of the Commission on this subject was more comprehensive than any previously adopted. It stresses that complete condemnation of atomic weapons does not imply approval of any other weapons; it acknowledges that the complete elimination of atomic weapons is possible only within a setting of a general reduction of armaments; and it accepts that any scheme for general reduction must include those weapons which are thought to favour any one group of nations against another.

Collective Security

Where the French parliamentarians argued in favour of neutralism between rival blocs, Russia's Ehrenburg argued for a general security agreement including all the nations of Europe. While the sympathy and understanding of the U.S.S.R. would go to any country refusing to take part in aggressive blocs, no country, he said, could maintain its security simply by "contracting out" of rival blocs. All countries must make an active and positive contribution to the maintenance of peace. Pierre Cot of

France, by way of reply, stated that the neutralists were not against collective security, but saw it as a half-way stage of the process of escape from the policy of blocs. A real general security agreement between East and West in Europe would not only guarantee peace, but also stabilise the internal position in France; it would remove the obstacle to the formation of a progressive parliamentary Popular Front, because the question of support or opposition to the Atlantic Pact, which now prevents progressive co-operation, would be removed.

There were also questions on which there was no debate. There were none in that vast gathering of 1640 delegates who would oppose Peoples' China being admitted to its legitimate place in the United Nations. There were none who would speak in defence of America's occupation of Taiwan, or in defence of the colonial system which denies the people their rights of self-determination and their basic

liberties. "It is extremely interesting," writes one commentator on the Assembly "that the colonial system, in this day and age, has reached the company of the 'indefensibles'." The peace movement has recognised that colonialism has no longer any moral or logical defence; it depends only on the supremacy of naked force; and though the peace movement issues no call for the overthrow of imperialism, it leaves no doubt that violence and force and armed aggression are called into being to uphold it.

The influence and impact on the Assembly of the delegates from pacifist organisations — from the Society of Friends, the War Resisters' International and the Fellowship of Reconciliation — was greater than their numbers. They argued their beliefs, and won acceptance of the right of conscientious objectors to refuse military service, and the recognition of the right of all people to oppose war in the way that seems proper and appropriate to them. And after the Assembly was over, the

pacifists met together and adopted a resolution which perhaps sums up the feelings of all those who were there with the Partisans of Peace for the first time. They had hesitated about taking part in the Assembly, said the Resolution. But they had been convinced that their participation was worth while. They believed that a spiritual development was taking place in the World Peace Movement, through its collaboration with those who believe in the principles of non-violence.

They might have added: and through its collaboration with other lovers of peace who believe in principles of different kinds. For the development has taken place. The Peace Movement has come of age. It speaks today not just for the active campaigners, not just for the Partisans of Peace, not just for the members of Peace Councils. It speaks today with the living, confident and determined voice of the world's peoples.

Helsinki is the witness.

TERROR IN NORTH AFRICA

NOT everything that has happened in Morocco and Algeria during the past few weeks has been reported abroad. The authorities of these territories, which are in the grip of terror hardly equalled in their turbulent history, have not hesitated to ban and seize newspapers and to expel reporters to prevent the full truth from leaking out of North Africa. In this they have had the full support of the French Government in Paris which recently seized an issue of a national newspaper which reported details of a massacre in Algeria.

However, despite the bans, seizures and expulsions, enough has been made known about the recent tragic events in North Africa to reveal the hypocrisy of the French colonialist claim to be carrying out a "civilising mission" in the area. Certainly the activities during the past few months of some of the French settlers, the police authorities and the military forces reflect no credit on French imperialism. Let us take a look at some of these happenings.

Settler Terrorism

Last June when the extremists

among the settlers in both Morocco and Algeria were clamouring for arms for use against the nationalist movements of the two territories, a group of settlers in Morocco formed them-

By
DESMOND BUCKLE

selves into a so-called counter-terrorist organisation. They proceeded to draw up a list of persons, both Moroccan and French, who were to be murdered. It took only a matter of days for them to strike down their first important victim. He was M. Jacques Lemaigre-Dubreuil, an industrialist, who was a leader of liberal French opinion in Morocco and owner of the Casablanca daily newspaper, *Maroc-Presse*. Much to the annoyance of the die-hard settlers the *Maroc-Presse* was pursuing a policy of promoting understanding between the French and the Moroccans and was often critical of the protectorate administration for its illiberal attitude.

No fewer than 80 outrages by Europeans had been reported before the assassination of M. Lemaigre-

Dubreuil without anyone being apprehended. But now something had to be done if only to show who in fact was in control in Morocco. And there followed the sensational announcement from M. July, Minister for Moroccan and Tunisian Affairs in the French Government that a certain M. Delrieu, former inspector of the Casablanca judicial police, had been arrested under "very heavy suspicion" of counter-terrorist activity, and sent to Paris under escort. Later 10 more people were arrested, 7 of whom were policemen, and charged with being implicated in outbreaks of European terrorism.

The arrest of these people, particularly of the police terrorists, aroused their extremist friends to the most intense fury. On June 27, several hundred Europeans rioted and tried to storm the offices of the *Maroc-Presse* in Casablanca. A so-called "Anti-terrorist Defence Organisation" openly distributed leaflets in which prominent Moroccan nationals and French liberals were marked down for assassination.

A month later in Casablanca came the Bastille Day events transparently stage-managed by *L'Union pour la*

présence Française Maroc, the extreme right-wing French settler organisation.

Bastille Day Provocation

Bastille Day, July 14, was celebrated in Morocco, as in France, as a national holiday. In the evening of that day, the Mers-Sultan Square in Casablanca was crowded with people, some walking, others sitting at tables on the terraces of the cafes.

Suddenly there was a deafening roar as a bomb placed in front of one of the cafes exploded. As the smoke and the dust cleared six shattered European bodies were seen lying on the pavement. All were beyond human aid. Some twenty-six others scattered about the square were seriously injured.

While passers-by stood stunned by the suddenness of the incident, a number of people who seemed to know everything about the incident had quickly jumped on to the cafe tables and started to address them. The bomb, they claimed, had been thrown by Moroccans. They shrieked for vengeance. Death to all Moroccans! Down with Grandval, the new Resident-General who wants to negotiate with Moroccans!

Meanwhile there were other developments in other parts of the town. A procession of French settlers was already marching from the Avenue d'Amada and another was forming in the remote Maarif district. How did the organisers of these processions know what had happened in the Mers-Sultan square even before there had been time to attend to the dead and wounded?

For four days blood-crazed Europeans ranged through the town attacking and lynching any Moroccans they could find. And their attacks were not directed against Moroccans alone. A number of the hooligans broke into the home of Maitre Jean Charles Legrand, leading French advocate, who has frequently defended in court Moroccans charged with "terrorism." In self-defence M. Legrand shot dead one of his assailants and wounded two others.

The Moroccans, attacked in their Medinas, struck back. M. Grandval declared a "state of siege" and called in Foreign Legionnaires and Senegalese troops who had orders to fire on Moroccans but not on the French settlers.

France Tries "Reforms"

M. Grandval, the Resident-General, had been sent to Rabat by the Faure Government in Paris expressly for the purpose of working out certain "reforms" which the French imperialists calculated would blunt the edge of the nationalist aspirations of the Moroccan people and make France's grip on the country more secure. He saw, however, that there was no hope of introducing these reforms successfully until and unless the dynastic problem was solved. He warned Paris to make some effort to solve this problem before the second anniversary on August 20 of the deposition of the former Sultan of Morocco, Sidi Mohammed Ben Youssef, and his replacement by the puppet Moulay Ben Arafa. Time was running out, he warned, and "time is blood." How tragically true M. Grandval's words turned out to be! Yet Premier Edgar Faure in Paris declared that his Government could not allow itself to be dictated to by a date.

The fact is that the French Government was still disposed to treat the Moroccans in the same contemptuous manner as had General Guillaume, Resident-General in August, 1953, who said of the Moroccans at the time: "Je leur ferai manger du foin." (I will make them eat hay.)

Troops Against Moroccans

When the Moroccans, at the end of their tether, attacked at Oued Zem and Khenifra they were only doing to the Europeans what the latter did to Moroccan Medinas a month earlier in Casablanca.

While French army sources announced that as a result of military operations during the bloody anniversary week-end some 700 Moroccans had been killed by French forces, unofficial reports said that another 1,500 had been summarily shot by vigilante bands of French landowners. *The New York Herald Tribune* (August 27, 1955) said that 700 Moroccans had been killed around Oued Zem alone where 88 Europeans had previously been slaughtered by Berber tribesmen. Troops, said this newspaper, went into action with orders to shoot anyone who ran and to burn all houses whose inhabitants were absent. Absence was to be considered as evidence of guilt. . . . The clean-up, it added, was made following violent demands for one by the settlers.

Algerian Repression

In Algeria the outbreak which coincided with the Moroccan anniversary took place when troops were moved from Algeria to reinforce those in Morocco in anticipation of the Moroccan events. In Algeria, as in Morocco, the savagery of the forces of repression knew no bounds. Writing from Algeria on August 24, the special correspondent of *Le Monde* said that a "merciless war of race and religion" was raging in the Constantine area. He claimed to have witnessed the execution by French Commandos of 50 old people women and children in a village near Philippeville, which had been abandoned by its menfolk. He added that military men on the spot were giving an estimate of Algerian victims as being ten times the official figure of 521 killed. Later this same correspondent wrote about a common grave containing 1000 bodies which he had seen at the village of Carrieres Romaines, about 5 kilometres from Philippeville.

In an article on life today in Algerian villages, *Paris-Presse*, recently wrote: "The fellahin (peasants) but lately pacific and hardworking, at present lead the life of hunted beasts scattered in the tangled scrub of northern Constantine, having neither arms nor food. Dreading extermination if they return to their villages they appear to hesitate. From time to time large groups are noticed. That is what gives rise to the launching of a general alert."

Almost half of France's total and forces (excluding the troops still in Indo-China) are bogged down in North Africa. That is the price that the country is being called upon to pay in order to uphold the privileges of the French settlers. And there is a rapidly growing number of Frenchmen who do not think it is worth the price.

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for us.

Journey on the Moscow-Peking Railway

By **ALBIE SACHS**

EVERYBODY knows that it rains in London, and anyone will tell you that it is cold in Siberia. Before leaving for an international youth conference in Peking, I was informed that I should prepare for a chilly journey, so I dutifully crammed my bags with pullovers, scarves and long underpants. The long trip threatened to be dull so I slipped in a few books, and with a view to the Soviet post-war pre-occupation with reconstructing heavy industry, I added a good measure of sweets.

By plane to Prague and train to Moscow and I found myself ready, together with about a hundred delegates from all over the world, to embark on the famous Trans-Siberian Railway.

The train got off to a good start—instead of to the usual gongs and whistle blasts, we were heralded out with music relayed through a loudspeaker. We were a few miles outside Moscow and we could still hear the strains of "Moskva-Pekin," our farewell song, and only after long marvelling at the magnificent amplifying power of Soviet loudspeakers, did we learn that what we believed to be an echo from afar was merely the sound of the radios in each compartment. Radios! Excited by this discovery, delegates began spreading rumours about some of the other conveniences which they had heard were provided by the train, now honoured by the title "the Express." We chased up and down the corridors searching for observation cars, smoking rooms and lounges. One enthusiast even swore there was a swimming bath on board! Alas, the train was an ordinary one—comfortable and tastefully decorated, providing the usual amenities for food and toilet, but otherwise devoid of spectacular convenience.

The ordinariness of the train was, however, compensated for by the extraordinariness of the staff. They certainly didn't "know their place," and had neither the manners of the menial nor the brass of the bureaucrat which we are accustomed to find on the railways. It was as though we all belonged to a giant family with the surname of "Tovarish." The stewards chatted and sang with us as they made the beds and poked around with

natty little vacuum cleaners, and earned our eternal gratitude by providing an endless flow of black tea to quench our thirsts—"on the (Soviet) house."

They were indeed "servants" of a new type—critical spectators of our chess tournament, people who would be insulted by any suggestion of "tipping," many of them taking University courses by correspondence, and all in all, men and women who behaved as though they owned the train.

For ten days and nine nights we journeyed into the East, through Siberia, the "mysterious" hinterland of the Soviet Union, and down the plains of China. Travelling against the sun we lost six hours on our watches (coming back by plane we made them up so rapidly that we twice on the same day had breakfast at eight), the days of the week became jumbled, and time was relaxed of its stress so that we could calmly appraise the people we met and the territory we passed through.

The first fact which impressed itself upon all of us was that as far as summer is concerned, the frozen wastes of Siberia belong to poets and propagandists. The sun shines with mighty force on the Soviet lands, so that I cursed those who misled me into taking winter-wear.

First birch, then pine forests, surrounded us however far we travelled. Pleasant streams coursed to and fro alongside the railway track before wandering off into the woods, birds fluttered merrily at our energetic advance and every day we wakened to scenes of pastoral tranquility. How unlike "Siberia" Siberia really was!

Yet the main surprises in store for us were not of a topographical character. Regularly distant at about one a day, we would suddenly emerge upon giant cities whose names most of us had never heard of—Sverdlovsk, Novosibirsk, Krasnoyarsk, Omsk (the only one we all knew!), Irkutsk and more—cities bustling with industry and development. Power stations, factories of all sizes and description, suburb upon suburb of well laid-out workers' flats and smart city centres had completely overwhelmed the sleepy trading towns of yore.

Unfortunately we never stopped

long enough in any place to go very far into these cities, but we did manage to explore a number of stations. The main buildings were generally spacious and imposing, housing waiting rooms, showers, stalls and barber-shops. Often there would be gardens with statues and fountains, and although the crowds of people meeting the train, boarding and disembarking would give them a casual and disorderly appearance, the stations were always spotlessly clean and free from litter or dust.

Volley-ball is a very popular sport in the Soviet Union, and one of our interpreters, a real athletic type, always disporting himself in a track suit and doing gymnastics, brought along a stock of volley-balls with him. He would rally the delegates, rousing the shirkers from their books, and gather us all around him on one of the platforms. For twenty minutes or so we would punch the ball around, making up in fury for our lack of skill, to such effect that we frequently managed to hit peaceful Soviet citizens on the head. Being bounced upon by the volley-ball was generally taken as an invitation to join the game, so instead of drawing hidden machine guns or Molotov cocktails, the aggrieved comrades would take their places in the circle. We made many friends in this manner, people who won't forget us in a hurry, and so through aggression rather than negotiation we furthered the cause of peaceful co-existence, leaving behind us a trail of bruised peace-lovers.

I am often questioned about the clothes style of the Soviet people. Although in general I feel that this is one field in which they could learn much from the "West," through a correct understanding of the relation between theory and practice they have evolved a style in travel-wear that the sophisticated salons of Paris and London would do well to take notice of. I refer to the sensational pyjama line. Old and young, male and female, all the passengers on the train seemed to have a varied assortment of pyjamas for parading in. They find them comfortable and washable, and all round a life-saver for their clothes from soot and dust. I often used to wonder, though, what they wore when they went to sleep.

The sight of pyjama-clad figures strolling up and down the train seemed to have a very soothing effect both on wearer and viewer, so that when the emergency cord brought the train to a sudden halt just outside Irkutsk, no one was unduly alarmed. It turned out that one of the passengers had developed an acute attack of appendicitis. The train reversed to the station, the train doctor spoke to the station doctor who 'phoned up the nearest hospital. In five minutes the stricken passenger was on her way for an emergency operation. We were all very impressed at the fluent and fuss-free manner in which it was all carried out.

Irkutsk is a city that will long remain in my memory. Situated practically on the shores of Lake Baikal, it was the centre of Czarist exile, and many songs, composed and sung over hundreds of years, told not of the splendour of the mountain-fringed lake, but of the countless revolutionaries who died there. To-day a metropolis is arising on the ruins of the old gaoler-town. Block upon block of fine buildings stretch as far as the eye can see, and hundreds more are being raised by the myriads of tower-cranes one sees silhouetted against the sky. A giant reclamation scheme is in progress just outside the town as part of a plan which provides for electrification, irrigation and the building of a completely new city. Dredgers, cranes, excavators and bulldozers, these are the "slave-labourers" busily toiling to construct the metropolis.

Clothes and concentration camps seem to be the only topics which many of my student friends ask me about when I discuss my trip. If they had been with me, they would have seen the vast construction works described above, and they would have come to realise that the Soviet people are building up their country not on a basis of terror and forced labour, but by means of an all-round raising of technical knowledge and cultural standards. They would also have seen some of the hundreds of thousands of young men and women quartered in disused railway trucks while preparing settlements from which they will open up huge new tracts of soil to cultivation.

Music played an important role in the life of the train. Apart from playing chess, all Russians seemed to be able to sing and in reply to my timid but well applauded efforts, I would at all times of the day be regaled with fine vocal achievements. Folks-songs,

marches, arias and even a snatch or two of oratoria were produced with the utmost ease by my fellow passengers.

I would spend many hours, too, lying on my bunk and attending to the programme on the radio. Modern violin and piano concertos, folk-songs and a bit of jazz made up the bulk of the day's listening. In addition there were some infuriating comics who insisted on telling their jokes in Russian to the enormous laughter of their studio audiences and my very "live" neighbours. Bursting with frustration I would switch off the set in my compartment, only to hear the programme being loudly enjoyed by my next door inhabitants on either side.

It wouldn't be right to conclude these notes without a word about food. Three times a day we would have gigantic meals placed before us in the dining saloon, and as often we would plunge into the appetising fare without ever managing to finish it all. Certain odd delicacies to which we were accustomed were lacking, but to make up for them caviar and smoked salmon were provided in embarrassingly large quantities. My ancestral Litvak blood seemed to favour the simple sour bread and borscht and so each of the delegates found something especially satisfying, but never could even our Stakhanovite gourmands manage the lot. All meals would be rounded off with a beer, lemonade, mineral water or tea, according to our taste, and a huge bowl of scrumptious sweets. So much for the London all-sorts which I had tucked in with my books.

I shut my eyes now and try to re-picture the scenes as we travelled along. Out of the one window the forests, rivers, cities and stations; out of the other, an almost non-stop stream of trains on the second track. Pulsing with goods and passenger trains, the Trans-Siberian Railway is like an artery feeding and opening up the whole of the Soviet interior, and, indeed, linking up the Soviets with the people of China. Instead of being the avenue of Czarist oppression in the East, the railway now stands as an active symbol of the united constructive efforts of 800 million people. "Moskva-Pekin" carries a message of hope and peaceful effort. One looks forward to the day when the peoples of Africa will sing of the opening of the way from the Cape to Cairo through an equally fruitful continent.

★ REVIEW

NEW LIFE IN CHINA, by Ruth First, with a foreword by Walter Sisulu. Published by The Friends of China Society, 119 Union Centre, Johannesburg. Price 1s.

In this attractively arranged and illustrated pamphlet Ruth First has done an exceptionally fine piece of work. It is the work of a craftsman in journalism.

Warmly and interestingly she describes what she saw and learned of the new China, the people she met and talked with, their stories of the old and the new China and their hopes and plans for the future.

In the 32 pages she succeeds not only in conveying to the reader a mine of pertinent information but also the vividness of her impressions of the new China and something of the spirit of its people.

Most of us tend to accept it as inevitable that a pamphlet of this nature will reflect the stark facts and bleak statistics necessary to its content and that it will be presented in a formal fashion with something of the character of a government blue book — important to read but hardly a pleasure. Ruth First has arranged and presented her material in a way that is a delight to read.

The pamphlet has more than a general interest for the South African reader. I can do no better than to quote from the foreword by Walter Sisulu: "Here was a country formerly as backward as any — poverty-stricken, undeveloped, held in bondage. The unification and liberation of its 600 million people from feudalism is one of the most interesting revolutionary developments of our century. Here are people who, in the words of the Chinese themselves, had "turned over" (freed themselves) and "stood up." With a breathless speed they are doing away with illiteracy and disease, building industry, revitalising agriculture. The largest country in the world is governing itself for the first time, and to those who try to persuade us that colonial peoples are incapable of managing their own affairs there is the answer — "Look at China."

"China has very special interest for our people, and this booklet should find many readers."

J.H.

LIFE IN A RESERVE

By
JONES G. KGOSANE

I WANT my people and people the world over to know how African Reserves in South Africa are run. I must write the truth though it is hated by our present fear-ridden Government with its many spies.

Africans in the so-called Reserves are not at all satisfied with the laws imposed on them against their will. The Nationalist Government regards the people in the Reserves as puppets; and yet he who turns everybody against himself without knowing how is a fool!

Take, for instance, how the system works in our Thaba 'Nchu Reserve. The Native Commissioner, who is a White man, is given the power to rule the reserve above the so-called "Bantu authorities" and the Chiefs. The officials of the Native Affairs Department under the Commissioner are mostly Europeans too. Under these officials are the Bantu authorities and the chiefs, and under them are in turn the headmen in the different villages. The activities of all these people are regulated by Government order, and, whether they like it or not, they must make the government's laws work. All these bodies and individuals carry out instructions fearfully, and blindly.

If a man in the Reserve has a case it takes him time, patience and persistence to raise it from the headman to the Commissioner. Each of those in the different bodies who hears the case gives one a headache; everyone has his own interpretation of the law, and claims to know best. This Government is surely a silly child. Time and energy are wasted for

nothing. It takes an African person anything from three to seven months for these authorities to settle his case, matters which, if dealt with justly, need have taken no more than ten minutes to dispose of.

The people face very many difficulties: their stock is limited; many Africans who need land have none; the strict collection of poll tax and numerous other taxes goes on all the time.

Why does the present Government deny to the people of the Reserves their wealth and rights? Cattle are our food, our aid in cultivating the land, our means of travel and transport, essential for our livelihood. But when we are cut off from rearing cattle the nation will starve whilst the land will grow not crops but weeds. Of late we are ordered to limit our horses and poultry; our donkeys and goats are ordered out of existence.

Even if you are permitted to rear stock you are not permitted to increase your animals above the limit imposed on you and written in your book. If, at the outset, you are allowed two cattle, six sheep, and one horse, these numbers must remain the same throughout the years.

The oldest residents, those who were lucky, rear up to eight cattle, fifty sheep and three horses, but as the years are advancing, everything is being cut, slowly but surely.

We young people are totally denied the chance to rear cattle or any stock.

The plots of land which were freely available during earlier times are no more. Even if you do have land, how are you to cultivate the soil when you have no animals for ploughing?

This question is puzzling great men of my nation.

This Government wants to ruin the African from toe nail to hair, I tell you. He thinks he is very clever, whilst we are looking on. Taxes are made compulsory for all Africans. The stores in the reserves are large and they contain every necessary tool and implement, ploughs and tractors, needed for the advancement of the Africans in the Reserves. But to buy them the people need money . . . The people in the Reserves are in fear and unrest for they are beginning to find the truth. The Nationalists are threatening every person in the Reserves, those near and far. No animals to be used, no land to be provided, they say, yet taxes, yes!

On top of all the taxes is the poll tax. Then there is the so-called hospital tax. All African men over the age of 16 years, excluding school-goers, must find tax money. The tax is compulsory whether you are working or not. Many people suffer, for no jobs are available in this Reserve. Africans are packed in great numbers, but there are few European employers to provide work for so many people. We are camped in this place of our birth, our hands and feet tied together, whilst our brains are being spoilt.

We pay our taxes and yet we are not permitted to work in the urban areas. The pass laws are worrying the whole population of the Union. On top of the pass laws is the devil that does not give us a chance to work freely so as to pay our taxes regularly. If one is lucky to get into the urban areas there are the difficulties like Section 10 of the Urban Areas Act, Section 17, lodgers' permits, and other laws on these lines. The African from the rural areas is permitted only to do domestic work, garden jobs, building and other hard labour work. A high wage for a man from the Reserve in one of these jobs is £5 a month, and many work for £1 10s. to £3 a month.

The laws as written down in the Freedom Charter should prosper, and their fruits ripen. I pray with confidence for great leaders of all races in the Union to unite more than ever before. Let us make South Africa Heaven for all races, all colours, and all personalities.

In our life I see Freedom for all.

★ REVIEW

SOUTH AFRICANS IN THE SOVIET UNION. Edited and published by Ruth First. Price 6d.

Here is the truth about the Soviet Union told by six South Africans who have visited the Soviet Union within the last two years!

The pamphlet is well written and beautifully presented. It contains an introduction by the Rev. D. C. Thompson, who visited the Soviet Union himself in 1951.

Paul Joseph reports on the Soviet Workers, their working and living conditions, opportunities for advancement and leisure and recreation. Walter

Sisulu's section "Freedom of Nations" reports on the many nationalities that make up the Soviet Union, and describes a visit to Soviet Azerbaijan. Duma Nokwe deals with "Soviet Education, Brian Bunting reports on "Soviet Culture" and Sam Kahn on "Jewry in the Soviet Union."

Ruth First's section "Building the Future" gives a breath-taking and fascinating picture of the plans of the Soviet people for the future.

In one or other section there is the answer to the many questions that are being asked as to what is really happening in the Soviet Union.

J.H.


Ruth Reed
OF FIFTH AVENUE

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