

reality

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NADINE GORDIMER ON CENSORSHIP

EDITORIAL

GENERAL ELECTION — for what?

In 1970 the Republic of South Africa will become the first country ever to have fought a general election on sport. This election is being called at the behest of a party that has roundly condemned those who mix politics and sport. It is a fantastic situation. The Nationalist seismograph is obviously taking a tremendous beating. The needle indicates grave internal tremors, but what on earth are they all about?

At Empangeni a Cabinet Minister, Dr. Connie Mulder, obviously rattled by a question that he should have expected, declared that the Government had not yet decided whether Maoris would or would not be allowed to represent New Zealand in South Africa, and in any event the decision would be taken only when the team had been announced. Not surprisingly Dr. Mulder has disowned his own reply: the newspapers had created a "wrong impression".

At Potchefstroom a deputy Minister, Mr. Hendrik Schoeman, after telling a meeting that he would eat with African diplomats if it were in the interests of South Africa, could not help adding, "Do you think Minister Uys and I enjoy eating with a Bantu?".

ELECTION ISSUES

These are two of the election issues, sport and eating with diplomatic Bantu. The third concerns the relationship between the Afrikaans-speaking Government and the English speaking people. Mr. Vorster and Dr. Hertzog are very nice to the English, and want them to be proud of their own; but Dr. Hertzog, in his nice way, wouldn't trust them with an iota of power, and Mr. Vorster, in his nice way, trusts them implicitly but doesn't give them any power anyway, if we except Professor Horwood.

And what's it all about? As always race. But in this fantastic way. For the ideological differences between Mr. Vorster and Dr. Herzog seem to the rest of us so trivial that we

cannot understand the behaviour of the Nationalist seismograph. Dr. Mulder and Mr. Schoeman, on the defensive against Herzogite attackers, reveal themselves as Herzogites in feeling and Vorsterites in policy. Anyone intelligent who goes to those meetings whether he be verkrampt or verkrampt-verlig or verlig-verlig, must come away from them in a state of complete bafflement. These events are a repetition of those of more than 30 years ago, where the United Party verkramptes writhed and wriggled under the attacks of the Malan verkramptes, and the questions that provoked them to folly were always the same - do you approve of mixed marriages? do you approve of non-white students on the campuses of Wits and Cape Town? do you approve of Indian merchants employing white girls? And of course the United Party verkramptes didn't approve, but they also were committed to an "outward looking" policy, having been dragged into a semi-willing fusion with Smuts. With one important difference the U.P. "outward looking" policy was on the wane, while Vorster's is on the way in, though hardly, in Clough's words, in any kind of silent flooding in of the main.

STRUGGLE NOT TRIVIAL

There is yet another way of looking at the present situation. Is it not possible that we are witnessing a struggle not trivial at all, between a rigid unyielding authoritarian Calvinism and a modern man-of-the-world, Rothman-of-Pall-Mall, golf-but-not-on-Sundays Calvinism? If this is so, then the one who really knows what it is all about, is Dr. Herzog himself. For he realises that the decline of authoritarianism, the decay of nonconformism, the challenging of ancestral mores, would signify not only a profound change in Afrikanerdom, but also a profound change in race policies.

Yet even this is a gross over-simplification. For in the fields of law and order, Mr. Vorster has shown himself ready and willing to use almost any authoritarian power to crush political nonconformity. And it seems reasonable to believe that as he increases his powers, he will use them against the verkrampte right just as he once used them against the liberals and the left, whom he hates and hated with a venom that he could hardly feel - reasonably - for the Herstigte Nasionale Party.

One can only suppose that there is yet another struggle going on in the ranks of the

Verligtes, psychologically much more fascinating, for the struggle is being waged between the two sides of the Afrikaner personality, and not, as yet, between two groups of Afrikaners. This is revealed in the lapses of Dr. Mulder and Mr. Schoeman, who follow forward-looking policies with backward-looking glances.

LAUGHABLE

There seems at the moment to be no sure way of analysing and interpreting what indeed is something that goes deep, however trivial the issues appear to those South Africans who have forsaken all forms of racial discrimination, and who regard as laughable the extension of social and other privileges to non-white foreigners when they are denied to our own people. And who could weep rather than laugh when an election is fought over trivial concessions abroad, rather than inhuman cruelties at home. It is not just those of us who are non-Afrikaners who are baffled by it all. So far there has not appeared one Afrikaner analyst who is able to give any deep interpretation of the turbulent scene.

There is one comic? - pathetic - aspect of it all, and that is to find oneself feeling some kind of sympathy for the 70-year-old bigot who is the immediate cause of it all. How ironic that he - who was as whole-hearted an architect of our authoritarian legislation as any other - should be warning us that our freedom is in such danger! And how ironic that at his age he seems prepared to endure consequences which, if his skin had been of another colour, would certainly have been merciless. What a pity that it takes 70 years to arrive at some idea of what freedom is, and then only because one's own freedom is endangered!

REAL FREEDOM

Dr. Herzog - and Mr. Vorster too - have no conception of the meaning of freedom. Real freedom includes the right to expose the cruelties and atrocities that are committed in the name of one's own country, and the right to try to cleanse it from the corruption of war and racial overlordism. To this kind of freedom these two are total strangers, and it is because of this that their internecine strife strikes not one chord in the hearts of the overwhelming majority of their fellow-countrymen. The whole thing is seen for what it is - a gross and anachronistic vulgarity, but one to which we are compelled to pay attention.

It isn't easy to be certain, at this distance, exactly how many of those who are demonstrating against the Springbok rugby tour of Britain are people who are determined to spread an atmosphere of chaotic violence. It seems fairly clear that, as one would expect, most demonstrators are idealistic young people who are seriously disturbed at what seems to them to be a public acquiescence on racialism in sport.

After the large demonstration in Manchester on November 26th, Mr. William Palfrey the Chief Constable of Lancashire, said that the vast majority of the demonstrators were "very nice young people" and that their own official leaders had done their best to control them, but that there was a "militant lunatic fringe" which as usual tried to join in. It is equally clear that most of the South African press - not to mention the S.A.B.C. - has, in order no doubt to cheer up its white clientele, been laying heavy emphasis upon every instance or imagined instance of violence or anarchy — as well as upon such an irrelevant fact as the length of the hair of student demonstrators (very many young British men have long hair nowadays, as they have had in most previous ages). But it seems likely that many of the sensible demonstrators are having difficulty in publicly disengaging themselves from the "militant lunatic fringe".

We hope these people succeed in making their position clear. It is very important that they should do so, for their own sake and for the sake of South Africa.

MULTIPLE HARM

If seriously-intended and honestly challenging exhibitions of political concern are taken over and distorted and made brutal by extremists, a great and multiple harm will have been done. Liberally-minded people will have shown themselves to be incapable of conducting their own campaigns — incapable, by implication, of handling the implementation and the effects of their own ideas. Illiberal people will have been given a gratuitous and unexpected reinforcement of their own prejudices and presuppositions. And, more particularly, very many white South Africans will have been confirmed in their impression that most of those people who take it upon themselves to oppose apartheid are

irresponsible and dangerous; the corollary — that a belief in apartheid is an indication of civilized reasonableness — is one which most "good South Africans" will be happy to draw.

If, on the other hand, the sensible demonstrators can channel their enthusiasm accurately and can retain control of their own gatherings, they will have demonstrated to Britain and to South Africa that disapproval of apartheid is a sober and serious business. They will have shown the people of Britain that it is possible, and valuable, to give public expression to political and moral convictions, and that students' protests are sometimes extremely important. And they will have given white South Africa something to think about.

MORE HARM THAN GOOD ?

It has been suggested, often, that demonstrations of this sort, however well conducted and however lucidly explained, do more harm than good — that they push more and more white South Africans (and at the moment it is of course the whites who determine South Africa's political stance) into a laager of patriotic indignation and self-pity. This analysis seems to us to be superficial. The immediate effect of demonstrations upon many white South Africans may well be the one that has just been described. But at a deeper level the whole drama seems to us to be likely to make its impact. Far down — at a depth lower perhaps than that of conscious realization, at a depth indeed where conscious opinions are often contradicted by an ungovernable intuition many white South Africans may perhaps find themselves beginning to recognize that apartheid is something which the human community is never going to smile upon. And in the more enlightened spirits a further, more painful notion may dawn, may well up from the unspeakable subconscious: maybe one of the reasons why apartheid doesn't look good to outsiders is that it isn't good.

IS THE POVERTY GAP FOREVER ?

by J. P. BLUMENFELD

The claim is often made that apartheid has benefitted non-Whites materially, by increasing their standard of living via the provision of increased work opportunities, higher wages and social welfare facilities.

The proponents of this viewpoint are sometimes prepared to concede that in the non-material spheres of life apartheid has not been of such great benefit, although they will usually add the rider that in the final utopian state of total separation, civil liberties and respect for human dignity together with opportunities for social, political, cultural and economic advancement will appear. (It might be mentioned in passing that the similarity between apartheid and communism, in that both offer eventual salvation and aggrandisement after an interim, but usually undefined, period of suffering and deprivation, is most striking, "the end justifying the means" being implicit in both systems).

21 YEARS

It is, of course, true that in 21 years of apartheid-orientated government, there has been investment in, and development of, the under-developed and undeveloped regions of South Africa, including the African Reserves, on a scale far in excess of anything that was apparent in the previous decades when government was not so obviously wedded to the ideology of total separation. This must be seen as a response to changing values (whether "universal", or simply "western" or more specifically "African" is immaterial) rather than as a direct consequence of the accession to power of the white nationalists.

If looked at from a somewhat different angle, a total failure to stimulate the development of the more backward regions of the Republic in an era when the problems and the economics of under-developed areas constitute major items in the consciousness of national governments and international agencies, would have been akin to an extension of colonialism in post-colonial days or to a perpetuation of slavery in post-slavery times. When the scale of development thus far achieved, or even proposed, is seen in this context, the efforts of the Nationalist government in this direction come close to inviting just such a comparison.

PRESENT DAY VALUES

Similarly, it is in the light of present day values and standards that the benefits which may or may not have accrued to non-Whites through the application of apartheid must be evaluated. The old arguments that Africans in South Africa are, in material terms, substantially better off, on average, than their brethren further north, or that a full belly and a roof over his head will make a modern-day man content (as it may have made an olden-day slave content) simply do not hold water any longer. It is, or it should be, a primary aim of any modern government to promote the physical, spiritual and material well-being of its subjects. Any advancement along these lines should be accepted as a matter of course and not as a reason for self-congratulatory and self-justifying claims and assertions. Such advancements are only remarkable when they are relatively large or relatively small in relation to the average level of achievement registered by all countries. And when a government specifically and unilaterally confers upon itself the status of trustee or guardian over a section of the subjects, it should be wary of making exaggerated claims about the benefits accruing therefrom to those whom it holds in trust; for the position carries with it certain responsibilities, not least of which is that in any clash of interests the guardian should either put the interests of those in his guardianship before his own or relinquish his position of trust. A cynic might be forgiven for doubting that any government, let alone the South African government, would be so selfless in its approach.

STANDARD OBJECTION

A universally accepted means of achieving this standard objective of government, namely the promotion of the well-being of all its subjects, is to improve the efficiency with which the country's resources, be they natural, human or material resources, are allocated and utilised. In particular, government should strive to ensure that the manner of distribution

minimises the net cost to the country, since in strictly economic terms net cost represents the yardstick of efficiency. Of course, it is unlikely that the situation of maximum possible efficiency could ever be attained, but it can at least be expected of a government that each isolated and individual change which it makes in the allocation of resources should not add to this net cost. Most people to-day would probably qualify all this by introducing the concept of equity which would result in the evaluation of this cost in human as well as in material terms.

The more inclined one is towards socialism, the greater the emphasis one would place on this principle of "human" evaluation of cost, but the bald (albeit greatly oversimplified) exposition above should satisfy even the most die-hard capitalist. Seen purely in terms of real cost, the failure to exploit the productive potential of non-Whites in South Africa to the same degree as that of whites is sheer wastage of resources; so, too, is the (partial) duplication of services and facilities for Whites and non-Whites. This is not to deny that jobs have been created by this duplication, including some for non-Whites which they would not otherwise have had; but the point to be made is that this is not the most efficient way to use the country's resources. The net addition to the supply of goods and services has been significantly smaller than might have been achieved by a similar outlay in another direction. The extra cost is borne (albeit possibly in different proportions) by all sections of the community and all sectors of the economy.

DUAL ECONOMIES

South Africa, with its "dual economies" (that is, with its co-existing and interdependent modern, urban-industrial and traditional rural-subsistence economies), with its problems of congestion in some areas and underdevelopment of other areas, in short, with its classic "paradox of poverty amongst plenty", is in urgent need of a substantial re-distribution of its resources. What is more, the present high-cost pattern of allocation and utilisation of resources (especially labour) and the obviously inequitable distribution of wealth in the country are, in this instance, closely

related. For example, the relatively low maximum price at which a non-White can sell his labour, as a result of the limitations placed upon both his geographical and occupational mobility, compared with that which a White person can command (often for the same level of skill) represents at best a lower incentive to improve his productivity, and at worst an actual disincentive. It does not help to claim that the average Zambian or the average Kenyan is worse off than the average Zulu. In a sense, this claim might even be grossly misleading in that the average Zambian presumably at least enjoys the average standard of living which his country provides, whereas the average Zulu's standard of living is far below that of the average South African. Seen in this perspective the fact that some non-Whites may be better off now than they were before is no credit to apartheid.

INCREASED

Both the money incomes and the real incomes of non-Whites have certainly increased over the years, but so have those of the Whites. It is possible that the rate of increase of the former may have been slightly higher than that of the latter and that the gap between the two may, in consequence, even have decreased. Since it is very difficult, if not impossible, on the basis of available statistics, to test the validity of any such claim a reliable assessment of the exact position cannot be obtained. It would be common cause, however, that any narrowing of the gap between rich and poor in South Africa which may have occurred over the years will have been at best marginal. **In all probability it would have been negligible. The present economic system in South Africa is based upon the retention of a gap; whether at its present level or not is immaterial.** But for as long as the gap exists to any substantial degree, for so long will it be necessary for the rich to subsidise the poor (in terms of sub-economic housing, sub-economic transport fares etc.); and for so long will the cost of this notoriously inefficient utilisation of our resources be borne by both rich and poor alike.

The Non-White Universities of South Africa

by E. G. MALHERBE

Pliny was right when he said: "Ex Africa semper aliquid novi" (Out of Africa something new always turns up.) The latest curiosity is that recently perpetrated in the field of higher education. During the last session of Parliament five non-White colleges have been legislated into "autonomous" universities by simple parliamentary fiat long before they had proved themselves by ordinary standards to be worthy of this promotion. This precipitate action is another step in relegating non-White education into a state of separate inferiority and makes the whole of the South African university system look ridiculous in the community of universities. Not only is their control anything but autonomous, but their internal administration will remain an absolute freak in the university world. This absurdity has been resorted to presumably in order to remedy their immaturity and isolation as tribal (ethnic) institutions.

Ten years ago these institutions (with the exception of Fort Hare) did not even exist. Our older universities on the other hand had to serve long periods of probation as colleges before they were accorded independent university status.

While I am the last person to deny non-Whites proper university training (my own record proves the contrary), I feel that this whole development is premature. It is like squeezing a peach in order to accelerate its ripening.

It is premature because of the backwardness of the non-White secondary and high schools from which these would-be universities must draw their matriculants. This applies particularly to the schools catering for the bulk of the non-Whites, namely the Africans, where the quality and quantity of the output, particularly in the sciences and mathematics are still too poor to feed five independent universities. The whole educational background of home and school of the non-Whites is too poor to warrant such a precipitate step in the field of higher education. The quality and quantity of the intake is far behind that of the Whites, even at the time when it was considered that the White colleges were unripe for university status.

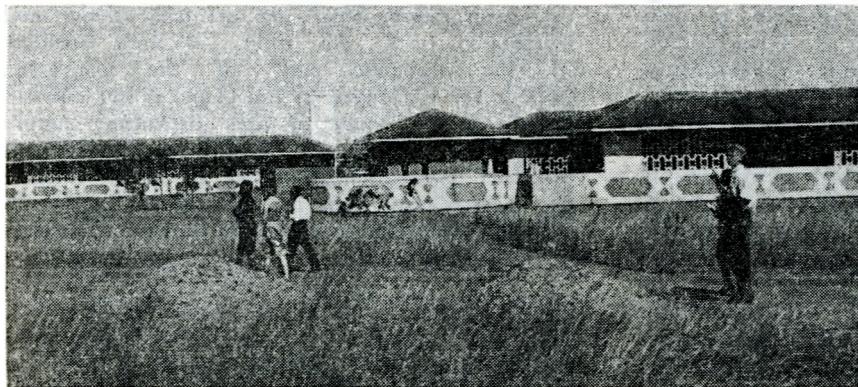
NATS IN POWER

Here it is perhaps advisable to give a bit of historical background. Very soon after the Nationalist Party came into power, it began to apply its apartheid policy to the universities. This went through two successive stages

first, separating White from non-White; second segregating the non-Whites into their respective ethnic groups. (If some of the extreme members of the Party had had their way, it would have applied the same principle of compulsory ethnic segregation also to the Whites: separating Afrikaans-speaking from English-speaking students.)

Before implementing the first stage, the Government appointed a three-man commission to advise it regarding the provision of separate university facilities for non-Whites. This was in 1953. The commission consisted of Dr. J. E. Holloway (Chairman) Secretary for Finance and former Professor from Pretoria University; Dr. R. W. Wilcocks, Rector of Stellenbosch University; and the writer. (I was at the time Principal of the University of Natal, where the non-White section had by far the largest number of non-White students of any university institution in Southern Africa and where a beginning had been made with a fully-equipped medical school for non-Whites.)

After investigating the whole position in all its financial as well as educational aspects the Commission recommended that, as a first step, the two non-White institutions, namely Fort Hare and the non-White section of Natal should be extended and developed into full-fledged institutions. In the meantime, in order to guarantee academic standards, Fort Hare was to continue its association with Rhodes University and the non-White section in Durban its association with the University of Natal.



PART OF THE NGOYA CAMPUS

"Looking at the new African university institutions, one finds that they have been located in remote rural areas."

NO ETHNIC SPLIT

As a second step, and only when the number of matriculants coming up from the high schools warranted it, another purely non-White institution would be established in the Transvaal, probably in association with either the University of Pretoria or the Witwatersrand University. The Commission considered that differentiation on ethnic lines was irrelevant at university level. Both Fort Hare and Natal had catered not only for all ethnic groups of the Bantu population, but also for Coloureds and Indians; and no trouble had been experienced by having them together in the same university institutions. Indeed, this has been proved to work very well even to this day in the Medical School of the University of Natal, where there is no ethnic differentiation among the non-White students.

The Commission did not recommend that non-Whites should be prohibited from attending the White universities. There was to be academic freedom (*lern freiheit*), i.e. non-Whites could themselves choose whether they wanted to be by themselves in non-White institutions or to go to such White universities as would be prepared to take them.

This report proved to be totally unacceptable to the Government; in fact, some rather nasty things were said in Parliament about members of the Commission. The Government therefore proceeded with legislation, (a) to prohibit non-Whites from registering at White universities except by special ministerial consent, and (b) to establish new colleges designed to cater for non-Whites according to their ethnic origins. These colleges would submit students for examinations as external students of the University of South Africa,

The Government was definitely not prepared to take the risk of non-White students not wanting to be segregated ethnically. The

students had to be compelled to be separate and to like it.

DISSIPATED RESOURCES

There is not the slightest doubt that if, instead of spending millions of Rand (capital and current) on creating these small ethnic colleges, the Government had concentrated its resources in developing two strong non-White universities non-ethnically, as had been recommended by the Commission, not only would more non-Whites have been able to avail themselves of higher education, but there would have been a greater diversification of courses offered and a much more efficient use made of academic manpower and equipment. Now, however, because its resources have been dissipated through duplication in small institutions, it has not been possible for the Government to offer degree courses to the Africans for example, in art and in agriculture, subjects which are so close to their lives.

All the legislative enactments regarding the higher education of non-Whites have been characterised by double talk. First there was the euphemistically named **University Extension Act**. Instead of extending the rights and powers of the universities, it had the effect of **limiting** them. In consequence our existing universities lost their traditional right to choose their students, and non-White students lost the right to sit at the feet of teachers of their choice - a right which students of different nations have enjoyed for hundreds of years.

Next, the legislation during the last parliamentary session purported to turn the five non-White colleges into "autonomous universities". (According to press reports "autonomous" is the term used by the Prime Minister himself).

In actual fact this term turned out to be a big bluff because, according to the Act, the

Minister not only appoints the University Council but also every member of the academic staff. Even the financial transactions, for example a loan by this Government-appointed Council, are subject to ministerial control. Moreover, the Minister decides which non-White students should attend the respective universities according to their ethnic origin and tribe. For example, Zulus may go only to the Zulu university in North Natal, Xosas to Fort Hare, Coloureds to the Cape even though they may live in Natal 1200 miles away. To speak, therefore, of these non-White university institutions as being autonomous in any real sense of the word is semantic nonsense. **Tribalism** and not autonomy is the operative word.

Even so, this tribal approach contains curious anomalies as far as higher education for Africans is concerned. For example, the University College of the North consists of 235 North-Sotho, 81 South-Sotho, 175 Tswana 37 Venda students, which is a far more heterogeneous mixture as regards tribal culture and language than, for instance, a mixture of Xosas and Zulus would have been. Yet Xosas and Zulus are not allowed to mix at university level without the express permission of the Minister.

One other curious feature is that each university is to have two councils - a White one and a non-White one; and two senates - a White one and a non-White one. At the moment the White council's and senates are in the saddle. The non-White ones are purely advisory and it is doubtful whether in some cases they have functioned at all. Presumably the idea is that ultimately the White councils and senates will all become non-White and be in control with the White bodies being advisory. How exactly and at what stage the switch over will take place has not been explained, but the Government is adamant that at no point should White and non-White sit in the same bodies because that would be "mixing" and "integration".

Just how phoney all this high-flown talk is about these institutions being the purveyors of the respective cultural heritages of the non-Whites (and therefore "full-fledged" and "independent") becomes evident from the fact that those non-White professors and lecturers, who at least have some first-hand knowledge of the respective cultural heritages of their peoples, are excluded from having a vote on the academic policy-making bodies of these ethnic universities, simply because they are non-White.

ADAM SMALL

Even Adam Small, an eminent scholar and Afrikaans poet, the only Coloured member of the academic staff of the University College for Coloureds in the Cape, is not allowed to sit on the Senate of that institution, simply because he is Coloured. Where does the much vaunted "eiesoortigheid" come in when Whites, and Whites only, have the determining vote as to the whole structure, content and methods of university teaching in these so-called ethnic institutions.

What will happen one day in the joint Matriculation Board when a non-White university with an entirely non-White senate and council has to be represented on it, has not at all been made clear. What is definitely decreed is that the principals or rectors of these non-White colleges will not be members of the Committee of University Principals. The chances are therefore that no non-White will be allowed on the present White Joint Matriculation Board. A separate non-White Matriculation Board will probably be established and we shall have in South Africa a White Matric and a non-White Matric. There is not the slightest doubt that the latter will be stamped with inferiority, much as in America "negro universities" and "negro degrees" have all along been regarded as inferior.

In spite of the above considerations, this unprecedented piece of administrative nonsense was bulldozed through Parliament by an apartheid-obsessed majority Party, without realising that in the long run it will bring South Africa's whole university system into disrepute.

The Government contends that because it is providing the money for the running of these institutions, the staff and students must be subjected to the closest control and surveillance. In this respect these institutions are much more like those operating in some other African states, e.g. in Ghana, than like the White universities operating in South Africa. In Ghana Nkrumah himself could hire and fire the rector and staff. In fact he did so on political grounds, when it suited him. This has had disastrous results for the academic life of that university. Really good students could not stand for that sort of thing. This resulted in an abnormal turnover in staff.

STIFLING ENVIRONMENT

What is in question is not the curriculum or the pattern of degrees, which will probably be much like they were under the University of South Africa. It is rather the whole stifling intellectual environment, the enforced isolation

from currents or thought in other universities, which condemn the non-Whites to an inferior system of higher education. I know that within this Government-regulated regime there will always be, as there have been in the past, dedicated White teachers who will sincerely do their best for the students and try to make the system work for their benefit, and one can only hope that under such teachers the apparently penal and restrictive regulations will be interpreted humanely. There is, however, sufficient evidence that the morale among the students is low, in an atmosphere from which the fresh air of dissent is excluded and where students' self-government is vitiated for all except yes-men. Under such circumstances the mere change of name from 'college' to 'university', which is autonomous in name only, will make the promotion of intellectual freedom amongst the non-White students an unreal exercise.

Looking at the new African university institutions, one finds that they have been located in remote rural areas where the environment is still relatively primitive. The vast majority of the students in these institutions are not socially part of that environment. They are intellectual and social snobs in regard to their immediate tribal environment. A large proportion of them come from more sophisticated environments, sometimes from hundreds of miles away. They are not allowed to visit the neighbouring kraals without specific permission of the Rector; in fact, these institutions are little intellectual islands in a sea of primitive tribalism. They did not grow out of that environment and community in the way that universities like Stellenbosch, Cape Town, Pretoria and Potchefstroom grew out of and became socially integrated with the local community.

I am convinced that, had these institutions been established for instance in Soweto or in Kwa Mashu, they would have been far more effectively integrated with the African communities than they are now where they are situated at out-of-the-way-rural places like Turfloop and Ngoya. This lack of sense of community with their own immediate African environment, even in the case of an old institution such as Fort Hare, has been commented upon by several commissions of enquiry into affairs of that college.

"RUSSIAN" POLICY

Another assumption underlying this obsession with tribal identity at the university

level is that the training must be "eiesoortig" in order that these people can serve their own "nation" or ethnic group. In other words, the deployment of university trainees is determined not by the non-Whites' free choice but by a White Government in which they have no voice. In this respect our Government is emulating a practice which has found favour in Communist Russia, where the State determines by regulation the deployment of the country's universities.

The graduates of Fort Hare, South Africa's oldest non-White university institution, are serving to-day all over South Africa and are holding important positions even in the neighbouring territories. This was before the obsession with tribalism and ethnic origins bedevilled the functioning of non-White university education in this country.

In recent debates in Parliament the Minister and many of the Nationalist members explained repetitively that by "university autonomy" they really meant that under this new regime each university would now be able to develop its own unique ethnic syllabus and to conduct its own examinations. Thus it is claimed that their peculiar ethnic needs will be served far better than under the University of South Africa, which had hitherto umbrella-wise determined the syllabus and controlled the examinations. It is by virtue of this change that they are now to be regarded as full-fledged, independent universities. When members of the Opposition during the debate pointed out that, while higher education for non-Whites was necessary, this legislation was premature and the words "full-fledged independent" were not warranted, the Minister avoided the real issue and took refuge in the "laager" of tribal concepts. He insisted that **each nation or ethnic group must have its own university according to its specific and unique cultural heritage and national character in order to develop its particular national identity ("waarin voldoen kan word aan hulle spesifieke, eiesoortige kultuur-erfenisse en volkskarakter, sodat daar vandaar die nodige voeding kan uitgaan na hulle ontwikkeling as een eiesoortige volk").**

ZULU LATIN?

One is constrained to ask, what do these high-faluting phrases really mean when one is concerned with university studies? What are the specific "kultuurerfenisse" which will make the university syllabus and the examinations in mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology,

English, Afrikaans, History, Latin, etc. "eiesoortig" for the Zulu or for the Sotho or for the Tswana tribes respectively? Must the sciences for example, now be taught in these ethnic institutions for Africans with the animistic and witchcraft bias which is peculiar to the cultural heritage ("volkseie") of the respective African tribes? If so, then it is clear that the Minister shares the view held by Communist Russia that even science must have an ideological bias peculiar to a people's cultural heritage.

The only academic field in which there will be a relevant "eiesoortigheid" will be in the case of the indigenous language of the particular ethnic group, for instance Zulu, Sotho, Tswana, etc. But even these Bantu languages have very limited use as media in the field of higher learning where the medium of instruction and the textbooks are in other languages (nearly all in English.) In event, very few of the teachers in these institutions know enough of these indigenous languages to be able to use them as media of instruction. Over 90% of the teaching staff are White and have been trained in the academic tradition of White universities. This, of course, is inevitable under the circum-

stances. Also it is most unlikely that they can deviate radically from the curricula and examinations to which they have been used in order to give these university subjects a tribal "eiesoortigheid".

To claim therefore that ethnic "eiesoortigheid" is the *raison d'être* and guiding principle for these five non-White universities is unrealistic make-believe. If given effect to, it would negate the true university spirit; it would isolate instead of broadening the minds of future non-White leaders.

I cannot do better than conclude with the words of Professor Cecil Hourani, one of the leading educators in the Middle East. Speaking of training leaders in the Arabic world, he said:

"To be a modern Arab man, he must pass through the medium of other cultures..... In order to be himself, he must temporarily lose himself..... One finds oneself through others, not by being enclosed in oneself.... The University of Damascus was a failure because it did not allow for the refertilization of the Arab mind, which comes only through outside contact. Such a refertilized mind becomes more and more creative in its own language and culture."

'ADVISE AND CONSENT'

by J. V. CREWE

Some time ago *News/Check* published a survey of the tastes and pastimes of the South African élite. Apart from confirming the fact that behind the line of white gables and black Cadillacs one enters a kind of spiritual Karoo, the survey was of little interest. Admittedly *News/Check*'s view of what constitutes an élite might be questionable, and there were one or two exceptions to the rule of mediocrity. But exceptions prove a rule.

Naturally Mr. Vorster appeared among the élite, and naturally one's curiosity was aroused. The expected entries — references to his golf and family life — were there, but little else beside to give a flavour of private distinction to the public man, or even to suggest what might lie behind the familiar mask. However, one fact did come to light: Mr. Vorster had read and admired **Advise and Consent**.* That, in itself might not mean much, but it was the **only** book referred to under 'reading', and the only glimpse into Mr. Vorster's mental world given in the entire article. One should not jump to conclusions. President Kennedy was an acknowledged admirer of Ian Fleming's works, but no one has suggested that

he learned his political or moral lessons from James Bond. Still, where there is little information one must extract full value from what one has.

SHORT ACCOUNT

A short account of **Advise and Consent** is necessary here to help decide whether its being on Mr. Vorster's bookshelf is important or not. (My apologies to readers who are already familiar with the book.) In this context, the fact that **Advise and Consent** has no literary value does not matter particularly. What does matter is that, for all the minutiae of the American political scene contained in it, the novel is essentially a fantasy, a romanticisation

of some aspects of politics under the guise of "realism." In this respect it is insidious. It has the flavour of truth and substance, a product of Mr. Drury's undoubtedly knowledge of American politics, but its extraordinary popularity should put us on our guard. The truth about politics in the modern world is seldom simple or agreeable, and very seldom can it be presented at the best-seller level. In the best-seller one can **only** expect a simplified view of things, usually escapist in tendency. **Advise and Consent** is no exception.

It is, in essence, a rhapsody on "pragmatism"; on verligte politics American-style. The U.S. Senate becomes the living embodiment of pragmatism at work, and the mystique of behind-the-scenes power is constantly evoked. The lobbies hum with subtle bargaining; the debating chamber is a sounding board for clashing rhetoric. But then we are shown that behind the superficial rivalries the Senate is, after all, a superior club, and only the right-minded really belong. Freaks, with bad morals or extravagant ideas may be in the Senate, but can never really be of it. Naturally, every man is permitted to have his principles, and there will even be clashes of principle, but everyone instinctively knows where to draw the line. Significantly, the one man who does not know where to draw the line (the villain of the piece) is a visionary, a man of ideas. He is also:

- (i.) a new senator, who is unfamiliar with the code;
- (ii.) a demagogue, who addresses peace rallies, consorts with unsavoury types, is a coward, virtually a traitor; and a vicious blackmailer.

(The association of ideas here is revealing!) At the end of the novel he has been smashed, and his rabble dispersed in confusion. Right-thinking, patriotism and the flexible-but-tough approach prevail. Finally, the Russians are simultaneously wooed (outward-going) and threatened (kragdadig).

REASSURING

For the ordinary American middle-class reader (and his counterparts everywhere) the novel is obviously reassuring. In the 'Senate' he sees men who are magnified projections of himself, invested with power, subtlety and wisdom. They are totally vindicated in their authority and their methods. Most, if not all, 'outgroup' political manifestations are seen

as froth (or scum) on the surface of society: it is behind the closed doors of the 'Club' that the telling decisions are made. (The White House itself is a kind of annexe to the Senate, and the incumbent is judged from the Senate's point of view.) And behind the Senate there is, of course, a hinterland of 'good' social connexions, in which a certain range of status and conduct will be tolerated as long as one does not in some flagrant fashion lose caste. Substitute Pretoria or Cape Town for Washington and the picture will not need to be altered very much.

It must be repeated, though, that **Advise and Consent** is a fantasy: a power-fantasy, a snob-fantasy, an Arcadia in which the real-politik, though present, is less important than the nostalgia. Political power and virtue are vested, and remain vested in the idealised governing clique. Life seems simpler and more secure than one would imagine possible. Suggestive reading for a verligte Prime Minister?

SUPERMEN TO THE SIDELINES

The irony is, of course, that the events of the last few years in American politics have threatened to relegate the supermen of **Advise and Consent** to the sidelines. The very attributes which conferred distinction on them in the novel are those which now seem disabling in real life. Their exclusiveness, complacency, ignorance of history (despite the exaggerated regard for tradition), their hostility to experiment and to thought, their sense of national self-sufficiency and their blind faith in expediency - all these have left them victims of a social revolution whose character and origins they cannot begin to comprehend. For all their political expertise, abysmal ignorance of their own society and of the world leaves them defenceless against the surges of human energy moving around them. Mr. Drury's characters would no doubt, lay the blame on the communist world conspiracy, and their 'pragmatism' might express itself in equally futile attempts to bully or conciliate. But it would be life rather than any conspiracy which defeated them. They simply have nothing to offer, humanly or politically.

Let us hope that Mr. Vorster reads **Advise and Consent** for the sake of the warning it contains, and not for its spurious vision of success.

* By Allen Drury, author of the recent account of South Africa "A Very Strange Society."

CENSORSHIP AND THE PRIMARY HOMELAND

by NADINE GORDIMER

We don't know whether, their unity finally broken by the weight of a blade of grass from the rugby field, our government will have a sufficiently free mind before the elections to carry out an intention to abolish appeals to the courts against decisions of the censorship Board.

But we were told by the Minister of the Interior, Mr. Muller, in August this year that the step was being considered: the ultimate extension of the powers of the Publications and Entertainment Act by abolition of the very clause that was offered as a built-in check and safeguard against any possible abuse of those powers.

For that is what we were assured in 1963 when the Act was promulgated. The censors themselves would be people of the highest literary judgment and in any case, there would always be recourse to the courts to challenge their decisions. It would be a little difficult, and, of course, expensive to do so. It would be a reversal of the conception of justice to which we are supposed to be devoted in this country — that a court is a tribunal before which a man is given the opportunity to meet charges against himself, not a place where he enters prejudged guilty by some government-appointed board and must prove himself innocent. But it would remain a **right**.

REASSURED

Many people allowed themselves to be reassured. Those who were not were frowned upon as extremist. Couldn't they see that it was unreasonable to oppose censorship totally, on principle? Couldn't they admit that there were some publications and films that were simply filthy, a raw incitement to sexual or political violence, without any artistic merit? The answer that the apparatus to deal with such works already existed within the ordinary processes of law left the questioners uneasy; in South Africa we are so conditioned to accept that - to paraphrase Pascal - the government has its reasons. Wasn't it better to concede arbitrary control in return for the promise that (by nature of the exalted critical faculties of the Censorship Board members) serious works of art would be respected, and, in the remote

event of an error of judgment, a decision could be reversed in open court?

But of course there was only one way to oppose censorship if one doubted censorship at all, as there has always been only one way to oppose other apartheid legislation if one doubts apartheid at all: on principle, totally, and from the beginning. Because you can neither impose nor dismantle the system piecemeal; the system consists of units of legislation large and small, that have each their rationale essentially in relation to the grand design. For example, there is no such thing as petty apartheid; it is political logic that happens to be operating on a scale that makes it **appear** absurd, that is all. What is absurd is to think that it can quite easily be abolished — a thought regarded in this country as an "enlightenment" that some South Africans such as Professor Barnard seem prone to receive when lying awake in the small hours in hotels abroad. There is nothing easy about it; if you are ashamed of petty apartheid, you must have the strength and will to get rid of the whole system.

GOVERNMENT HAS ITS ILLUSIONS

Conversely, there was no way to accept the Publications and Entertainment Act in 1963 without accepting by implication the eventual abolition of right of appeal to the courts. I am not suggesting that the inclusion of the clause in this Act was a deliberate piece of deception. I am sure that our government, too, has its illusions. Ministers act in good faith, no doubt, when they delude themselves sometimes that they are not committed to a Faustian bargain with the political logic of their chosen goal. But from the beginning, the end of the safeguarding clause was plainly in sight for anyone who faced this political logic. No social system in which a tiny minority must govern without consent over a vast majority can

afford to submit any part of control of communication to the hazard of a court decision. The clause — poor perfunctory gesture to the rule of law rather than to freedom of expression that it is — might just as well have been written in disappearing ink.

For, removed from the context of its emotive avatars (protection of virtue, protection from temptation; a superego policing the obstreperous national id) censorship is control of communication. Not "communications" mind, but "communication", that concept that covers the thoughts set in train by the written or spoken word, as well as the word itself, and that in the final analysis is the process by which men reach out and find each other. We speak of the failure of a human relationship as one in which there is "no communication". Control of **information** is merely one of the functions of censorship; its ultimate purpose as a political weapon of apartheid is to bring about a situation where there is "no communication" between South Africa and the world without — the world of ideas that might cause us to question our way of life here, and "no communication" within our society between the sections of a people carved up into categories of colour and language. Communication is at once intangible and the ultimate in human integration. So long as the lines are down there is little likelihood of people finding common cause.

WRITTEN WORD

Of course, communication in this deep sense does not depend entirely upon the word, but it is the word, and the written word in particular, persisting for reference and reflection after the spoken word has died away, that carries communication most widely. The critic George Steiner* speaks of the written word as the "primary homeland" of the dispossessed; it is a homeland without the ethnic grouping that would qualify it as one of the Homelands, but our government recognises its existence nevertheless. Censorship in all its manifestations provides an electrified fence to keep us out of that territory.

How does censorship work as part of the grand design of apartheid? And how effective has it been? Far more than we realise, I think. Picking up a daily newspaper, one may be reassured — and visitors from abroad are often surprised — to see reporting and open debate on contentious subjects. In fact, there is no "censorship" as such, of newspapers; as

the editor of one of them** pointed out recently, there is no need, because "all the censoring the Government requires is done by the newspaper staffs themselves and their lawyers. It is called 'complying with the law'" — and he concludes, "The laws which enmesh the Press in South Africa have brought us a long way along the path of being told only such things as statecraft would wish us to know." Here is an example of the interlocking of the units of legislation — the Suppression of Communism Act, the Criminal Law Amendment Act, the Official Secrets Act — these Acts and 25 more which restrict the press link up with the Censorship Act in such a way that one could scarcely detect the joins. Each smoothly confirms the restrictive power of the other, and the power of the whole. It is not without significance that the threat to abolish appeal to the courts against decisions of the Censorship Board should seem as much part of the BOSS law, under which the abolition would not be framed, as of the Publications and Entertainment Act, which is where categorically it belongs.

FEW SURVIVORS

Foreigners are also surprised to find that a journal such as "Reality" can be published. They are not aware, of course, that there are few survivors here, and that "Reality" is the sole new venture, in the field of those small journals of opinion which in all countries do much to provide background information on limelight issues, and raise those that get passed over. Small journals of this kind are not "censored", either; they are simply closed down under the provisions of one Act or another, or left without staff by a systematic banning of successive editors and journalists. As for African newspapers, they are controlled by white interests, and it is surely a measure of how unpublishable, in terms of the press-restrictive laws, African opinion on political issues is, to notice that the names of these papers never even come up in the bitter recriminations heaped by the Government on the "disloyal" press.

The Government maintains "without blushing", as Mr. Raymond Louw remarks, "that the Press in this country is free. But that "freedom" (my quotes) is subject to the restriction of nearly 30 laws and the threat of prosecution under them has become a reality for at least one large newspaper. What free-

* "The Language Animal" Encounter, August, 1969

** Raymond Louw "Freedom of the Press in South Africa" Wits. Student, 26th September, 1969.

dom remains on the level of information falls under the heading of repressive tolerance — a term that I am aware will be thrown at my head as a piece of liberal neo-Marxist jargon, but that nevertheless conceptualises accurately the position of the Press in South Africa.

HALF-LIGHT

When it comes to literature, and in particular the literature of ideas, there has been precious little tolerance to disguise the repression. Tolerance has operated in one small area only, and provides a curious half-light on the psychology of white supremacy. Literature by black South Africans has been successfully wiped out by censorship and the banning of individuals, at home and in exile. But white writers have been permitted to deal, within strict limits, with the disabilities, suffering, hopes, dreams, even resentments of black people. Are such writings perhaps tolerated because they have upon them the gloss of proxy — in a strange way, although they may indict white supremacy, they can be claimed by it because they speak for the black man, as white supremacy decides for him how he shall live. . . ?

KATRINA

Films such as "Katrina" (no doubt there will be more of them) are another curiosity. Here the 'contentious' subject of miscegenation is "tackled courageously". That is the light in which the makers offer the film; and the censors allow it to be shown as proof of freedom of the intellect here, even while Africans are complaining that, in order to ensure that they do not view contentious subjects, censorship allots them only those films which are an insult to adult intelligence. Of course "Katrina" itself is something of an insult to adult intelligence. The film doesn't tackle anything at all; at most it takes us back thirty years to the point reached in S. G. Millin's "God's Stepchildren", where she demonstrated that love across the colour bar brings misery in South Africa, but did not carry the proposition to its logical conclusion, which is that the misery is caused by the colour bar, not the love. The public goes home from the cinema drunk with the liberty of having seen a titillating subject interpreted according to the tenets of apartheid.

In literature, the events of the years 1959-64 surely traumatic whether you regard them as the triumph of the forces of good over evil, or as the tragedy of a striving for human rights that turned through frustration to violence —

have become the material for James Bond — style versions of the life of police spies. Censorship prevents any opportunity for South Africans to approach these events seriously, as an examination of human — not necessarily political — motivation. There are at least three novels, dealing in imaginative terms with the subject, that have been excised from that already much-mutilated body of work, South African literature — my own and that of C. J. Driver (banned by the Censorship Board), and Mary Benson's (automatically struck out by virtue of the fact that she is a banned person).

FINAL MEASURE

But the final measure of the effects of censorship is too often approached from the point of view of writers rather than readers. After all, writers represent a special-interest group, and a small one; Censorship affects them professionally; they may write books that cannot be sold or read. But there are many more readers than writers, and the truth is that censorship so far has affected their interests far more seriously than it does the special ones of the writers. Writers whose works are banned may hope to be read another day, or elsewhere; but a whole generation of South Africans is growing up with areas of the world of ideas closed to them, and without any insight into the lives and aspirations of their fellow countrymen, black or white as the case may be, living on the other side of that net of legislation through which we may all only peer at each other dumbly. A book may be banned under any of the Publications and Entertainment Act's 97 definitions of what is "undesirable". The success of censorship must be seen in the completeness with which we are cut off not just from the few books dealing with our own ingrown society but also from the books which formulate the thinking that is going on all around us, in particular on this continent to which we stake our lives on belonging. From Fanon to Mazrui — yes, you may well ask who they are — important writers are merely names to us. As South Africans we do not know what the rest of Africa is thinking, just as, as whites, we do not know what the black and coloured population is thinking. Nkosi, Mphahlele, Modisane — they, too, are only names, now, these black South African writers.

All this — intellectual isolation, isolation of ignorance among white people about the inner life of their countrymen of another colour — this is the blunting of human faculties

that control of communication is steadily achieving. It is essential to the maintenance of apartheid as a whole. We cannot expect

to free ourselves of censorship, to bring life back to our numbed human responses, while apartheid lasts.

FREE AFRICA — Some impressions

by D. POTTER

In Africa, as in the rest of the world, real politics revolves round the question "Shall the State or the people wield power?". Generally speaking African countries have not answered this question. Both tendencies are visible, often side by side. On the one hand the State centred on the capital reaches for a phony progress: on the other hand the people seek to improve their lot by their own efforts.

The State brandishes its symbols not in the bush where there is real work to be done, but in the city where there is air-conditioning and Bwana salaries for the civil servants. The State plumps for the expensive prestige of a national airline or a TV station for the capital or a swish ambassador's compound in the Nairobi diplomatic suburb. One sees the presidential motorcade sweeping down a Nairobi street. Fat black cars. Motor cycle cops fore and aft. Sirens. In the middle Jomo Kenyatta. One wonders whether he learnt the style from General de Gaulle. Along with the foreign currency tricks. On entering Malawi every traveller must deposit twenty pounds with the customs. On leaving Malawi the money is scrupulously returned. The trick seems designed to improve the image of the Finance Ministry, where possibly there is an account labelled "Short Term Foreign Investment". No doubt the deposits make the books look good, but the connection with economic development seems remote.

In Kenya I saw a truck-driver buy off a cop who was about to inspect his vehicle for roadworthiness. In the Sudan I saw the customs men taking their percentage off a load of smuggled whisky. On the outskirts of Khartoum one sees cardboard slums. There is a whopping tax on beer. Instead of being made locally the jam is imported from China.

VAST

In the Southern Sudan the Nile steamer chugs past virtually empty country. The earth is black. The rainfall is forty inches a year. The papyrus for mile after mile. It is so vast that it seems as if its extent cannot be measured in miles. One measures it in days' travel instead until one loses count of the days. It is a vacuum where the twentieth century has scarcely penetrated. Two Shillack braves were on the steamer. They stood six foot eight and carried spears with engraved blades and four bladed throwing knives. Their shoulders were

decorated with knobs of raised flesh forming a pattern which one may see on the statues of Lower Egypt; and one had on his belly, with the navel as hub, a wheel formed by scars. They stood bare-foot on the sun-heated iron decks of the steamer aloof plumed and dignified, staring out at the papyrus. It was forbidden to photograph them, not because of the Muslim prohibition on pictures, but "because the Government doesn't want foreigners to see how primitive they are". At night the steamer moved past curtains of flame as the people burnt off the papyrus to prepare for planting. There were soldiers aboard, who had been fighting rebels. During the day they slept in a sand-bag fort on the upper deck, and in the evenings they sat around drinking sherry. By virtue of the handful of pills I carried I became, temporarily, doctor to the Sudanese army, and was protected by my patients from the vociferous protests of an inman who objected to my breaking the fast of Ramadan.

FEW SETTLEMENTS

Later the papyrus trees turned to bush. There are a few herds of tiny cattle and a few settlements where people gather to cheer the steamer. Cops wearing magnificent ostrich plumes in their hats strut about, swiping at the people with their canes.

In East Africa the people exercise the right to take charge of their own affairs. In the near absence of traffic regulations, trading and building regulations the people set about post-colonial reconstruction. They run small bus companies, build their own pole and thatch schools, build communal dipping tanks. At the bus stops in Tanzania, on the streets of small Egyptian towns people trade in the open air produce, ready-cooked meals, homemade rope, spears, furniture.

The land, everywhere, is politically central. The contrast with South Africa could not be more extreme. Driving through the Transkei

or the euphonically named Bantu Area No. One near Giants Castle one is tempted to succumb to the apartheid lie - that Africans can only ruin land. One is tempted to succumb even if one knows the reasons. The land is still in the grip of the Chiefs. It is worked by the old and weak. The men have been packed off to the mines by the tender operation of the laws of economics. One is aware that the reserves are simply a trash can, a dumping ground for the surplus flesh that cannot be accommodated by our supposedly flourishing economy. And yet the impact of those ruined fields is so powerful that one almost comes to believe that only Bwana should be trusted with them.

EXPERTLY

In Egypt, under socialism, the peasants own their land and work it expertly. In Kenya the land has reverted to the people. On the slopes of Kilimanjaro the peasants own their land which they irrigate by means of an intricate system of canals. Their houses have masonry walls and iron roofs. The people eat meat. The children go to school. They do not have swollen bellies. Near Moshi those who need land simply start working it. One of the main differences between free Africa and the Republic is that the people are better housed than the animals. When they work they work like men, not like prisoners of war. It is impossible to think of them as "boys". Their rural society is intact and vigorous, having been spared the grosser forms of malnutrition and three generations of blackbirding: and by virtue of their vigour and their social cohesion the people wield economic power. They don't need a school or a brickworks or a village bridge they go out and make it.

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

In free Africa the shams of twenty years of apartheid slip lightly and instantly away. It is enormously liberating to know that the corruption of personal relationships by the colour bar is only superficial. Among the Bwanas it is becoming less and less fashionable to maintain the colour bar; to the scores of Peace Corps and V.S.O. workers and their counterparts from Canada and Germany race prejudice is very nearly incomprehensible. (Possibly this explains why the Peace Corps is banned from South Africa.) Because they live very close to the Africans and work with them on water-supplies, road schemes, education etc., the Peace Corps have gone a very

long way towards repairing the white man's reputation. Consequently the Africans are quite natural. There is no mattress apartheid, soap apartheid, cup apartheid. There is no baasskap rule that Africans are a little slow though eager to learn. There is a fair sprinkling of people who speak English or French with accuracy and even ambition. (Examples: This is a well watered country. My father is a peasant from a remote district. You can't compare colonial risings to the wars between sovereign states.) and with such people one does not dare to use baby-talk. One remembers the degraded jargons of Fanakalo or Kombuis-Afrikams with distaste. Conversations gravitate towards Vietnam, Rhodesia, the revolt against the Portugese, methods of crop production, since Africans, like the other grown ups, are interested in serious topics rather than safe ones.

NORMALITY

Another index of normality is the two-way flow of helpfulness and hospitality. In the Sudan, being completely broke, my companion and I lived for a week off the people. They gave us food. They lent us money for train fares. They tried to bully bank officials into cashing our cheques. Later, other people borrowed money from us.

The apartheid sex rules melt away as one moves among innocent people. On a bus in Tanzania, a dignified Masai in tribal gear with ear-plugs, spear and sword permitted himself the luxury of fingering my companion's glorious hair. And in Madagascar where the women are amiable, quiet, generally French-speaking and nearly always beautiful, even the domineer could not be blind to their charms.

The change in the white man's position was once put to me by an Indian shop-keeper who invited me to stay with him in a twelve hut village in Northern Uganda. For three days I went with him on fruitless buffalo hunts and on expeditions into the bush to buy crocodile skins. At the end of my stay he said "Formerly you would have been the Bwana and I the coolie; but now Uganda is independent. That is why we can be friends".

BREAD and CIRCUSES

A Look at the Opening Rounds of the Election Campaign

by ALAN TONKYN

"The people that once bestowed commands, consulships, legions and all else, now bridles itself and longs eagerly for just two things - Bread and circuses!"

"If you would have some say in matters of conscience such as raffles and Sunday sport then ring..... and make certain that your name appears on the voters' list for the elections during April next."

The first of these two statements is that of the Roman satirist Juvenal, writing at the beginning of the second century A.D. The second is that of the secretary of the Midlands Regional Council of the United Party, in a letter to the "Natal Witness" in October, 1969. The Natal electorate may be better dressed and sweeter-smelling than its Roman counterpart, but it would seem to have advanced little in political sophistication when Bread and Circuses can still be held out as an electoral lure.

It is true that such lures are offered in most democratic elections, but in the South African context they are especially shameful. An all-White election is bad enough, but an all-White election that takes almost no notice of the plight of the black and brown people in South Africa is a sorry farce. In a land be-devilled by malnutrition and a lack of basic housing, health and educational facilities Bread and Circuses become a grim joke. The early stages of the election campaign have not been taken up only with such trivialities as Sunday Sport and raffles, but there has been an aura of unreality about these opening exchanges which even the efforts of the Progressive Party have not been able to disperse.

ROME BURNS

South Africa, amongst other things, is faced with a black population explosion, and with an industrial boom that is refashioning the middle and lower orders of South African society. An election campaign at this moment should ring with an almost hysterical insistence about such matters. However, to use another Roman analogy, the whites are fiddling while Rome burns.

One of the main causes of the unreality pervading the election campaign is, as is

noted in our editorial, the struggle between the Nationalists and the "Herstigte" National Party (HNP). This struggle was obviously one of the major reasons underlying the calling of the election, for Mr. Vorster stated that he wished to show the world that South Africa had a stable, undivided government. This Afrikaner civil war is one which has to do with the Nationalist "sport" policy (or the Nationalist racial policy as it affects sport), with eating with Bantu, with being nice to English-speaking South Africans, and with watching T.V. It is absurd.

But enough of such abstract speculations about the struggle. Let us look at the physical realities.

"Thrice he was beaten down and flung off the 4 foot high Town Hall stage. Twice he fell flat on his back. Blows were traded furiously. But he gave as good as he got - if not better. I saw a young muscle-bound lad's head snap back as his jaw crunched under the impact of Mr. van der Merwe's powerful fist." Is it a boxing match? A riot? Technically speaking, no. It is part of the election contest between the HNP and the Nationalists as reported in the "Sunday Tribune". It is part of that mysterious and civilised procedure which Mr. S. L. Muller would have us believe is too sophisticated for the comprehension of such people as the Coloureds. The excerpts above record the conflict at Paarl between "Oom Fanie" van der Merwe of the HNP and young Nationalist thugs. The scene at Paarl was similar to that at Newcastle, Vryheid, Heilbron and Bloemfontein. These occurrences might almost be utterly comic if it were not for the context in which they are placed. For while Oom Fanie's "powerful fist" lashes out, South Africa burns.

AN OBSESSION

This civil war, as mentioned before, is irrelevant at this crucial stage in South Africa's history: a few more U.P. M.P.'S or some HNP faces in Parliament will make no difference to South Africa's disaster course. However, the conflict may yet have its importance. The Nationalists are obviously obsessed with their need to defeat the HNP. Nationalist invective and Nationalist thugs have been directed against the HNP rather than the U.P. The Nationalists have been forced on many occasions to drop their verligte guard in order to parrot some of the prejudices to which their ultra-right wing opponents seemed to be staking a proprietary claim. Thus we have Dr. Connie Mulder casting doubts on the feasibility of the All Black tour, and Mr. Schoeman airing his distaste at "eating with a Bantu". This Nationalist obsession with the danger of the HNP which helps to lend an air of unreality to the election campaign at the same time diverts the Nationalists from their task of embroidering the ludicrous "Bantu homeland" policy. Faced with a strong undercurrent of extreme right wing opinion, the Nationalists cannot afford to be generous to the "Bantu", and they cannot afford to appear too "enlightened." Such developments may well force an earlier end to the Bantustan policy than might otherwise have been possible. It is significant that while Nationalist leaders allowed, and indeed enabled, those in the Tswana homeland to starve for years, they acted within 72 hours to embarrass Dr. Hertzog publicly and legally after he made his rash statement about the possible annual cost of the proposed Bureau of State Security. The Nationalists are

being forced to show even more clearly that power matters more to them than principle.

While this absurd right-wing battle continues, there would seem to be a chance for the main opposition party to put itself forward as a party really concerned with the crucial issues facing South Africa. A statement by Mr. Bill Sutton, M.P. for Mooi River, seemed to suggest that the U.P. really was doing just this. After the nomination of the Progressive Party candidate for the Mooi River constituency, Mr. Sutton expressed the hope that a Nationalist candidate would be put forward, and added:

"I would be very disappointed to have to spend six months in my constituency debating puerile political platitudes with the Progressive Party when all around us the fight is raging against the Nationalists' political juggernaut which is crunching its way through the rights of the people of South Africa."

If the United Party fight is "raging", it is raging piamissimo. Here is an example of it, taken from the "Natal Witness" of 4th November:

"Only the stupidity of the Government prevented South Africa from enjoying the privileges of TV, Sunday sport, State lotteries and better pensions, Mr. Eric Winchester, United Party M.P. for Port Natal said yesterday."

"Stupidity" is the best word that Mr. Winchester can find to attach to a government that is perpetrating acts of brutal inhumanity and wild insanity throughout South Africa. TV., Sunday sport, lotteries, pensions, these are the "Bread and Circuses" which Mr. Winchester offers the whites of South Africa.

Here are some more snippets from the U.P. election campaign:

"Mr. Marais Steyn, deputy leader of the United Party, last night challenged Mr. Vorster to prove that he was sincere about national unity by rescinding the laws on mother-tongue education. . . . Mr. Steyn, in full cry, also attacked the Government's sports policy. . ." (Natal Mercury, 22/11)

Mr. Carpendale gave notice that he would move a motion that the Council was of the opinion that the cause of national unity among the white people of South Africa could best be achieved by adopting the principle of the U.P. (Natal Mercury 18/11)



"Dr. Hertzog keeps fit by trying to speak at Herstigte meetings."

FEATHER DUSTERS

Messrs. Steyn and Carpendale, armed with feather dusters, go out to do battle with the Nationalist juggernaut. One feels that the formidable political engine seemingly represented by "Mr. Steyn in full cry" could well be directed against something more important than the Government's sport policy. Raffles Sunday sport, white unity, white pensions, "petty apartheid" - these are the candy-coated issues on which the U.P. goes to battle for the "rights of the people of South Africa".

Even when a man like Sir de Villiers Graaf deals with an important matter like the shortage of skilled manpower owing to the Government's wasteful policies, his voice remains a respectable whisper, geared to soothe the whites, and offering only scraps of comfort to the non-Whites who are to be led "with justice". For instance, Sir de Villiers has explained that he does not wish to admit unlimited numbers of non-whites into all occupations. He says that his party would pay special attention to the education and re-education of the whites "to ensure the quality of their leadership, their ability to take new and better paid jobs in a technologically advancing economy". His party, he says, would guarantee a national minimum wage for whites. The wages of Africans working in Border areas would be revised periodically so that the latter would not compete unfairly with whites doing similar work elsewhere. The United Party is obviously more keen on placating the whites than on providing for the future of that ever growing mass of non-white industrial workers who hold the future of South Africa in their hands.

THE REAL ISSUES

While the Nationalists brawl and the United Party mutters, what are the matters about which an election should be fought? Here are just a few, taken from recent press reports. They are all matters which, in healthy democratic societies would shake nations, and topple governments:

● The lack of housing for Coloureds on the Rand and in Durban.

"Eleven families totalling 52 people are living in a 12-room shack settlement in Durban's Greenwood Park — and the Department of Community Development says it cannot help them" (Sunday Tribune)

"Whole families of Coloureds are arriving daily in Johannesburg to replace Africans ousted from their jobs by the physical Plan-

ning Act — and the result could be greater overcrowding than ever the city is already short of 5,000 houses for Coloureds." (Rand Daily Mail)

● African poverty and disease

In the Tswana homeland: here, according to Dr. D. Mackenzie, former superintendent of the St. Michael's mission hospital, starvation, malnutrition, T.B., florid scurvy, beri-beri, and pellagra are everywhere to be encountered, not to mention the social evils of prostitution and illegitimate children caused by the migratory labour system. . . . many Africans were moved from so-called Black Spots into this area with seemingly very little provision having been made for them"

(Rand Daily Mail)

At Morsogat "resettlement area": "Poor, often non-existent, facilities; unhealthy and degrading living conditions; additional costs eroding wages that are already far too low the enforced break-up of families. These are the morale-shattering hardships responsible for a comment that is heard again and again in Morsogat: 'We have been thrown away'"

(Rand Daily Mail)

Everywhere else: In a letter to the Rand Daily Mail the Director of the Medical Missions of the Anglican church said that the Tswana situation existed in such areas as the Transkei, Zululand, Transvaal and South West Africa.

● Indian poverty

"Thousands of Indian families are living at near-starvation level in affluent Durban. By Christmas, many of them may not have even a roof over their heads"

"Durban corporation and Government department were among the biggest 'culprits' who paid abysmally low wages from R32 to R44 a month (Sunday Tribune)

" . . . in spite of protests from (Indian) home owners the Department of Community Development has refused to repair the badly cracked houses, built less than three years ago." (Sunday Tribune)

● Expulsion of Indians and Coloureds from Zululand

"Between 7,000 and 8,000 Indians and Coloureds will be officially banned from Zululand from January 1 next year (The Government) doesn't know where the displaced families will go next to earn a living . . . Senior Government officials said this week that there was 'no urgency' to find alternative homes for Zululand's banned thousands."

(Sunday Tribune)

● The emergence of a Black Power movement amongst non-White intellectuals.

This is a matter which has received little attention from the Press, but, as events in the U.S.A. show, it could have cataclysmic effects on South Africa before the turn of the century.

While most of the whites in South Africa play on their political treadmill with outdated Afrikaner feuds and with lotteries and pensions, the forces of elementary chaos and misery are at work in the country. Starvation, lack of housing, disease are everywhere. At the same time the small vanguard of African graduates and the increasing army of skilled African workers is growing in awareness, and in bitterness.

Even the Progressives are caught up in the gimmickry of an all-White election, but the only electoral statements which have looked the facts of South African life in the face have come from top Progressives.

Dr Steytler, for instance, has spoken of the need for non-white labour to work where it desires and for the best wages possible. He has spoken of the non-white population explosion and its implications, and of the fact that the "political rights" now being granted to non-whites do not satisfy them since they do not affect their living and working conditions.

However, liberal South Africans must fear that, in an era of White pettiness and selfishness, Dr. Steytler and those who think like him have arrived too late.

This South Africa

Dr. Koornhof (Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration and Education) said that government, municipal and statutory body officials who had to deal with Africans were taught early in their careers that the African was a human being just like the whites and that he merited his own place in the sun.

(Report in Natal Daily News)

The Prime Minister, who was speaking at a report-back meeting in his constituency, said what had shocked him most in politics today was that the Hertzog group unashamedly claimed that now, for the first time, there was a party founded on the word of God.

"Such a claim is an insult to the Nationalist Party which, for all time, has been based upon the word of God. To play on the religious feelings of our people in this matter is detestable.

(Report in Natal Witness)

Oom Fanie (Mr. Fanie van der Merwe) has been one of the most colourful personalities on the Cape political scene for years

He has a sharp wit and is as quick as lightning with his repartee, as evidenced on Tuesday night when he caught a toilet roll and threw it back, shouting: "You need it more than I do."

(Report in Sunday Tribune)

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