

FIGHTING TALK

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A drawing by PAUL HOGARTH of
Farm Workers in Norfolk, England.

URANIUM FOR PEACE

By Dr. A. E. H. BLEKSLEY

JOHANNESBURG'S 70 YEARS

By DR. E. ROUX

THE COPPERBELT CRISIS

**SPECIAL ISSUE
ON THE PASS
LAWS**

Short Story by
ALFRED HUTCHINSON

A MONTHLY JOURNAL FOR DEMOCRATS

"FIGHTING TALK"

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Editor: RUTH FIRST

COMMENT

COMING OF AGE

IN 1935, priests, politicians, chiefs and teachers—the leaders of the African people—gathered in Bloemfontein to strike a blow against the "Hertzog Acts," the Natives Land and Trust Act, the Natives Representation Act, the Natives Urban Areas Act. There was born a new force in South African affairs—the African opposition to White supremacy, united for the first time across the lines of tribe and language, co-ordinated across the borders of district and province, armed with the techniques of modern political organisation and agitation. This was the All African Convention.

And now it is 1956; twenty-one years on. And again there is to be a great national gathering in Bloemfontein called by the Interdenominational Ministers' Association. This time the blows will be directed against Nationalist apartheid law, the current, most reactionary expression of White supremacists. But this time, things will be different. The infant force, born twenty-one years ago has reached maturity. This time Bloemfontein will speak not just for the advance guard, the enlightened few, as in 1935, but for a whole people who have grown towards political consciousness as a plant grows towards light, who have established political organisations that cover the country and speak for the nation.

And because of that difference, Bloemfontein must not hark back to the decisions of the past, to set up new campaign committees, answerable to nobody. Instead it must throw its weight in the direction in which history has moved for these twenty-one years. It must record an unmistakable rejection by the African people of apartheid, and all its works and Tomlinson theories. And it must lay the basis for widening out the unity that has been forged around the Freedom Charter, so that it will come in time to unfold the whole range of African opinion from chief to communist, from priest to politician.

FROM THE SIDELINES

By
CECIL WILLIAMS

PROFESSOR H. W. J. WIJNHOLDS, Professor of Commerce, Money and Banking at Pretoria University in an already notorious interview with the *Rand Daily Mail* said, "South Africa is spoon feeding the Native population and the country's reward will be a race of dependent, morally weak and useless people . . . the best way of achieving something akin to a balance in the racial groups would be to halt the great natural increase in the Native population . . . previously they had died in thousands from lack of proper medical care and from starvation . . ." Jesus Christ, enraged at the affronts to God of the moneylenders and bankers in the Temple, took a whip to them and drive them out. In a short time, the modern messiahs of South Africa, enraged at the affronts to MAN of the professors of money and banking, will take a whip to them and drive them out. Meanwhile, I am appalled at the decay of White South Africa's moral fibre, at the corrosion of the conduits of human feelings. Pity, love, compassion are being curdled into their opposites. The community virtues of aid for the weak and defenceless, protection for babies and children, shelter for the homeless are dubbed community vices. And the poisoned wells of hatred are gushing out all over. The Whites no longer relieve their hatred by "kicking a Kaffir"—that's not enough—they're kicking each other. On the West Rand local youths fight German immigrants; on the East Rand "ducktails" with Italians; a Johannesburg post office worker is fined £15 for barbaric cruelty to a chained up dog; a boy of 15 is whipped for stabbing and setting alight to a number of dogs; an embittered, angry father seizes a gun which kills his two-year old child; a drunken husband beats up his wife and drives her, naked, out of doors. These horrible deeds, expressing the frustration of warped personalities, reflect the race-hatred of the Whites in general, and, in particular, the desperate practices of the Government, driven by insecurity, rapacity and their own brand of sadism. Mussolini and Hitler met their ghastly ends as their *herrenvolkism* crashed about their ears. So, too, in South Africa . . .

VERWOERD'S correspondence on the question whether Advocate Duma Nokwe shall be permitted chambers in a "White" area has set the Johannesburg Bar Council and newspaper editors by the ears. They really are angry—the members of the Bar doubly so. Firstly, they are indignant that a Cabinet Minister can so spitefully insist on the application of a discriminatory law to the extent of preventing an admitted advocate from earning a living. Secondly, they are outraged that a Cabinet Minister can so rudely ignore their reasoning, so maliciously impute false motives to them—and so mockingly twist their tails. But I am not surprised at Verwoerd's uncouthness. He is reputed to be something of a megalomaniac, in addition to which he is a member of the Nationalist Government, which has shown unmistakably since 1948 that it doesn't give a hoot for the practices of democracy. Verwoerd refuses to talk to people who, however mildly, however justly, question his actions. *Au contraire*, through his secretary, he tauntingly slanders them.

MR. A. G. T. CHAPLIN, Resident-Commissioner Designate for Basutoland, whose appointment was held up for a while because of the Basuto people's refusal to accept a *South African* in that post, must be making a lot of South Africans ask, "What's wrong with us South Africans, anyway?" What a blow to the pride of the White supremacists to learn that they're not considered good enough to be a civil servant to Black people. Still, we shall learn in time that the great majority of the human race believe that we are all created equal: and that the minority of race-bigots are being humbled and brought low.

UNTOUCHABLE

**THE
PASS LAWS**

“ . . . When the camouflage and fancydress, the bright publicity talk are stripped from the pass laws, they stand revealed as the framework of South Africa’s modern serfdom.”

THE NEW SLAVERY

By RUTH FIRST

THE young African in the hospital bed at Coronation Hospital could not talk easily, which wasn't surprising. He had tried to slit his throat with a razor blade, and had been found, moments later, by sheer chance, as he lay bleeding on the floor of the room in Sophiatown. His pass was not in order. He'd tried again and again at the pass office to have it "fixed," but without success. How could a man live in the town without a proper pass?

A 30-year-old Orlando man decided he couldn't. Convicted for a pass offence, he served a long prison term on a Bethal farm, and when he came back "a changed man," desperate because his pass still left him on the wrong side of the law, he hanged himself by an overall belt from a nail behind the kitchen door of his mother's house.

Horror stories? Horrible, but true. And in a South Africa that has become so conditioned to the pass laws that they are accepted as normal, necessary and our way of life, such stories must be remembered, and told. Two suicides, but for these two how many hundreds of thousands rounded up in raids, in prison, in farm jails, how many broken families, and youngsters running from the pick-up vans?

A Nightmare For Every African

Every year more and more Africans go to prison under the pass laws. Take the steep rise in convictions over the last five years. In 1950 217,387 Africans were convicted under the curfew, location, registration and other pass regulations. In 1955 the figure was 337,603. On every working day last year more than 1,000 Africans were sentenced in the courts under the pass laws. These are the figures for convictions, not arrests. Thousands more caught in the pass law dragnet do not appear in court. Shunted through the network of labour bureaux in the country, condemned by passes that don't meet the savage requirements of the law, they are bamboozled, cajoled, threatened or stampeded into accepting farm work rather than face prosecutions or be finally expelled from the cities.

The pass laws are a nightmare. Young men grow up gnawed by fear of the policeman or plain-clothes detective at the next corner, of the roving pick-up van; humiliated and wearied by the queueing day after day at the pass office where men are herded like cattle for dipping; afraid above all of that dreaded purple stamp across their pass books: "Not to be employed in the urban area of—."

Thousands of police, thousands more civil servants, the White employing population, all play their part in keeping this gigantic pass machine ticking over. There are the travelling permits, the monthly service contract entries, passes for day labourers; permits to enter locations to visit friends, "special" passes for use after curfew hours; the complicated tangle of the Urban Areas Act, amendments, consolidating acts that through the years have been varied, extended, screwed tighter.

Pass Laws Under Fire

Yet, through the decades, processions of authoritative government commissions and officials have flayed the pass laws. Already in 1906 the Transvaal was trying to "simplify" its pass system. The 1920 Inter-departmental Committee on Pass Laws wrote:

"We cannot too strongly record our opinion that there should be no indiscriminate stopping of Natives by the police for the production of the registration certificate, as the harassing and constant interference with the freedom of movement of law-abiding Natives is without any doubt the most serious grievance which the Natives have against the pass laws . . ."

"All members of the S.A. Police examined by us are in agreement that no good purpose is served by the indiscriminate demanding of passes. . . . The great weight of evidence from and on behalf of employers of labour and officials shows that the various pass systems operating have been of little practical value in the tracing and identification of Natives. . . ."

Through the years the chorus grew louder, more insistent: the pass laws were under fire from the 1930-32 Native Economic Commission, the Smit Commission of 1942, the Fagan Commission of 1946, to mention only a few.

In 1942 Cabinet Minister Denys Reitz made a frontal attack on the pass law system. In the three years 1939-41, he divulged, 273,790 Africans were convicted under the pass laws (compare the figure with the 1955 convictions!) and this was a "devastating indictment . . . for no one can call this offence a crime . . .". Instructions went out to the police to relax the enforcement of the pass law in certain areas.

Pass Law "Protection"?

Not so under the Nationalists. Minister Verwoerd's Native Affairs Department Empire would never hear of the abolition of the pass laws (even if the act tightening up the system and substituting the reference book for the numerous individual pass documents is dubbed "The abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents Act!"). The pass laws are indispensable and South Africa could not ever be the same without them.

Why? They are needed for the *protection* of the African people, the Nationalists tell us.

"The (pass law) system was originally intended and in fact constituted a protection to numbers of illiterate and unsophisticated beings, almost all of whom could speak only a Bantu language, and who, as a result of economic circumstances, were required to leave the safety and tranquility of their homes in the tribal reserves to seek employment in the complex foreign environment of the towns and cities of the Union."

(From the official South African memorandum published in 1953 *International Labour Office Report on Forced Labour*).

Earlier this year an N.A.D. official told African women that the possession of reference books would be an "advantage and protection" to them.

The Nationalist Government in the role of protector of the African people: that should make even Hangman Heydrich, Protector of Czechoslovakia, stir uneasily in his grave. *No African has ever defended the pass laws or had a word to say in their favour.* Africans abominate them and demand their total abolition. *If "protection" is to be the justification, "Save us from such protectors" is their cry.*

Crime Control?

The pass laws prevent crime, says the Government. On the contrary. *Far from preventing crime, the pass laws cause it.* A system that jails hundreds of thousands each year on purely technical offences turns innocents into criminals. Honest work-seekers blocked at the pass offices by influx control and labour bureau regulations become desperados. Alexandra Township, the African area being slowly strangled by the pass laws has probably one of the highest crime incidence figures in the country. Everywhere, as the pass laws have been tightened up, the crime figures have soared.

The police tell us the daily manhunts, the mass raids are needed to stop crime, so over some weekends 2,000 men are stopped, searched, shunted into the cells. Imagine the police of Greater London arresting 20,00 men and stopping and frisking many times that number in the chance there may be gangs of dope-peddlers, thieves and murderers among them. *Wholesale round-ups that would be tolerated in no civilised community are an excuse for the absence of more effective crime detention methods, and they amount to endless reprisals against all Africans for the minority of law-breakers in their midst.*

The Real Reasons

No, crime prevention and "protection" don't wash as reasons for the pass laws. *A source of revenue, yes.* Yet the thousands collected for every pass book and photograph, on monthly service contracts, in court fines for contraventions of the law, are paid out many times over by the wasteful system that ties an army of civil servants to this gargantuan machine, that fritters away millions of African man hours every year in pass queues and prison cells.

Intimidation, the grip of the police state, yes, that is a reason for the pass laws. Every man is indexed, numbered, finger-printed, photographed and kept in his place and regimented.

Keeping the system of cheap labour going, yes. Every worker in fear and trembling lest he lose his job, his pass, the approval of his employer. Cowed, controlled, docile labour without the right to bargain for the better job, to compete in any labour area other than the one in which he is pegged as a work-seeker. That is nearer the truth.

"Through its pass laws, the state is in a position to exert pressure upon the Native population similar in effect to a system of forced labour," reported the I.L.O. Commission on Forced labour. "The indirect effect of the laws is to channel labour into agricultural and manual work and to create an abundant, permanent, cheap labour force."

The State Information Office, the Native Affairs Department, will bellow the usual denials, but the facts tell the story with stark and brutal clarity.

The Mines Show The Way

In March 1894 a deputation from the Transvaal Chamber of Mines (whose honorary president was the State President and honorary vice-president the Minister

of Mines of the day) handed over to the Volksraad in Pretoria *regulations for the issue of passes which had been drafted by the Chamber.* The Volksraad memorandum on "regulations to promote the supply of Native labour on the Goldfields of the Republic and for the better controlling and regulation of the Natives employed," read:

"Large and constantly increasing numbers of Natives are required for the mining industry, and for service on farms, and at present excessive wages are being successfully demanded. (*The wage paid by the Chamber was 61s. a month—R.F.*) Owing to the existing inadequate pass laws and regulations for the control of labour it is impossible to secure such combination on the part of employers as would enable Native wages to be reduced to a reasonable level. Owing to the present high wages paid by the mines, farmers and others are put to shifts to get labourers at high wages, and a reduction of the rate of the mines would therefore directly benefit farmers and all other employers. It has been found impossible to compel the due performance of contracts. The continuous expansion of the mining industry, no less than the requirements of the farmer, render it necessary that the Natives shall by all possible means be encouraged to seek work and that the large number in employment should be brought under effective Government control."

(*From the annual report of the Chamber of Mines 1895.*)

By October of the same year the new pass regulations *drafted by the Chamber* were in force in the Transvaal Republic.

One section read:

"Upon entering the boundaries of a proclaimed Gold field, a Native shall be bound, before engaging himself to any employer, to repair to the office of the Mining Commissioner for a district pass."

This pass was a metal badge stamped with a number to be attached to a strong leather strap or buckle, and had to be worn by the African round his left arm above the elbow.

Through the years the forms of pressure on the Government by the mining and farming groups have grown more subtle and sophisticated. The official reports of the Chamber of Mines at the end of the last century revealed the Chamber's hand in framing laws and putting pressure on government with crude and disarming forthrightness. These days official statistics on the functioning of the labour bureau, the numbers of Africans sent out of the towns as farm labourers, if kept, are well hidden. Since 1951 the official reports of the Department of Justice do not even give a total figure for arrests under the pass laws.

But though the true purpose of the pass laws is disguised and hidden from view, they function today as they did in 1895: this is the mechanism for cheap, forced labour on which apartheid, and segregation before it, is built. *When the camouflage and fancydress, the bright publicity talk, are stripped from the pass laws they stand revealed as the master framework of South Africa's modern serfdom.*

Slavery was abolished in South Africa in 1834 (though there must be many on the platteland who regret its passing to this day) but the pass laws still bind the African to his master, block his entry to the towns, keep him under constant police surveillance, control his movement, turn every employer into an arm of the police state, keep the migratory labour system going, and try to prevent the growth of stable, urban African communities in a modern industrialised society in which the old master-servant relations should be swept aside.

BITTER HARVEST

By
HILDA WATTS

"FARM PRISONS IDEAL, SAYS SWART." ("Star" headline on the opening of a new farm gaol in Paarl in 1954.)

"The Department of Justice provided 6,000 Native labourers a day from farm gaols. In addition, 40,000 labourers a year were provided from ordinary prisons. It was the policy to train these men as farm labourers and so help to solve the shortage of farm labour." ("Star", March, 1956.)

"Several more prisons were to be built soon, said Swart. Farm prisons have been a great success. They had been criticised, but the critics did not appreciate the real value of the system." (Press report, June 1953.)

OUT in the country, the air is fresh, the crops are green, the birds sing. If you are fortunate enough to be a prisoner in a farm gaol, you may enjoy all these pleasant assets of the countryside. What is more, you are housed in model buildings under ideal conditions; you are given the wonderful opportunity of receiving training in the occupation of farm labourer; and your only trouble is that the farmer for whom you work may be too kind to you.

This is the idyllic picture of life for the prisoner at farm gaols presented by official statements and speeches.

What They Say

Farm prisons have been in the news ever since Mr. Swart took to holding much-publicised openings of new farm prisons, beginning with the prison at Leslie seven years ago, which he described as a "monument to the enterprise of the farmers."

He called on other farmers to follow the example of "this wonderful piece of work. . . . you have erected a model gaol . . . people do not understand the position. They know as much about it as an ape does about religion . . . convicts who come here will be treated sympathetically." Apart from doing a national service by providing labour to the farmers, the farm gaol system also helped to reform African criminals by bringing them into the atmosphere of the countryside:

"The whole basis behind the prison farms in the Union was rehabilitation through work," declared Mr. Verster, Director of Prisons, when he took journalists on a conducted tour with the object of correcting the impression that South African prisoners were ill-treated or used as slave labour on prison farms. He described the freedom given to prisoners. *"When the mealies are fully grown, all the guard can do is to pray that the same number of convicts who go in at the one end of the field come out at the other. They are totally out of the guard's sight."*

How The System Works

There were gaols built by private individuals or companies before Mr. Swart became Minister of Justice. (Sir Abe Bailey built the Krugersdorp gaol many years ago, and mining companies drew prisoners from it; and there were private gaols at the Cape, which supplied prisoners to wine farmers and for road-making and labouring work.) Mr. Swart proudly claims the farm prison system as "his baby" and with his support, the number of farm prisons rose rapidly. In 1950 there were eight. Today

there are twice as many.

But Mr. Swart objects to the name farm gaols, and prefers to call them prison outposts, or out stations. *"Let me emphasise there are no farm gaols in the sense that farmers are allowed to detain prisoners in private gaols on their farms. The policy is to allow farmers' associations to erect prisons where we house a number of prisoners, who are then employed by the members in agricultural work on their farms."*

What about the "pass offenders" who are sent to work for farmers, and locked in compounds every night?

The use of prisoners as labourers on the farms actually falls into two categories. The farm gaols, built by associations of farmers, are for long-term prisoners, who are housed in the gaols, but hired out to the farmers at 1/9 each a day. At night they return to the gaol.

But in addition there are large numbers of men picked up for contravention of pass laws, or non-payment of tax who are sent to work on the farms as an alternative to imprisonment.

The whole system of hiring out prisoners to private employers has come in for extensive criticism, both inside and outside South Africa. And particularly the practice of sending pass offenders to the farms. Overseas, the Department of Prisons can issue such a statement as this:—

"It must be reiterated that passless Natives are under no circumstances transferred to farm prison outstations for labour purpose. The only prisoners detained at such outstations are those who have received sentences ranging from 6 months to 10 years for serious crimes (pass law offenders are normally fined from 2/6 to £1, with alternative periods of imprisonment of 4—14 days.) There is therefore no question of sending such offenders to farm prison outstations."

It is unnecessary to comment on the outrageous lie that pass law offenders are normally fined from 2/6 to £1. Many pass offenders may not be sent to farm prisons, but they are handed over direct to the farmer, who without the actual official status, is in fact their gaoler.

During 1952, 40,553 African prisoners "elected" (the official term!) to take part in the scheme whereby petty offenders with sentences not exceeding four months are hired out to farmers, while in 1953 and 1954, 100,000 short-sentence prisoners "availed themselves" of this scheme.

We do not, however, differentiate greatly between these

two categories—the pass offenders who are kept like prisoners on the farms, and the long-term offenders for whom farmers build their own official gaols. If anything, the short-term prisoners or contract labourers are liable to suffer most, and the majority of serious assault cases that come to the courts concern these prisoners. *But it is the whole system of forced labour on the farms which is wrong, and that gives rise to a train of evils.*

These Are The True Facts

For now take a look at the true picture.

The system is designed to keep up the supply of labour to farms, men who of their own free will would never go and work under the conditions that exist on the farms.

This fact, too, is freely admitted. *"The farm labour problem in the Eastern Transvaal is so acute that without convict labour he would have to give up farming,"* stated a leading member of the Geluk Farmers' Association. What is more, Swart claims that it costs the State only a third as much to maintain a prisoner in the country as in city prisons.

In spite of the fact that it is constantly reiterated from official quarters that pass offenders "choose" or "elect" to work on the farms instead of serving an ordinary prison sentence, the facts are different. Sometimes they are tricked into going, at other times they simply have no choice. A favourite story is to tell them that they are being sent to work in factories on the East Rand—Springs, perhaps, or Germiston. Many really believe they are going to such factories; others know it is not true; but they have no choice. Men whose passes are not "in order" are told they must agree to periods of farm work or face prosecution or endorsement out of the urban area. Sometimes they are asked to put their thumb-print on a contract, sometimes to run past a table touching a pencil.

Bethal district, Nigel, Devon . . . the rich mealie and potato lands of the Eastern Transvaal . . . the convicts know them well. Usually they are deprived of their clothes, given sacks to wear, a sack to sleep on or use as a blanket in winter. "A whipping was our daily bread," said one of the "9d.-a-day" prisoners. Under his raised shirt, the wheals still showed across his back. At night, prisoners and contract labourers are locked in compounds, even chained by their ankles to a post in the centre of the shed where they sleep.

The story is endlessly repeated. Terrible assault cases have reached the courts and received publicity: the horrifying Snyman case (*"Take his shirt off, he does not feel anything . . . I will beat him for a week."*); the Gouws case (*"I am dying now, Master."*); the Bedwell case (*"Baas, I only wanted my money . . ."*); the Michael case (*"the boss boy cried until he was unable to cry any more . . ."*)—these are only extreme examples of the daily treatment of thousands of labourers on the farms.

To be beaten is simply part of the routine. From sunrise to sunset the farmer or his foremen crack their mule whips, their sjamboks. Hard porridge served on a sack and eaten with bare hands is the staple diet. Often at the end of a month or two, when they are due to be released, the farmer refuses to let them go, withholding money and passes and clothes. Some escape, bringing back to their homes the bruises, the lash-marks, the sores and scabs that are the marks of their labour.

"There are isolated cases of maltreatment which are severely punished in the courts," says Mr. Swart, but *"I deny that farmers, as a whole, treat their labour badly."*

And after the Snyman case . . . "one hardly hears any complaints from the convicts about bad treatment."

But escape, whether you are a pass offender living on the farm, or a long-term convict working among the "high" mealies, is not something to be lightly undertaken. A man I knew, a Rhodesian whose pass was "not in order," and who was sent to a farm in Nigel district (after being told that he was being sent back to Rhodesia!) escaped stark naked one night only through supreme daring and courage. He also had a whip-lash mark down his face and neck, although he had worked on the farm only two days.

The farmers have their own "boss-boy" jailers, their dogs, their guns. In the farm gaols, prison officials are told to shoot to kill. *"Officers of the prison service must not hesitate to use their weapons to prevent escapes,"* says Mr. Verster. They are told it is unnecessary to shoot first into the air, or to aim wide of the escaping convicts. All convicts are warned they will be shot if they attempt to escape.

And This Is What Lies Behind The System

Every year now more than fifty thousand human beings become the victims of this evil and frightful system. For it is the system of forced labour that breeds such conditions. In the case of the farm gaols, farmers are being encouraged to invest large sums of money, in fact to have a vested interest in the maximum exploitation of convict labour. The one inducement that could have forced the farmers to improve labour conditions on their farms—the necessity of attracting free labour—is permanently removed, it becomes unnecessary even to provide the convict workers with the basic minimums of life—sufficient food and clothing; for provided life can be maintained until his term of work expires, it does not matter to the farmer in what physical state he leaves.

At the root of it all lie South Africa's racial attitudes and the pass laws; the one ensures that contempt for human (African) life that makes cruelties inevitable; the other ensures that the forced labour supply will not dry up. "Arrests Ensure Supply of Native Farm Labour," stated a Mail headline some time ago, during a reporter's investigation of the pass laws. The police dragnets sweep out wider and wider, day and night, to bring in every possible pass and tax offender. The farmers send their barred and wired vans to the Native Commissioner's Courts to pick up their next batch of victims. Even the "Star" described it as "A Vicious System"—there is no doubt the system lends itself to gross injustices."

"Rehabilitation through work!" says Mr. Verster. *"Helping to reform Native criminals by bringing them into the atmosphere of the countryside!"* says Mr. Swart. *"The outdoor existence to which the Native is accustomed!"* says the Department of Prisons.

The two sides of the forced labour coin:—the "wonderful" farm prison buildings in which farmers invest profits drawn from human sweat and blood, and the pass victims shanghaied to the farms—are two more forceful reasons why the whole pass system must be destroyed.

And the sooner the better. For each year sees a more bitter harvest being reaped on South Africa's farms. There is a limit to human endurance. What crop can grow from violence, brutality, degradation? Who will dare confront the calloused, whip-marked, starved man wearing a sack when he finally cries "halt" to the use of convict labour on the farms?

SHORT STORY

No Pass...

By ALFRED HUTCHINSON

AMOS Zwane bent over his reference book like someone in prayer. Flat-faced, smiling uncertainly—his photograph conjured up the White man, an official of the NAD, who had come to their factory. Unctuous, paternalistic, tolerant. Hugging his sagging stomach, wagging a warning finger. "Bad men, very bad men . . . Don't listen to them. The passes are finished . . . And a wallet—put your girl friend's picture in it."

After the new passes the raids had been stepped up. At the stations. At the bus stops. In the houses. Raids everywhere. Men got lost. They came months later with horned fingers, welted backs, haunted eyes. With nightmares of the farms. With ghost farmers with sjamboks . . .

A riot squad rattled up the street. His heart pounded viciously against his ribs. He told himself he need not fear; that his time was not up. He turned the pages of his pass book trying to forget, ignore, ignore the fear—like a man trying to ignore the insistent urge to urinate—and the lavatories still far away. But his ears picked out the riot squad in the deserted location. Shaking, rattling—like his life which was so badly shaken. Back to Nongoma.

He tried to picture it. But it remained a name. And only the hills, like an untamed maiden's breasts, taut in the dawn of womanhood. No, it did not remember him any more. He was a tree torn up by a gale. The terror of homelessness, of the wilderness . . . leading his wife and two children in tow. And the farm jails, the potato field, the sjambok . . . Amos Zwane squirmed.

* *

"Staan ver, jong . . . Jy stink!" The stamp pressed on the page deliberately, the White man skewing his mouth. "Gaan terug. Next."

"Baas . . ."

Next. Hamba."

Stumbling into the street like one blinded, the pass book still dangling in his hand. Bumping into a White policeman and being flung into the street. Shaking his head, shaking it, and shaking it again. A flying squad car rounding the corner lazily like a gorged barbel in lazy waters. "Look where you are going . . . Black bastard . . ." The screech of tyre and voice. A pain in his thigh. Stumbling on.

The spray from the huge funnels of the waterworks . . . Falling on the eyeless buildings, the drabness, the weariness. Falling on droves of shivering, frightened men. Falling on policemen going in and out of the buildings. And suddenly jerked, jolted by the familiar landmarks of the pass-trap area—the underground lavatories in Diagonal Street and the Indian Market. The fear tightening his scrotum . . .

Stumbling on, forgetting the pain in his thigh. Forgetting everything but the police. Remembering the location—the shambles of a sanctuary. Turning away from every man's eye. Missing a heartbeat. Missing a step. Too late. Walking on, walking towards the group of dirty African men barring the corner of the street and the huddle of handcuffed men at their side. "Pass." Taking out his pass—with the purple stamp, the mark of exile. Union tax, employment, Bantu authorities . . . A slow lazy look at the stamp . . . and the pass book trembling

in his hand. Seventy-two hours . . . The location. To hide there like the passless men—jailed . . .

Amos Zwane raised a corner of the curtain and the sun of early spring rushed into the musty room. Molefe, the carpenter, was chatting with Ma Mnisi and stroking the plank in his hands. His greasy blue overalls were steeped in the sun, so full of living. And the memory of his own working days struck him . . . the hissing, huffing pistons in the tool factory. He had been a man then . . . The thought of Fana and Mamazane numbed him—his two children going hungry and ragged. And Martha—how would she take it . . .

* *

"What to do there . . . Nongoma . . . It's in Zululand . . ." Her eyes blinked in the candlelight.

"They chased me out of here."

He had waited for her to ask him. But she had kept aloof throughout supper—his nightly ordeal since he lost his job. And he had been aware only of her eyes, of the burning accusation in them . . . Blaming him, blaming—as if he could help it. She enveloped the children in a wild protective look. He suddenly realised that if he went he would do so alone.

His flight from town echoed in his mind. He was afraid of Martha, too. He was afraid of the wild uncaring, abandon, that he saw in her eyes. He longed for his dead mother; longed for his father who had died so long ago.

"I'm tired," she said yawning indifferently. "Ma asked me if the children could come and live with her." He knew she was stealing the children from him. He saw his home broken and the little he had stored in the world . . . the little happiness . . . All gone.

She suddenly turned to him. "Can't you do something?"

He felt a knot of irritation. "Like what?" The harshness of his words surprised him.

"Oh, you don't care," she said with a bored shrug of the shoulders.

His eye caught the strip of cement on the floor, the strip that would not grow any more and cover the whole floor. Like the room he would have put up . . . Those things belonged to the past. All gone now. In their place were the rounded hills.

* *

He stamped his feet. He glanced up and down the street. And up and down the street. Why was the man taking such a long time with his new pass, his new lease of life? A fugitive fear nagged his heart . . . He restrained himself from going after the man . . . He would wait. He had given the man the five borrowed pounds . . . What a fool. He knew then he had been cheated. He trotted down the street taking the way the man had gone.

"Brother, did you see a short fat man?"

"Short fat man?"

"He fixes passes . . . He told me to wait . . ."

"You didn't give him money?" Amos Zwane was silent. "He's gone with your money . . . He's finished the people."

• Continued on next page

No Pass... (Cont. from previous page)

A red world tottered and fell on him. He dug his fingers into his eyes, staggering drunkenly... He stumbled not knowing what he was doing. He stumbled in a searing blindness.

"Pass." He stumbled past the man. He was yanked back. "Pass... The Whitesman's papers..." He looked at the policeman with blank bloodshot eyes. He slowly fetched up his pass from his pocket. The seventy-two hours had passed days ago. He did not really care now. He only waited for the blow he knew was coming. He staggered back, licking his broken lips. The handcuffs bit into his wrist with the dull ache of a cracked cold tooth.

He suddenly saw the people passing by. He realised he was at the entrance of the station. He looked at his fellow prisoners and at the man he was handcuffed to.

By Alfred Hutchinson

People were passing by and an impersonal wall seemed to have risen between them and the people walking past. He looked at his mate more closely.

"Ames... What's happened?"
"It's it again... Tell Martha..."
"Shut up, kaffir!" He waited for the White policeman to reach him. He coiled into a knot of expectancy. Then his stomach solidified with pain and he fell—dragging his mate with him. "Talk again... You're not in the f... location... You're a prisoner!"

An old woman with a bundle of washing on her head stopped, shook her head and sighed. The hurrying footsteps paused and there was a ringing silence. The policeman clamped his jaws and looked over the heads of the little group of people. The footsteps resumed again... life flowing on. Pass. Pass.

THE MACHINE

By ALEX LA GUMA

No. 27 Rutger Street, Cape Town, is a wide ugly building with a face of rough unpainted bricks. The guttering along the veranda has come loose and sags at one end, and around the edges of the lifeless doors the brown paint has turned a grimy black. A weather-beaten sign on one wall struggles to be noticed in the drab surroundings: "Native Female Registration."

Next to this gloomy building a big gate opens onto a cobble area like the courtyard of an old-time inn, and there are some more narrow, closed doors. Inside, hemmed in by glass partitions and counters a group of White clerks huddle at their desks and fight their way through the morass of red-tape and ponderous administrative machinery which is supposed to operate the soul-destroying intricacies of the pass-law system (for African women) in Cape Town.

On a long hard bench squeezed into a space in one of the offices the line of African women awaiting the ordeal of having to be registered, or to be issued with new permits, or to have their lives broken, starts and often overflows into the yard.

The official behind the counter is red-faced. It is difficult to judge, merely by looking at him, whether he is angry or just hot. His necktie has been loosened and his waistcoat unbuttoned. A row of pens and pencils form a tiny fence across his breast, as if it had been

erected there to keep out all feeling of friendliness, or even minute sparks of pity or compassion. He is unemotional, expressionless, a robot, part of the vast machinery created to enslave a people. Beyond the counter he sees a row of women with dark faces. Does he think of them as women? Are they human? Does he hate them? It is difficult to read behind the ruddy face, the fine blonde down on his cheeks, the pale hair. Perhaps the machine mind registers everything simply as other machines. The questions have become stereo-typed, like a record being played over and over again.

Ja. What is your name?
Where do you come from?
Where were you born?
Let me see your paper.
When did you come to Cape Town?

I've got no time for nonsense. Come back tomorrow morning. Next week.

The machine has no feeling for human life, flesh, blood, tired muscles, strained sinews, heavy eyes, fear and hope and frustration. The machine must administer a law, it must perform a function. It has no feeling for a woman who cannot prove how long she has been living in the area and so must be torn from her family to be removed to a strange place far from things which have become part of her life. The machine has no pity for a family ordered to leave its long established home to set up a pen-

dokkie in the bleak wastes of Nyanga with the communal latrines, water-taps, the quagmires in winter, sickness, disease, death.

In the queue the women wait to hear their fate decided by the machine.

You must come back tomorrow and bring your husband's pass with you.— But my husband must have his pass. He cannot go to work without his pass.

He will have to stay home and he will lose a day's money.

I cannot help that. You must bring his pass with you.

Where is your paper?
Ah. You are not married. When are you going to get married? You will not be given a new paper if you are not married.

You must take this paper to the baas at Nyanga.— We do not want to live in Nyanga. We have a home in Elies River.
You must take this paper to Nyanga, or we will cancel it.
You have only been in Cape Town for eight years.— No. I have lived here for seventeen years.

Stand over there and I will talk to you just now.

The woman waits aside and the machine talks on the 'phone. Minutes pass and then there is a stir and the police enter.

Waar is die meid?
Daar staan sy.
Kom jong.

THINKING BACK OVER

70 YEARS

THE "Ridge of the White Waters" may have got its name from the streams which flow north and south from the watershed to find their way through the Limpopo and Vaal to the Indian and Atlantic oceans. Many of them have now been canalised and carry laundry effluents, but we still have Little Falls and Witpoortje.

Early and Middle Stone Age men hunted along our northern escarpment, leaving various artefacts in the stream beds. They left no preserved bones and we do not know to what races they belonged. At Aarwelskop (now anglicised to "Noetheliff") are remains of stone kraals. Probably local Bantu drove their cattle there for safety from the marauding Matabele nearly a century and a half ago. Mzilikazi's impis are said to have marched across the site that was to be Johannesburg on their trek to the north-west.

Who found the Main Reef is still

There is a woman who has been in hospital for sixteen years. The machine cannot renew her permit unless she gets married or goes to work. The machine does not know anything about sickness or infirmity. A crippled woman is no different from a whole woman.

A woman is removed to jail and kept for five days before appearing on trial. The machine has found something wrong with the little sheet of paper. The magistrate finds nothing wrong with it. The machine had gone slightly out of gear and five days had been taken from a life. The machine cannot help that. Machines wear down sometimes.

Daily the machines grind away. The robot with the pale Morde hair is tireless, inscrutable, hard. Sometimes the mask slips away and there is a revelation of human emotion. But the slip is adjusted quickly, the functions go on, ceaselessly.

Let me see your paper.
You cannot get a new paper unless you go to Nyanga.

You must come back tomorrow. I have no bus fare.

I can't help that. You must come back tomorrow.

Waar is die meid?
Daar staan sy.
Kom. Kom. Slaap jy?

matter for dispute, as is also the problem as to who gave his name to Johannesburg. The city to be was sited on comparatively flat land between the Langlaage and the Jeppe outcroppings.

During its growth from mining camp to industrial metropolis, Johannesburg, more than any other town in South Africa, has been the centre of class conflict, the place where racial, political and social forces have met and clashed.

The first of these conflicts was between the new mine magnates of the Witwatersrand goldfields and the Boer republican government of Kruger. In this struggle the mine-owning capitalists enlisted the support of the rank and file diggers, prospectors, overseers and traders who formed the majority of the White population of Johannesburg. These people, classed as "Uitlanders" by the republican government, were incited to demand the vote. Had it been granted them that would have formed an opposition to the land-owning majority in the Volksraad and, from Kruger's point of view, a fifth column for the British Empire.

The Jameson Raid, by which the supporters of Rhodes sought by a coup d'état to overthrow Kruger's government, misfired badly. Jameson's six hundred raiders from Mafeking were surrounded and forced to surrender south of Roodepoort, while the Uitlanders in Johannesburg were cowed by a fifteen pounder gun mounted on the Fort (where the prison still is.)

The Reform Committee, which had planned the raid, was arrested; its members were condemned to death. Lionel Phillips fainted when the sentence was pronounced. He and his fellow prisoners survived to become leading and respected citizens of Johannesburg, after the war of 1899-1902 had given them the kind of government they wanted.

Following the war, profits lagged because of lack of cheap labour. Africans, not yet properly marshalled by poll tax and land acts, did not come in sufficient numbers. In 1904 Chinese labourers were imported from Hong-Kong. Imprisoned in compounds they frequently broke loose and caused trouble. Out of the anti-Chinese agi-

Dr. Edward Roux writes a Johannesburg Anniversary article.

tation arose the South African Labour Party.

Struggle number two was between the mine owners and the White overseers, the mining aristocracy of labour. I have early recollections of strikes in Johannesburg. Except for the very rich, the White population was enthusiastically "Labour." The tramways having gone on strike, the workers cheerfully walked home to the suburbs in Benzedonout Valley or Judith Paarl. Five out of six wore red rosettes. That was in 1912.

In 1913 there was a big strike and shooting: the "Battle of the Rand Club," the "Siege of the Trades Hall." The strikers burnt down the station and the Star office. The latter was rebuilt to resist mob attacks. Chudleigh (the big store, now the O.K. Bazaar in Eloff Street) had all its windows smashed. Chudleigh was mayor and unpopular with the strikers.

Came the Great War in 1914. I remember meetings of the War-on-War League broken up by returned soldiers. In 1915 the anti-German riots. In Commissioner Street a big warehouse was burning. Casks of brandy exploded and the gutters were aflame with burning alcohol. The fire brigade was there but only to prevent the fire spreading to other buildings. The next day the houses of Germans living in the suburbs went up in smoke. That evening the mob advanced on Vrededorp. Vrededorp Nationalists met them in the Fordburg subway and there was a pitched battle. Vrededorp Germans were not burned out.

After the war another wave of strikes. And now the Black man came into the picture. No trams were running. Returning home from a meeting of strikers outside the power station, we boys passed Von Brandis Square, an open space in those days. The square was littered with papers. A mass meeting of Africans, whose passes were being burnt, had been dispersed by the police.

In 1922 the "Red Revolt." The Afrikaans worker was now in the ascendant. Strikers' commandos clashed with the police. Benoni declared a soviet! Fordburg was in the hands of the strikers. Brixton police surrendered

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COPPERBELT CRISIS

By
L. BERNSTEIN

WHEN Central African Federation was in the making, it was claimed by all its supporters that a new era of "partnership" between African and European was being opened. Wherever else that partnership may have appeared—and it is not easy to find it anywhere—it has certainly not reached the Northern Rhodesian copperbelt. Here things are as they were in the days when Rudd secured for Cecil John Rhodes and the British South Africa Company the untrammelled and exclusive right to exploit the territory of King Lewanika of the Barotse. The Black man works, and the White man profits; the White man orders and the Black obeys.

It would be cynical here to talk of partnership. The African is no partner of the copper-mining companies of Rhodesian Anglo-American and Rhodesian Selection Trust. The African digs—at an average wage of £8/10/0 per month; and the companies profit at a rate of £4½ million a month. It would be cynical even to talk of partnership between African and European miners. For the African labours and the White miner supervises.

"The value of the *minimum* European remuneration in the Copper-mining industry exceeds by approximately 500 per cent. the value of the present *maximum* remuneration of the *highest* paid African surface worker." (My emphasis.—D.B.)

This is the reality of the "partnership" as described by an official Government publication, *The Report of the Board of Inquiry on Advancement of Africans in the Copper Mining Industry 1954*. If the African miners have turned their backs on the polite discussions and friendly arguments that are common to partnerships, they have done so with reason. They have learnt the hard way about the blunt truths of life on the copper-belt. They have learnt that, with the Government, be it Northern Rhodesian Legislature or Federation Assembly, money talks—copper company money. They have learnt that, for the workers, militant trade unionism is the only answer.

The Hard Way

African trade unionism on the copper-belt has come up the hard way. At the start, the mining companies dealt with raw tribal innocents in imperial fashion—3d. a day, nine hour shifts, and rations for six days a week only. The miners struggled in unorganised, spontaneous angry fashion, and the wages crept slowly up. In 1935, when the highest-paid "boss-boys" earned 12/6 per month, a poll tax of 15/- per year was imposed on all copper-belt miners. The workers struck, unorganised as they were; and the Government struck back, with machine-guns and tear gas and batons. At Roan Antelope, five miners died; but the others were rounded up and returned to the mines as prisoners, working under armed guard.

Five years later it was the turn of the European miners. A two-day strike won for them most of their demands, in peace. Four days later, the African miners followed the example. Again the Government struck back, recklessly. Perhaps too recklessly. There were seventeen Africans shot dead, and 65 seriously wounded. Even in darkest Africa, such things could not pass unprotested in the midst of a war for what was lightly called "world freedom." A Commission of Inquiry came out from

Britain, not to rectify grievances but to pacify; copper, after all, is essential for war. The Commission skated lightly over the question of the wages of African miners, but recommended the organisation of "responsible" trades unions as the only sure safeguard of copper-belt peace.

Unions And Company Unions

The Government and copper companies reacted in typical fashion. From the Rand mine-compounds they borrowed the successful policy of divide-and-rule. Tribal groups were officially sponsored, and committees of "tribal representatives" formed to represent the workers. The more skilled were encouraged to hold themselves aloof from the mass; "boss-boys' committees" were sponsored by the companies. The letter if not the spirit of the recommendations was being complied with.

But the African workers had different ideas. Sporadic struggles continued, bypassing the company "unions," resorting to the only policy open to them, direct action. In 1946 the first successful, organised strike broke through the company-union curtain, not on the mines but on the Rhodesian Railways, controlled by the B.S.A. Company which is closely linked with the mining interests. The policy of company unionism had failed. The Northern Rhodesian Government shifted tack; from Britain's most conservative Transport and General Workers' Union the Government recruited Mr. W. M. Comrie to teach "stable, sane, conservative" trade unionism to the African workers, to divert them from militant direct action to the well-worn grooves of British trade-unionism-arbitration, conciliation, compromise. Or so it was thought.

But Mr. Comrie thought otherwise. In a short space of time he had converted several "boss-bays' committees" into branches of a newly-formed African Mineworkers' Union, and set in motion a process of trade-union organising which spread to Railway workers, teachers, drivers, hotel workers and others. The Mineworkers' Union grew rapidly under able leadership—President Lawrence C. Katilungu, former underground lasher and trolley-pusher; Secretary Matthews J. Nkoloma, educated at Ruskin College, Oxford. By the end of 1951, vigorous collective bargaining backed by real union strength had pushed up the average level of African miners' wages by 75 per cent. The old Southern African myth that "Africans are not yet ready for trade unionism" had been shot full of holes. The Labour and Mines Department of the Northern Rhodesian Government reported in 1949 that "African union officials conducted themselves in a responsible manner showing high negotiating qualities, which earned them the compliments of the general managers and conciliators." On the initiative of the British Miners' Union, the Miners' International had altered its rules to allow two unions from one country to affiliate, and had accepted the affiliation of the African Mineworkers' Union.

Advancement

But the gap remained. European workers on the copper-belt, benefiting from a bonus system by which parts of the profits were added to their annual wage, were drawing from £100 to £300 per month in pay. And copper prices had risen steadily on the wings of the cold war. Companies paid out dividends ranging from 80 per cent.

to 212 per cent. in a single year. Each African worker, on an average, produced £1,200 profit a year for the companies. The Union staked a claim for a share of that profit—for an overall wage rate of 10/8 per shift.

To the mining companies, reared in the freebooting colonial tradition of Rhodes and J. P. Morgan, this claim was "fantastic." Steadily the Union used and exhausted every legal channel of conciliation and arbitration. But finally, in 1955, a general strike was called. The response amongst the workers was almost complete. For three weeks there was a shut-down on the copper-belt, save for the skelton services of the Epropean workers. A company "return-to-work-or-be-fired" ultimatum met with no response. Finally the deadlock was broken by the intervention of a British Labour M.P. from Britain, Mr. Ronald Williams. The ultimatum was cancelled, and the workers returned to work without the satisfaction of their demands. But the Union had shown its muscles, and the Companies began to realise that they were up against a tough, determined and capable opponent. The next round, they realised, would be tougher still. The companies began to prepare for a decisive struggle to break the power of the Union. The weapon they sought was covered by the liberal-sounding scheme of "African advancement."

The idea was a simple one. Africans, so the companies proclaimed, were to be given the opportunity to advance to jobs previously reserved for Whites, and the Whites displaced would be found jobs on the managerial side, and thus suffer no disadvantage. The scheme, seemingly, promised the African miners more than they formerly had, and yet less than their demand, supported by the European Union, for "equal pay for equal work." A Mr. John Foster came from England to inquire into and report on schemes for African advancement.

Employees And Workers

In the meantime, the Companies promoted a new "trade union," reserved exclusively for monthly-paid "employees," the African Mines Salaried Staff Association. By company edict, these "employees"—clerks, boss-boys, medical orderlies, nurses and social workers, were debarred from the stop-order privileges for payment of dues to the African Mineworkers' Union, and from participating in its membership and activities. The purpose of the scheme became apparent when the Foster inquire ended with recommendations described by one paper as "those previously suggested by the Mining Companies." Africans were to be advanced to posts previously held by Europeans, it was recommended, but at wages "fit for Africans."

The categories of jobs covered by the "advancement" scheme showed that, in fact, these jobs had often previously been done by Africans, but under European supervision—driving heavy vehicles, plumbing and pipe-fitting, lashing, and minor carpentry and mechanical engineering. The rub lay not in the "advancement," not even in the meagre increase in wages which was to follow for those now promoted to work without European supervision, but in the fact that the "advanced" posts were to be monthly paid; and therefore, all holders of the "advanced" posts became, overnight, "employees," no longer eligible for the African Mineworkers' Union, but transferred willy nilly to the Salaried Staff Association. It is against this clear attempt to split and frustrate the African miners and their trade union organisation built at such heavy cost that the recent series of "rolling strikes" was started.

The New Mau-Mau

The "rolling strikes" started in July. They were conducted in perfect discipline and peace. First one mine and then another came out, for a week only. Each time, the return to work was carried out in perfect order. There have been attempts to describe the strikes as petty power-politics, an attempt by the Union to smash the Salaried Staff Association. But in fact the issue is not that all miners must be compelled to leave the company's Association, but that they shall be free to do so if they wish. From this simple issue has developed what is referred to as the "crisis" on the copper-belt. On the one side, a demand for the elementary and universally recognised right of workers to form their own trade unions freely, without coercion; on the other, the Company's determination to smash the Mineworkers' Union once and for all.

The Union, having run its full roster of "rolling strikes," has brought new pressures to bear on the companies; Sunday overtime work has been banned by the Union; Union members are refusing to wear leg-guards or to post their identity discs at the pithead before going underground, on the ground that these regulations are discriminatory because they are applied only to daily-paid African workers. On these issues the Companies have refused to negotiate or even discuss. The stage has been set for a showdown; and the Companies have determined to have it. Once again the Government has come to the Companies' rescue. A state of emergency has been declared; union offices have been raided and union leaders arrested and held without trial; meetings have been prohibited, and crowds have been "dispersed" with tear-gas.

But there is more to the present crisis than just the Mineworkers Union. This is to be a showdown with the African opposition—political as well as trade-union. African National Congress leaders have been deported from Southern Rhodesia to Nyasaland; others have been "politely warned" not to hold any meetings anywhere in the Federation while the copper-belt crisis continues. In the Federation Parliament there has been a growing agitation for "investigation" of the Congress, and for its suppression. Kenya pattern, there have been tales peddled in the press about "Mau Mau" societies forming in the Federation, and "figures" have been supplied to the London press about the number of arms held by Africans in the territory. Horror stories circulate about the "sinister" reasons behind proposals to merge the Congresses of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia. A "Kenya settler" mentality is being assiduously fostered in the Federation:

And yet everywhere, save in a single outburst of stoning in a Salisbury bus boycott, there is seeming peace in the Federation; African insurrection seems far distant and inconceivable. If there is a crisis for White supremacy in the Federation it does not lie here but in the crucial decisions which have to be taken this year on the qualifications that are to be set for voting rights for the Federal elections. If annual earnings are to be the qualification—as at present in Southern Rhodesia—higher wages on the Copper-belt may open the voters' rolls to many now disfranchised Africans. But a franchise debate in the overwhelmingly White Parliament against a fraudulently erected "Mau Mau" background can only serve the interests of the copper companies, entrench the White supremacists, and pave the way for new race discrimination in the name of "partnership."

70 YEARS

• Continued from page 9

to strikers armed with home-made bombs. Fordsburg was bombed by Government planes and bombarded with artillery. The militant strike leaders, Spendiff and Fisher, committed suicide before the soldiers marched in. The Government now had the situation in hand. Thousands were arrested; trials by special courts began. Long, Hull and Lewis sang "The Red Flag" on the gallows. Fifty thousand marched to Brixton in the funeral demonstration.

The Smuts-Botha government would possibly have gone out in the second Union elections in 1915. It was saved by the war, and 1915 was a khaki election. But in 1924 a Nationalist-Labour electoral pact and coalition came to power. It entrenched the industrial colour bar in legislation and in so doing signed the death warrant of the Labour Party, though that party was an unconscionable long time a-dying.

The Cornish, Welsh and Australian miners, the English and Scottish artisans, back-bone of the old trade unions, had gone to their fathers. Phthisis took its toll and Braamfontein cemetery is full of graves of men who died in their prime. A new class of White workers, skilled and semi-skilled, had taken their place. Chiefly Afrikaners, they found in the Nationalist Party all they appeared to want in the way of politics.

★

Social struggles of the future will increasingly centre round the position of the Black man in the metropolis.

Africans at first simply lived in slums within the city boundaries. In the 1920's Ferreirstown and New Doornfontein (on the southern side of the railway) abounded in "yards" where African workers lived. The Abantu-Batho, organ of the African National Congress, had its offices in Jeppes near the edge of New Doornfontein. The Communist Party established its headquarters in Ferreirstown. The I.C.U. chose the same suburb for its "Workers' Hall" when it arrived here in 1925.

Residential segregation, initiated by the United Party and accelerated by the present government, has changed the old pattern. Except for the Western and Eastern Native Townships there will soon be no residential areas for Africans in the city. That vast area of sprawling locations and shantytowns beyond the western border has become Johannesburg's alter ego.

Interview with an Author

VIC EDDY talks to WOLF MANKOWITZ

WOLF MANKOWITZ knew a great deal more about South Africa, all of it, than I had ever anticipated.

"Let me see," he said when I entered his hotel suite and introduced myself, *Fighting Talk* used to be an ex-servicemen's magazine, didn't it?"

I admitted it.

"And now it's a left-wing publication?"

I glanced at him, but the twinkle in his eye reassured me.

"Yes, I suppose you could say that," I replied.

The famous British author, playwright and journalist is a big man, about five feet eleven, with a charming smile and a friendly, informal manner. None of your midnight oil or garret about him; he travels extensively, lives well and enjoys life enormously. This does not, however, prevent him from writing about the down-trodden and the weak with humour and deep sympathy.

Cockney Life

Wolf Mankowitz typifies, perhaps more than any other British writer, the modern novelist with the clipped style and the biting understatement. He is the author of some six novels, several plays and innumerable film and television scripts. His latest film, "The Bespoke Overcoat," currently appearing in South Africa, is an unforgettable thirty-seven minutes of superb filmcraft. While the idea for this film was originally suggested to

More necessary than ever economically, the African is an intrinsic part of Johannesburg. But for him the mines and industries, the shops and offices would cease their bustling activities, the sky-scrapers would crumble and the gardens in those palatial suburbs would be choked with weeds.

A Chamber of Mines poster, published on the occasion of the British Empire Exhibition held in Johannesburg in 1936, showed a facade of towering buildings glittering in the sun, and below in the dark, an African miner working with his drill. That miner and his fellows in the location are not static and unchanging features of the Golden City. For them too time marches on and Johannesburg must more and more come to terms with them.

him by a story from Gogol, "The Bespoke Overcoat," set in a miserable section of the East End of London, is entirely his own. His latest novel, "My Old Man's a Dustman" (he presented me with an autographed copy), is a delightful and moving story of post-war Cockney life.

We chatted for some time about the English stage and film world; that is, he talked and I listened, chipping in a word now and again, to keep up appearances. He holds some, to me, remarkable opinions. ("Orson Welles' production of *Macbeth* is better than anything Olivier has ever done with Shakespeare"). But he reinforces his argument with some powerful and erudite comment, and his knowledge of the stage and screen, and the people who work on them, is prodigious.

"Now, down to business!" he said. "Ask me some questions."

"Question one," I said, "concerns your search for material for an I.D.B. story. That is what you came out here for, isn't it? How are you making out?"

"Very well. I have had all the co-operation I have needed, and my work here is almost finished."

He would say no more on this subject, and I decided not to press the point.

"Well, now," I said, "you've seen South Africa. How does it compare with the South Africa you've heard and read about?"

"Favourably," he replied promptly. "I am impressed with the country, the scenery, the cities, the architecture. Johannesburg may not be beautiful, but it's alive and dynamic. I love African music and African dancing."

Local Idiom

"As to that," I interposed, "don't you regard the influence of American jazz on some of our local artists as unfortunate?"

He smiled. "It came from here originally, you know."

"True," I said, "but it's put on some weight since we last saw it."

"Naturally African musicians and singers should pay more attention to indigenous music. There's a wealth of natural art in the local idiom and downright aping of American techniques is repellent. When Dolly Rathebe croons like Lena Horne I

can't listen. But when she sings like Dolly Rathebe I find her wonderful."

"Tell me," I asked, "are you familiar with the works of South African writers?"

He has, it appeared, read more South African novels than most of us. Nadine Gordimer is about the only one who approaches his standard of really good literature.

"Both Paton and Bloom have written good novels, but they will hardly find their places in world literature. South African writers lack two important qualities as a rule—humour and cynicism. "Oh, yes," he went on, seeing my look of surprise, "a touch of cynicism is very important to every writer, I think."

"How about Doris Lessing?"

"I know Doris well and like her immensely, but I find her style and her burning sincerity somewhat irritating. South African novelists, generally speaking, should learn to adopt a more universal approach to their work and should avoid the purely localised view."

Film Company

Unfortunately, there was no time to elaborate. He went on to talk about South African theatre. He believes that there is tremendous scope for local dramatic talent—so much so that he has launched his own company here, "Wolf Mankowitz Productions," which will make film and television documentaries and other features for overseas distribution. He has entered into a contract with the Union of Southern African Artists, whose function it will be, among other things, to search for and develop local talent, mainly African, for these films. It is not often that African dramatic aspiration receives such a shot in the arm.

Boycott?

"You know, Mr. Mankowitz," I said, "there is a school of opinion here which believes that artistes who intend visiting this country should be compelled by their organisations, such as Equity, to refuse to come unless they will be given an opportunity of appearing before Non-European audiences as well as Whites. What do you say to that?"

He reflected for a while before answering. "No, no compulsion. I don't believe anything would be gained by preventing overseas artistes from coming here for that reason. It should be left to their own consciences to decide this question. If others feel, as

THE CAUSES OF

DEPRESSIONS

By

MIKE MULLER

CAPITALIST production is production for profit. Profit can only come from the new values created by the workers in the course of production. As a result the workers receive only a part of the value they create, and they cannot buy back all the goods made by themselves. When manufacturers are left with unsold stocks their profits fall and they cut down or stop production, causing unemployment which again makes the position worse. This, very briefly, is the cause of depressions. Let us see how it works out in real life.

Great Wealth—Great Poverty

In the United States in 1929 (the year the Great Depression started) 5% of the people received *two-thirds* of all personal incomes.

The remaining 95% of the population were left with only one-third of the total personal incomes. Obviously not even the richest millionaire can sleep in two beds at the same time, nor eat tons of bread, nor will he buy a new motor car every day. So allowing for all the luxury spending of the rich on their personal needs, we are still left with a situation in which the ordinary people with their one-third share of income had to buy at least two-thirds of the goods produced.

On the basis of these figures you will say the whole system should break down immediately. So it would, were it not for the fact that the main expenditure of the rich is on the building and creation of new factories and plant. Such expenditure,

for instance Johnny Dankworth did, and refuse to come to South Africa and perform before purely White audiences, then let them emulate his example. But I don't think they should be forced one way or the other."

By this time other visitors began appearing in his hotel room, and I regretfully decided that my time was up.

"What of the future? Where are you off to now, and when might you be coming back?"

"From here I'm off to Moscow..."

"Lucky fellow!"

"...and I might possibly be returning to the Union next January, circumstances permitting. I hope, so, anyway."

"I hope so too," I said, as we shook hands.

and the jobs it creates, keeps the system going for several years at a time, but the new factories add to the total production and in the end "overproduction" is worse than ever. Then comes the final blow. As soon as the hope of profits fade, the capitalist stops building new factories, stops spending his profits. Then the crash comes and a real depression is on us; millions are jobless; hunger and misery prevail.

Until 1929 there used to be a depression every ten years or so. But between 1929 and 1939 it seemed very much as if the system had broken down for good. Then came the Second World War. War is a certain cure for depressions. War has jobs for everybody, as soldiers or in factories and farms. War knows no overproduction, it only knows waste and destruction.

Soviet Example

The Great Depression gave the capitalist classes of the world a terrible shock. Until that time the workers could see that when there was a depression in one place, there was depression everywhere. But during the Great Depression the world suddenly realised that one country was not affected by the disease, the Soviet Union. Here was a country where there were no queues for unemployment pay and the soup-kitchens of charity, but jobs and wages for all. The capitalists know that the workers will not tolerate another Great Depression when the example of the Socialist world will show that depressions are not inevitable.

Since 1945 the capitalists who boast that theirs is a "free economy" have had to accept rigid controls to survive. High taxes are collected by Governments and pumped back into the economy as welfare payments and subsidies. Governments nationalised unprofitable key industries and keep up investments in them (e.g., coal and railways in Britain), or subsidise others (e.g., farming and in the United States also atomic energy and shipbuilding).

For "Little Wobbles" Only

Such controls and "socialist" undertakings by capitalist governments do help a bit to stave off depressions. But even that militant voice of capitalism, *The Economist*, admits that while, "the modern economy has powerful "built-in stabilisers" that resist the contraction—tax payments decline sharply with marginal cuts in profits, state ex-

URANIUM FOR A NEW EARTH

By DR. ARTHUR BLEKSLEY

This paper on the use of atomic power for peace, not war, was prepared for the National Peace Convention to be held in Johannesburg on October 27 and 28, 1956.

WITHIN the next twenty four hours, the population of the world will have increased by almost one hundred thousand. Within ten years the population of the Republic of India will have increased by a total equal to the present population of England. Man is increasing in numbers at a higher rate than ever before in his history. And the world demand for food, the essential for life, and for power, the essential for civilised living, is increasing at an even greater rate. In many parts of the globe the common standard of living is rising fantastically; in others, the dominant desire is to raise the living standard of the community to approximate more closely to that of the more privileged nations. To meet the present situation and to realise such desires demands increased agricultural production on the one hand, and increased industrial production on the other. And fundamentally both of these demands reduce to one: the provision of cheap power in adequate quantities throughout the globe.

Well over one half of the world's population lives in Africa and Asia, under conditions in which their standards of living, of nutrition and of productivity are far below those of Western Europe and America. And yet these continents of Africa and Asia possess vast areas of potentially rich and fertile land. They probably possess equally vast potential resources in minerals on which to base a modern industrial economy. They could produce far more food than they do at present, if they possessed adequate transportation facilities, modern techniques of agriculture and irrigation systems that would ensure regular crops.

Power For The New World

Power is the basic requirement for any industrial development, as the history of the Western nations from the time of the Industrial Revolution all too clearly shows. It is the lack of power that is proving the greatest obstacle in the way of progress of the more backward countries. And until quite recently it would have been impossible to indicate any short cut towards the realisation of adequate power supplies for such nations. Now, however, through the development of the possibility of using the power of splitting atoms, a development which can be said to have come about as a by-product of the development of nuclear weapons, the entire face of the situation has been changed. Through atomic power, uranium offer the key to a new world.

The fundamental respect in which atomic power differs from conventional power sources of the past is simple. It lies in the fact of the incredible concentration of energy in fissionable material: one pound of Uranium contains as much accessible energy as several thousands tons of coal. This means that whereas in the past the development of a large power project involved the necessity of building the plant in the immediate vicinity of suitable coal sources, or alternatively of conveying the coal to the plant by means of a complex road or rail transportation system, in the case of atomic power this necessity no longer exists.

In other words, if there is any advantage in erecting an atomic power plant on the top of an isolated mountain or on an

isolated island, this can be done. A few hundred pounds of fissionable fuel, with an energy potential equal to that of a million tons of coal, require less in the way of transportation than the other and more or less conventional equipment which is needed as subsidiary to the atomic pile.

Atomic Stations For Coal

There are other reasons why atomic power must come to play an increasingly important part in the industrial complex even of the highly industrialised nations.

In Great Britain, for example, at the present time the power problem is as urgent as anywhere else in the world. Not only have British coal resources diminished incredibly during the past two or three generations. In addition the social developments of the last generation have made coal mining an even less attractive way of making a living than it had been in earlier years. The remaining coal is less accessible, and coal mining has become highly expensive. If Britain is to maintain her industrial standards, she must find other sources of power. Which explains how it comes about that it is in Britain today, and not in the vastly more highly developed United States, that the first large-scale building of atomic power stations is taking place. Thus we already have, at Calder Hall in Cumberland, the first atomic power station for the economic development of energy from fissionable material, and serving at the same time as the pilot for a dozen similar but probably improved power stations which are to be completed by 1965.

The other major reason why atomic power is inevitable, perhaps in the longer run, is applicable to a country such as South Africa, in which coal is cheap and the known coal reserves are sufficient to meet all demands for some centuries to come. This is the fact that coal is one of the most important chemical raw materials known to science. It is doubtful whether a complete list of chemical products based on coal as raw material could be drawn up, since the number probably exceeds a hundred thousand. They range from synthetic oil, for which there must always be a demand as the only adequate fuel for road and ordinary air transportation, to drugs, dyestuffs, synthetic rubber and an enormous range of such plastics as nylon. Any country which possesses adequate supplies of coal and water possesses a potential heavy chemical industry. And to burn coal for power and heating purposes is, very largely, to eliminate this possibility.

The vistas opened out by the possibility of utilising the energy of fissionable material, vistas of increased prosperity of already prosperous nations, and of prosperity for those which at present are not to be accounted among the fortunate, are therefore tremendous. Less clearly to be seen, but possibly of even greater final importance are those revealed by another aspect of the fundamental physical processes which take place within the heart of the atomic power plant, the atomic pile.

The essential point in this connection is the fact that when fissionable material, which in the first instance means uranium at the present time, undergoes the chain reaction of nuclear fission in an atomic pile, two things happen. A great deal of energy is emitted, on which the possibility of atomic energy (and of the atomic bomb) is based. In addition, however, the

atoms themselves are changed, and atoms in the immediate vicinity of the reacting material inside the pile can also be changed.

The atomic products resulting from the action of the pile are in general new: they do not occur in nature. In most cases they are in most important respects like atoms which do occur in nature, but very often they possess one entirely new feature which distinguishes them from their natural counterparts. They are radioactive.

In The Service of Medicine

Everyone has heard of that almost legendary substance radium, which owes its importance to the fact that its atoms slowly break up, giving out rays which are capable of penetrating through matter, and which can affect living cells.

It is this latter property in particular that has made radium the most valuable of the naturally occurring substances on earth. It is because the rays of radium have been found capable of destroying the cells of cancer that thousands of men and women now walk the world who but for its discovery must inevitably have died. And now, inside the atomic pile, we find common kinds of atom being given this same property, the property which has been called radioactivity.

All the radium available in the world, after nearly sixty years, does not amount to more than perhaps five pounds of the precious element spread across all the hospital of the globe. A single atomic plant could make vastly greater quantities of radio-cobalt available within one year. Thus before long it should be true to say that no one who needs radio-therapy should find it impossible to obtain it.

Out the field of medicine botanists and physiologists are beginning, for the first time in many cases, to understand the intricate details of the life processes of plants and animals. In agriculture, for example, experiments using radioactive isotopes of the important fertiliser elements, such as phosphorus, have thrown light on the way in which plants take up these highly important nutritive elements from the soil, and have increased the efficiency of fertiliser treatment. This must, in due course, be reflected practically in increased efficiency of food production.

So it has gone throughout the entire field of science and technology. The study of engine lubrication and the efficiency of various types of lubricant oils, for instance, has been greatly stimulated by the use of radio-isotopes. The effect of these experiments has already been the development of more effective lubricants, with increased engine life as an immediate consequence. New techniques of food sterilisation and processing have been discovered, based on the use of devices such as the cobalt bomb. More lasting fabrics, more permanent paints, more and better foodstuffs, even new varieties of foods, are promised by the application of these new techniques.

The promise of uranium, once the threat of destruction by the uranium bomb has been removed, is therefore vast beyond the power of any man to conceive. The discovery of the means of splitting atoms has brought man, spectacularly, to the cross-roads, and he has now to choose the road: that which leads to the destruction of homo sapiens, or the other which leads to that as yet dimly seen future: A new heaven and new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.

THE CAUSES OF DEPRESSION

• Continued from page 13

penditure on social security benefits rise automatically . . . the efficacy of these stabilisers has so far been tested only against very mild contracting forces. The cyclist can correct for little wobbles and keep his balance; but if he is pushed beyond a certain point, he will still overbalance."

But the real reason why capitalism has not had a depression since 1945 is much simpler: it is the "Cold War" and re-armament.

In 1950 the United States was heading straight for a depression. There were 5,000,000 unemployed workers in America in February, 1950. A year later the figure was back to a "normal" 1,000,000. The Korean war and re-armament had saved the American economy. For the 1950 budget year, war expenditure was 14,300,000,000 dollars. For the 1951 budget year it was more than doubled to 33,216,000,000 dollars. By 1953 it was 51,680,000,000 dollars. It has never gone down. Here lies the need for keeping warscares alive, the reason why the West dare not disarm. But even arms—in the absence of a shooting war—can be overproduced. Hence the frequent changes in American defence policies—now relying on warships, then on bombers, then again on guided missiles: a most stimulating thing for the economy when each change makes millions

of dollars worth of production obsolete.

Despite all this, not a single capitalist economist or captain of industry has the slightest faith in the ability of the capitalist system to prevent depressions. The only question debated in their journals and the financial pages of their press are "when?" and "how bad will it be?"

Exploitation of Colonial Peoples

One reason for depression is the increased, despite great spending on arms, exploitation of the colonial peoples during and since the war. Their industrialisation has made these countries more fully part of the world economy. The profits derived from them are enormous, far exceeding anything from the exploitation of the workers "at home". The income discrepancy between capitalists and workers in the leading capitalist countries has become smaller.

But in the words of the U.S. National Industrial Conference Board in its 1955 report:

"the gap between the highest and the lowest living standards of the bulk of the world's population was increasing despite the extension of civilization's benefits."

If this is allowed to continue, according to the Board "this country

(the United States) is approaching the end of its Golden Age."

In South Africa, in which the "home country economy" and the "colonial economy" exist side by side, in which privileged "aristocrats of labour" and doubly-exploited Black "colonial" workers rub shoulders on the job, the local "Golden Age" is equally in great danger.

Knowing the causes of capitalist bad times, workers' unity can compel policies which lead to greater prosperity: social security (pensions, health services, sickness and unemployment pay); higher wages paid out of profits; no industrial colour bars; investment in housing and public amenities. Such measures will delay the evil day. They will not permanently solve the contradictions of capitalism, for these will last until that system is replaced by workers' control over the economy.

Our

BOOK REVIEWS

of, among others

"African Nationalism," by Thomas Hodgkin and
"Pan-Africanism or Communism," by George Padmore will appear in the November issue.

★ REVIEW

“AFRICA SOUTH”

“WE cannot fight tyranny in fragments. The dissipation of our resistance to it through civil wars over trivial differences of approach can only lead to the collapse of all resistance in South Africa before the undivided, indivisible onslaught. If it is treason in South Africa for White democratic opinion to ally itself with Black, it is a judgment we must necessarily suffer and be proud to call down upon ourselves.”

These sentences in the editorial of the first issue of *Africa South* state the policy of this new quarterly journal: a united opposition to apartheid, an opposition which is not merely “White” and “parliamentary,” but which includes the disfranchised and those methods by which they alone can carry on the fight.

Every democrat will welcome a journal devoted to such principles. But it has a long, hard road ahead of it and it is doubtful whether all its present supporters will stay the distance.

The first issue contains several worthwhile articles: “Passes and Police” (which ought to be published as a pamphlet), “Labour and Labour Laws,” Bantu Education and the African Teacher.” Patrick Duncan’s article on “Passive Resistance” is the only real contribution to the very

necessary discussion of means of achieving the aims of the journal.

It is noticeable that there is not a single leading Congressman among the contributors. It must be surely have been possible to find a better informed writer on “African Political Movements,” and one of greater stature, that Jordan K. Ngu-bane?

Africa South would seem to be an abbreviation of “Africa South of the Sahara” for the articles on other African countries (Nigeria, Gold Coast) in the present issue are the forerunners of others to come. Greater knowledge of events elsewhere in Africa must lead to deeper political understanding in South Africa.

A reduction in price, even at the cost of size, and a brighter layout of editorial material, will probably help towards a greater circulation.


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