

FIGHTING

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TALK

ZEERUST: THE FULL STORY



BARBARA CASTLE:
Britain's Next Colonial
Secretary?

PROF. J. D. BERNAL
on the H-Bomb

THE 'AFRICANISTS':
Two Viewpoints

DIEGO RIVERA
by Albert Maltz

A MONTHLY JOURNAL FOR DEMOCRATS

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OUR COVER PICTURE:

"Mother and Child" by Mexican Artist Diego Rivera. See the Albert Maltz tribute to Rivera on page 11.

FROM THE SIDELINES

This month's
writer:
CECIL WILLIAMS

However unwillingly children 'creep like snails' to school, their parents are on the run to get the best education to ensure their children's future security. A journalist, recently commenting on the new swindle in 'Bantu' education of accepting only first-class passes for admission to a high school, reported, 'As a result the pupil who has obtained a second-class pass applies from school to school and everywhere the reply is: "I regret the school is full up.'

Do you remember the old Jewish writer, Sholom Aleichem's story, 'The High School'? The determined Jewish mother travelled from school to school, from village to village until she found a place for her son. Then the boys themselves, Gentile and Jew, went on strike in protest against the rotten discrimination. Finally, even conservative old Aaron got the idea of a 'strike' being a weapon in the hands of the oppressed. Not until South African parents strike and strike again at the portals of education shall we have a schooling system in our country, available to all children, and designed to adapt healthy minds and bodies to the exciting prospects of this space age.

No one blames the moronic Presley for cashing in on a commodity that finds a ready market in the capitalist world. But how I blame the promoters of such a degrading model of humankind. Yes, I saw 'Railhouse Jock' or 'Hellhouse Cock' or whatever it's called — a boring, boring film, with very little rock-and-roll in it. What sent me up the wall is that the film makers are here putting before millions and millions of young people as a film 'hero', a model to be copied, a 'success' boy to be emulated, a lumpy, droopy, lack-lustre-eyed, energyless, sparkless body, an uncouth, ill-mannered, ungrateful pig of a personality, a selfish, grasping, underfoot-trampling, dim-witted social character — and a lump of dough that can't ACT. Talk of ideals! How I enjoyed the next evening seeing 'Campbell's Kingdom', in which a reticent, courteous, noble, clean-living, clean-fighting fella, with the help of clean-living, clean-fighting, unselfish friends and the love of a good girl, manages to outwit the dirty, unsavoury minions of a nasty capitalist . . . Gimme that every time.

Before the Second World War the socialist system extended over 17% of the world's territory, embraced 9% of its total population and produced 10% of the world's industrial output; TODAY the socialist countries cover 26% of the world's territory, inhabited by 35% of the total population and they produce 33% of the world's industrial output. Meanwhile, Eisenhower — described in one paper as 'a man of peace' — asks in his new budget for £14,200 million for defence costs, 54% of the total budget — poor Americans. And how the armament manufacturers must be rubbing their hands.

Margaret Vines, the English actress, born in South Africa, who is in Johannesburg to play in 'The Chalk Garden', recounts this experience. 'I was reading my paper in Joubert Park, when a voice croaked, 'For God's sake, Miss, gimme a penny or a tickey'. I looked up to see the seediest, scruffiest man imaginable — White. I hesitated but gave him sixpence from my handbag. His dirty hand took it and his awful voice said, 'Look after you handbag, Miss — one of these bloodey kaffirs will grab it'. I was speechless with indignation but too slow-thinking to demand back my sixpence. Race superiority indeed!'

ZEERUST : THE FULL STORY

By A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Linokana — 'land of many streams' — is a reserve which lies about 18 miles from Zeerust. It is unlike most other reserves because in many ways it is almost idyllic. It is a land of many streams. The children are fat and well cared for, crops flourish, the oranges in season are golden and the whole area is lush with growth. Undoubtedly there is tremendous room for improvement and development — it is whispered, perhaps unfairly, that the people do not want too much improvement, they fear the covetous eyes of the local Europeans. We all know how easy it is these days for grounds to be found for removing Africans from their land, and Linokana is a lovely place.

For many years there has been, by and large, peace in Linokana. It is true that there have been local disputes; there have been complaints against the senior chief (now deposed) Abraham Moiloa, but they were very much the sort of disputes and complaints that always arise in any governed community. The chief was not perfect by any means but he *was* the chief and even the people who complained about him never dreamt or desired that he should be deposed.

But Linokana is not the only area where the Baphurutse tribe live. They are spread over a vast area comprising many other villages in the Groot Marico—Zeerust District. The names that come to mind immediately are Leeufontein and Braklaagte

(both under shadow of removal schemes), Gopane, Motswedi, Witkleigat and so on. There has never been a Paramount Chief of the Baphurutse. Each section has its own chief, but the ex-chief, Abraham Moiloa, at Linokana, was recognised as the senior chief of the tribe and anything done to him was felt by the tribe as a whole.

During the past troubled year in the Groot Marico District the Baphurutse as a whole (naturally with some exceptions) have come to look on the Native Commissioner at Zeerust, one Mr. Richter, as the villain of the piece. But whatever the faults of Mr. Richter may be these must not be allowed to cloud the issue. No matter who had been the Native Commissioner at Zeerust it is doubtful whether the trouble there could have been avoided.

For the case of the Baphurutse in the Zeerust area is a historic one. Here the apartheid policies and oppressive legislation of the Nationalist Government have reached their natural conclusion: the whole Nationalist fraud of encouraging the African people to develop along their own (tribal) lines has been exposed, and the picture of fear-ridden Zeerust and its environs is the picture of South Africa in the very near future — unless the Government changes its policies or unless we change the Government.

Let us look at the history of the disturbances and the recent events in the area. It all started, really, with the issue of passes to women in April 1957.—

Women's Passes Are Issued

The idea of the Government has been to slip in passes through the back door. It was realised that there would be tremendous opposition in the bigger cities and, it was hoped, more chance of acceptance amongst the "ignorant" Africans in the rural areas. But the Government miscalculated. There is no rural area where the people, through family and friends, have no contacts with the big cities. They are well aware of the consequences of having to carry passes. Zeerust was no exception.

During March 1957 it was announced in the Government Gazette that the pass-issuing unit of the government would be in Linokana and neighbouring areas for the issue of passes to women. It should be remembered here and for future reference that the law does not yet make it compulsory for women to have reference books, as the fixed date after which it would be an offence not to have a book has not yet been named.

The Native Commissioner, Mr. Richter, called on Chief Abraham Moiloa to order, and if necessary compel, the women to take out reference books. The chief was not prepared to do this and on April 1 he was more or less told by the Commissioner that unless he did so there might be serious consequences for him. This was the day on which the reference books were to be issued. Despite this threat the Chief remained firm and when asked to address the people called on the Commissioner to do so, and so evaded

direct disobedience. He had made his position clear, however, and his fate was sealed.

Meanwhile the pass-issuing unit had set up business in front of the shop of the local shopkeeper — a European named Gallichan — who lent his premises for the purpose. A handful of women did come to take out books but the majority refused.

The people were angered and so strong was their feeling against passes that they even went so far as to boycott Gallichan's shop and according to his own evidence his takings for April dropped to practically nothing.

The Deposal Of The Chief

Chief Abraham was informed that he had immediately to convene a meeting on April 4, 1957 at which the Chief Native Commissioner for the area would address the tribe at Linokana. This he did. At the kgotla the Chief sat in his rightful seat, a chair specially set aside for him. Wasting no time the Chief Native Commissioner asked if he was sitting in the chair of the Chief and on being told that he was, Chief Abraham was told to get off the chair as he was no longer Chief. He was also told that he was to leave the area within 14 days to go to Venterspost and that he was not to return without the permission of the Commissioner.

Mention has been made of certain complaints against the

Chief, laid originally in 1952 but enquired into officially only in November 1956. Amongst the charges (many of them of an administrative nature) was the ominous one that Chief Abraham Molloa had said on one occasion „Wie die hel is Verwoerd?”

The enquiry was held but nothing further had been heard and it was generally believed that the matter was now settled. It appears, however, that already in January, 1957, the order for Abraham's deposition had been signed. Nothing was done about it, however, until April 4 after the pass issuing fiasco and it was generally felt that had he supported the issue of passes there would have been no deposition.

The people were horrified. Their chief had been deposed and deported. (It transpired later that he had never been lawfully deported but the impression was purposely given that he had been). The Government did not even bother to do it in writing.

Naturally the news spread to Johannesburg and the Rand where many Baphurutse work. They had and still have a local committee looking after their interests in the big city. A special meeting was held and two buses were chartered to take as many as possible home on April 12 to see exactly what had happened.

They found that life in Linokana had come practically to a standstill. When teachers' wives took out passes and the principal supported the Bantu Authorities Act, the school was boycotted and subsequently ordered to be closed by the authorities. And to this day the children of Linokana have no school nor any prospect of school.

But to return to the Baphurutse from Johannesburg — they called a meeting in the kgotla on April 14; a meeting which was later alleged to have taken the form of a Court at which certain people who were believed to have betrayed the Chief were allegedly 'tried' and sentenced to death. Police intervened before any steps could be taken to carry the sentence out. That evening, whilst on their way home, to Johannesburg, about 100 persons were arrested. Twenty five were detained and charged with incitement to murder, attempted murder and — a most rare charge — *crimen laesio majestatis*, usurping the functions of the state. After a lengthy Supreme Court hearing five were convicted of attempted murder and sentenced to imprisonment ranging from 3—5 years. Some others were given a nominal fine for holding unlawful gatherings and the rest were discharged.

Now the Government stepped in with heavy hand. Numerous arrests were made — mostly for the holding of unlawful meetings but also for burning of passes. Most of the people charged were, in fact, acquitted in court, to the disgust of the police as will be seen later on when I come to deal with their evidence before the commission of enquiry that was later held.

In addition the Post Office at Linokana was closed, and remains closed until today; the railway bus was discontinued though this has now been restored; the telephone of the remaining trader, an Indian, and the only other phone in Linokana (apart from Gallichan's), always used by the people in emergencies, was suspended — on grounds of 'security'.

In the meanwhile, passes were still being issued in the area though not only in Linokana. But now the pass issuing unit was reinforced by a special squad of police from Pretoria, under the command of the notorious Sergeant Van Rooyen. This squad did not fall under the local command, but remained a law unto itself.

Night Raids and Assaults

With it began a period of terror for the people in the Zeerust district. There are many stories of how the police behaved. They started with an old tactic — dramatic raids in the middle of the night — a well known feature of city life but quite unknown in the peaceful reserve of Linokana. This is what some of the people said. The raids in Linokana were on May 16.

Christina Mokate: "On May the 16th at about midnight I heard a knock at my door. I asked who was knocking my door with a stick. Someone replied 'Open, I am a policeman'. When I was going to open the door it was forced open and a piece of the door was broken off. A European and 2 African constables rushed into the house and demanded my pass. I told them I have not taken a pass. They asked me why not. I replied that I had a new born baby who was born at the time the passes were being issued and I also didn't want to carry a pass. The European constable said I must open the blanket so that they could make sure I had a baby. I did so. They then searched the house and left."

Rjampi Mokolj: "On May 16, 1957, I heard a noise next to my hut. I woke up to see what was happening. I saw one girl come running to my house crying and chased by the police. When she got into my house the police rushed into my hut. There were 3 Europeans and 1 African. Two Europeans hit me with a sjambok on the head. An African police asked me for my pass. I was pulling out my suitcase from under the bed as my pass was in it. While doing this a European constable kicked me in my left kidney. I showed my pass. I then asked why they were kicking me about but nobody answered. I did not go to the doctor because I had no money."

Then there are the complaints from Leeufontein — a neighbouring village where the chief, Israel Molloa supported the government.

"My name is Lethloo Molloa. I live in Leeufontein in the Zeerust district. On Sunday the 2nd June, 1957, I was on my way to Zeerust. I wanted to go to court on Monday. I was spending the night in Braklaagte because the journey is long and I am old. I was at the chief's house in the later afternoon (The chief of Braklaagte opposed the issue of passes.) The police came from the direction of Leeufontein in vehicles. I saw the chief of Leeufontein was with them and one of his headmen called Puturu. (This Puturu is a man convicted of rape and other serious crimes, but he is Van Rooyen's henchman in Leeufontein.) There were less than 10 of us at the chief's house. The police did not say anything to the people. They assaulted the chief and his wife and a man who was there. The police put prisoners on the vehicles and then went into the village. From where I was on the police vehicle I could see the police chasing people. They hit the people with sjamboks and batons and canes. They did not arrest more people. There was a very big man who seemed to be in charge of the police. (Van Rooyen). He told the police to hit the people and he hit the people also. The police also kicked people and hit them with their fists. I was hit with a sjambok and sticks by Puturu and the chief of Leeufontein."

And so the grim tale goes on. Complaints were lodged with the police: the standard reply was given "The Attorney General declines to prosecute."

Then for a time things were relatively quiet. There were constant complaints about victimisation by pro-government

chiefs of people who are, or were suspected of being against passes for women. But nothing spectacular happened.

The big trial arising out of the events of April 13 ended in September 1957.

The Government Commission

Shortly after the conclusion of the trial and very suddenly it was announced that the Government intended holding a Commission of Enquiry into the causes of the unrest in the Groot Marico district. The announcement was made in the Government Gazette on the Friday and was scheduled to start on the following Wednesday, with what appeared to be almost indecent haste. No steps were taken to notify the people about the commission but all the Government-supporting chiefs were lined up and ready to proceed with their evidence on the day in question.

The mass of the Baphurutse, although taken by surprise, hurriedly organised a petition amongst the people calling on the commission to recommend, amongst other things, the return of the deposed chief, the reopening of the school and post office at Linokana, and to recommend the suspension of the issue of reference books to women. Thousands of signatures to the Petition were obtained in the space of a few days. Despite the short notice given, the lack of publicity, and the lack of transport, large crowds of Baphurutse attended the opening session of the commission. So many, in fact, that there was no room in the Native Commissioner's court for them all to be accommodated and special arrangements were made for an outside arena. Everything was very peaceful and the people listened with great interest to the proceedings, but the authorities were, apparently, very upset at the great interest shown in the commission, and the following week (the hearings were adjourned for a week on the second day) the police were out in force to prevent people coming to the so-called public enquiry! Harvard aeroplanes swooped down on the area in intimidatory fashion and roadblocks of police prevented the people from entering Zeerust. As a result of this, for example, women coming from Gopane were baton-charged and beaten up by the police. Unable to get to Zeerust for medical treatment a large number of them crossed the border into Bechuanaland where they were treated at the Lobatsi hospital. A check was made at the hospital and it was confirmed that well over 20 people were treated there for injuries as a result of this little effort by the police! Needless to say, no steps were taken in the matter.

The Commission of Enquiry was, in itself, a very interesting affair. It is difficult to decide what motivated the Government in appointing it. Perhaps it too saw the importance of what was happening in this area in relation to its policies as a whole. The commission was a one-man commission consisting of a Mr. H. BALK, a Native Appeal Court Judge and as such an employee of the Native Affairs Department, the Department most concerned with the troubles. Then, the commission was conducted in a most unusual way. There was no agenda and there was no one to lead evidence. In addition — and this is most important — no cross-examination of witnesses was allowed. As a result of this much of the evidence given was practically useless. Anyone could say anything. The Government supporting chiefs and their protagonists unanimously blamed the African National Congress for all their troubles. Apart from the fact that people were giving the "Afrika" salute there were no grounds given for these allegations.

The Native Commissioner, in his evidence, said that the people "present on April 13, 1957 (at Linokana where the disturbances then took place) were mostly not resident

here." (i.e. in the Zeerust district). Cross examination would have revealed, however, that all the people who visited the area on the day in question were in fact people who had their homes in the area although they may have been working in Johannesburg. This was clearly shown at the trial arising out of the disturbances on that and the following day. All of them had family in the area and regarded it as their home. In this way it was insinuated, as has time and again been tried, that 'agitators' incited the people — a completely false suggestion.

Another interesting and noteworthy aspect of the 'government supporting' evidence was the attacks made on the legal advisors of the Baphurutse. It was implied by the Native Commissioner, for example, that there was something sinister about the fact that the same legal representatives were constantly appearing for the people. Lieut. Coetzee, one of the main police witnesses carried this line somewhat further, and showed great distress at the fact that despite the police arrests, most of the people accused of various offences were defended in such a manner that they were acquitted. He found this very disheartening! It did not seem to occur to Lieut. Coetzee that it was, after all, the function of the Court to decide who is guilty or not and that every man is, supposedly, entitled to the best defence he can muster. The chairman of the commission, Mr. Balk, also found this witness's submission rather astonishing.

I mention this aspect at some length, because I think that it is a very important aspect of the situation in Zeerust. Lieut. Coetzee was talking with the voice of authority and subsequent events seem to show that the police intention is, where possible, to prevent the people from having a proper defence and, by encouraging terrorism by the government supporting chiefs, protected by the police, to suppress the people and prevent issues being brought before the courts. I will deal with this aspect shortly.

The Baphurutse, as a whole, led evidence to show that the trouble had been caused by the issue of reference books to women, the threatened removal of certain villages and the deposition of the Chief — all of which, coming together, and tactlessly handled by those in authority, had sparked off the troubles.

The Commission finished its hearings at the end of November, but to date it has failed to produce a report. In view of the subsequent events though it would seem any report issued today could not possibly take account of the new developments and would thus be useless. A sinister aspect of the suggestions made before the Commission was the suggestion that the Natal Native Code be brought into operation — the intention being apparently to impose communal fines on the people.

Rushed Court Prosecutions

Since the commission has ended the sinister aspect of Lieut. Coetzee's complaints about the courts acquitting people because they were well defended has become clear. In several of the other villages, particularly Witkleigat, Motswedi and Gopane, some of the women had, in fact, taken out reference books. Some had never realised exactly what it was all about, others were intimidated by their Chiefs. But by September it was becoming increasingly clear that no benefits were to derive from these books; they were either quite useless or would be used as instruments of oppression as for the men. The women who had had their books for nearly a year and now thoroughly disillusioned with them decided to burn them.

The first incident took place in Gopane, in September. There was a pass burning episode and the police came to arrest a handful of women who had been pointed out by the

local chief. They were met, however, by nearly all the women in the area who said as one man "If they are guilty, we are also. You must arrest us all." All piled into the police van and well over 200 of them were taken to Zeerust.

Chaos prevailed at the charge office. Women and children overflowed into the yard at the police station and the police were practically begging the women to leave. The following day their cases were brought before the court and a postponement was asked for to enable the women to prepare their defence. They were all allowed out on their own recognisances and told to report back at a later date. As there was no transport available for them except for a bus which could hold about 20 people the defence asked that transport be arranged for them on the day of the case. This was laid on by the government but the women were told that they had to pay about 5/- per head for the privilege. They refused point blank to pay this, they were not transported and that was the last ever heard of their case.

This was before Lieut. Coetzee gave evidence at the Commission — in fact, before the commission had sat.

On November 4 and 5, there were pass burning incidents at Witkleigat (a place which now features most prominently in recent incidents) and at Motswedi. About 40 women and 9 men were arrested at Witkleigat and 13 women at Motswedi. They were rushed to court and their cases were speeded through by the prosecution, the women being fined £50 or 6 months and the men £100 or 6 months imprisonment. Efforts were made to defend them but when the telephone calls asking for postponements were put through to Zeerust it was always "too late". It had been indicated that all cases arising from pass burning incidents were to be defended. The merits of the cases cannot be entered into; there is no doubt that the women did burn their passes as they admitted in Court, though an appeal against their sentences is pending to the Appellate Division.

Nearly fifty women are now scattered throughout the country's jails. One cannot describe all the consequences in human terms. One mother of a young infant went out of her mind in jail; her baby then died, officially of enteritis, but the jail inmates say it may have been enteritis but that the child, a few weeks old, was only fed three times a day and must have been half starved.

Terror in the Villages

But even worse than this spate of arrests was the terrorism in the villages. Since about September the squad under Sergeant van Rooyen has been roaming the area "preserving law and order." It has "taken under its wing" the pro-government chiefs such as Lucas Manyope of Motswedi and Edward Lencoe of Witkleigat. It may be coincidental but since this police squad have come into the area there has been a most terrible and frightening campaign against the people.

One can tell the "horror" stories ad infinitum. Perhaps because I saw the victim so soon after the incident the one that affected me most was the case of Mrs. Maletsoe. She was one of a group of women at Witkleigat who went to the Chief's kgotla to take a child of an arrested woman there. On their arrival they were, according to the story of her witness, surrounded by the Chief's regiment and attacked by the Chief. Several of them were injured, among them the three month old baby of Mrs. Matlala, who was on her mother's back. But most injured was Makgora Maletsoa who came to Johannesburg half crazed with pain with an arm so badly broken that even in these days of bed shortages she

spent over a month at Baragwanath Hospital. A charge was laid in November against the Chief. Until now no steps have been taken to prosecute him.

These women were also detained for a night by the Chief and with the full concurrence of Sgt. Van Rooyen and his band. In fact the following morning the police are alleged to have joined with the Chief in intimidating the women by shooting into the ground in their presence.

But this was not all. Workers from Johannesburg returning home to visit their families have been met at the buses and thrashed by Chief's men as they have climbed out. This was at Witkleigat and Motswedi in particular. We have seen the marks on many backs. These Chiefs have threatened to teach "everyone from Johannesburg a lesson."

Meanwhile the Chiefs have been recruiting for their regiments. Many people have refused to join and been duly punished. Whereas previously it was an honour to be a member of the regiments it has now for many become a matter of being ready to beat up their own people. And gradually the number of people opposing these chiefs has grown as the chiefs have become more and more oppressive.

Where there is no chief as in Linokana or where the Chief has taken a neutral attitude to the government as at Brakalalo or at Braklaagte and not tried to impose on the will of the people there has been no trouble. The trouble has arisen in those areas where the police have incited the Chiefs to intimidate their people.

Attacks on the people returning home from Johannesburg became so bad that people were becoming desperate. They were too worried about their families at home not to go home and yet too afraid to go. To report the assaults to the police has been a waste of time because without the support of the police these actions by the chiefs would not have been possible. Despite the long-standing trouble in the area the press has turned its back on events there, except for very occasional and brief reports. Trouble seemed imminent just before Christmas but it was not until some while later that reporters in Zeerust to see what was happening were themselves assaulted by members of a Chief's regiments, egged on by Sergeant Van Rooyen. But by then there had been the Christmas day disturbances which led to the burning down of the houses of the pro-government chiefs, Edward Lentshe and others, and to the arrests of nearly 150 people who are presently all cooped up in the Zeerust gaol (built to hold about 75.)

These cases are sub judice; we can only say with the background to these disturbances anyone with some understanding could see that something of the kind had to happen.

Today, the Groot Marico district is a fear-ridden place. Under cover of searching for the culprits for the arson, there is wide-spread terror. Many of the people have fled from their homes. Women and children are sleeping in the hills around their villages.

Chiefs who oppose the government and represent the will of their people are summarily deposed. Pro-government chiefs must rule by terror, with armed police ever at their elbows. The government's intervention in tribal affairs, usurping the powers of the chiefs, inciting chiefs to rule by the whip and the lash, has stripped bare its system of tribal administration and has built up a hatred of puppet chiefs and their trappings which must remain indelible. Where will it all end? It is hard to say. What began as demonstrations against passes for women and the deposal of a Chief has turned into something far more critical and in Zeerust the Government faces the collapse of its empire of Bantu Authorities and "yes-Chiefs".

THE MULTI-RACIAL CONFERENCE: NEXT STEP TO UNITY

Two years ago Mrs. "X" stood outside the Johannesburg City Hall wearing a Black Sash and holding a placard: "Defend the Constitution". Now she was busy serving tea to an ANC Executive member in the Witwatersrand University canteen.

The story of Mrs. "X's" evolution from a Defender to a Critic of the Constitution was in many ways the story of the Multi-Racial conference.

Called by the Interdenominational African Ministers Conference, the Multi-Racial Conference showed that the anti-apartheid tide is pulling stronger than ever before and among more segments of the population than ever before.

Many of the Mr. and Mrs. "X's" who enthusiastically responded to the call, would have balked at the idea of such a meeting two years ago.

Yet there they were — 300 of them — in December 1957, representing (in their private capacities) a formidable variety of interests, groups and trends of thought, but united by a dominating single aim: to achieve a democratic multi-racial South Africa.

The four conference commissions — on religion, civil liberties, economics, and political arrangements — were attended by people from all walks of life: there were professors, trade unionists, M.P.'s, lawyers, Archbishops, Senators, bus boycotters, authors, a Rabbi, a Bishop, an ex-Judge, priests and businessmen. There were members of the Labour Party, Liberal Party, Race Relations Institute, Federal Party, Anti-Republican League, the Congresses and many other groups.

It was the most representative convention yet to condemn apartheid and cast its vote for a free South Africa.

The conference expressed not only the significant repudiation by an influential European minority (most of the delegates were European) of white supremacy, but also the growing desire among ALL anti-apartheid forces to pool ideas, close ranks and map out the boundaries of agreement.

The holding of the conference placed the seal of recognition on four immensely important factors: One, the rapidly growing strength of multi-racialism — the idea that in tomorrow's South Africa all should have the vote. Two, the conviction that a united effort is required for the mighty task of building a free society. Three, a sense of urgency to "get down to the job". Four, a moving away from purely parliamentary methods of pressure and struggle.

Many commentators described the conference as something akin to a miracle. "The biggest thing about it was that it was held at all" was a popular theme. To look at the conference in this way is a misplacement of emphasis.

History's Agenda

After all, a conference of the size, broadness and representativeness was on the agenda of history for some time. There was nothing outstanding or unexpected that the separate anti-apartheid interests in South Africa should wish to get together. It was a natural, normal, predictable development, anticipated by Congress many years ago.

All 300 participants had not awoken one bright morning and announced: "Let's have a miracle! Let's have a multi-racial conference!" The conditions for the conference were prepared in the crucible of the successful mass struggles

waged, under Congress leadership, particularly during the last year, against the bastions of apartheid — especially the bus and economic boycotts, anti-pass campaigns, and the June 26 Stay-Away. These struggles, and the others — such as the opposition to apartheid from the nurses, universities and workers — impinged dramatically on the consciousness of everyone in South Africa; they drew the sharp dividing line between those who stood for and those who stood against apartheid; they posed a challenge to the peoples of South Africa which could not be evaded.

Surging Currents

Yes, the conference is only a 'miracle', if it is divorced from the surging currents of change about it; the impetus, mood, and sense of urgency in which it was held were manufactured in the workshop of the extra-parliamentary struggle. When COD was born soon after the Defiance Campaign, the first link in the chain reaction set up by the liberatory struggles of the Non-European peoples was forged. Today COD is an equal member of the Congress alliance; and every new mass struggle produces a new series of chain-reactions, bringing more people of all races into the orbit of struggle, swinging the balance away from the pole of reaction and white supremacy to the pole of democracy.

This was the setting and explanation of the multi-racial conference; given the necessary goodwill, understanding and desire for co-operation among all parties, there is not reason why the future should produce bigger and better manifestations of multi-racial unity in South Africa.

What then was the "biggest thing" about the Conference? Bearing in mind WHO was there, the most significant outcome was on WHAT they agreed. One delegate said: "This conference should have been held 9 years ago". Even if it was possible to convene such a representative meeting then, it is unlikely that its decisions could have paralleled those of the Multi-Racial conference. Indeed only the boldest prophet would have dared predict two or three years ago that the principle of "Votes-For-All", would have been endorsed without opposition by such a representative group.

Naturally, delegates were not unanimous on all points; some wanted rapid change, others wanted to go slow. But on the most important question, there was unanimity, demonstrated by the spontaneous and prolonged applause which greeted the chairman's announcement of the findings on political arrangements.

Although delegates "agreed to disagree" on the mechanics of transition from baasskap to democracy, they found firm accord "that only universal adult franchise on a common roll can meet the needs and aspirations of the people of this country". The conference accepted as its fundamental aim "the creation in South Africa of a common society" and resolved to "start working immediately towards the achievement of the goal of universal adult franchise". Such a decision may be routine at a Congress meeting, but measured against the character and composition of the conference it was revolutionary and represented a tremendous advance in South African thinking.

During the closing minutes, the Rev. Blaxall suggested that the Conference should constitute itself as a permanent

(Continued on page 14)

Open Discussion on — “The Afr

1. “Carbon Copy of the Nationalists” Says Simon Swann

Normally one would pay little attention to the Africanist group. They are a pint-sized, troublemaking sect in the ANC whose stocks are low and discredit high.

They are noisy and negligible, extreme and eccentric. They have no influence whatever over ANC policy.

Reverse Mirror

Their sole claim to attention is that they mirror in reverse the policy of the Nationalist Government, preaching the same crude racialism. Not without reason have the Africanists been described as “the black cousins of the Nats”.

Although the Africanists pay lip-service to the ANC, they do not in any real sense subscribe to Congress policy. For they do not want to destroy racial discrimination, the colour bar, tyranny and inhuman oppression; they merely desire that they, rather than the Nats should impose these practices. The Africanists would like to grab the machine of racial oppression and preserve it intact, so that they could use it against their enemies — all the Whites, all the Coloureds, all the Indians, and all other “foreigners”.

The Africanists are the illegitimate offspring of an immoral union between Afrikaner nationalism and the most politically backward elements of the largest oppressed national group.

In spirit they are closer to the Nats than the Congresses.

Carbon Copy

Despite the pretentious Africanist claim to embody a simon-pure nationalism, untainted by dirty “foreign ideologies”, a close look at Africanism reveals it to be a black carbon copy of Afrikaner Nationalism.

Both Nats and Africanists (1) subscribe to the principle of one-race domination and discrimination against persons of different skin-colours (2) claim that their group was “planted in South Africa by Providence to fulfil a divine destiny” (3) demand the predominant position of the chosen volk

or nation, who will monopolise all political privileges, and suppress the rights, national culture, and traditions of other groups (4) attack the Freedom Charter, the Congress alliance and the United Nations charter of Human Rights (5) would like to see a Nat victory (6) and are against a “coffee-coloured” race.

One doesn't need a course in elementary politics to spot the hallmarks of Nazism and Strijdomism engraved on this Africanism; naturally, the Africanists sometimes try to camouflage these give-away clues and to pose as “true African nationalists”. They deceive no one, however, and their position inside the ANC is, and has always been, precarious. At the last ANC conference, in fact, there was a powerful demand to “get rid of the worm in our apple”.

The demand was based on the argument that while the broad, heterogeneous ANC had offered a home to the Africanists, the ANC was as fundamentally opposed to the Black Africanism of Leballo & Co. as to the White Africanism of Strijdom & Co. It was argued that while the Africanists stood for a selfish, narrow, exclusive, racialistic nationalism, based on hatred and contempt of other national groups, the Congresses personified a true South African patriotism, opening its ranks to all South Africans without discrimination, and fighting for the equal rights of all people in Tomorrow's South Africa, based on mutual respect.

Narrow Sect

Even if the ANC does not deal with the Africanists, history itself will take a hand. Lessons of successful liberatory movements, in colonial countries, indicate that the Africanist brand of ideology never enjoyed any popularity. These movements did not evolve their democratic philosophies in the oppressors' schools. They did not say: “Let's see what our oppressors say, and then take the same line, only in reverse.” Instead they based their struggles on the imperishable democratic

principles which are built into the foundations of congress alliance.

And that is why the negative Africanist ideas, which have so far failed to take root in the sub-soil of the Congress movement will continue to remain the property of only a small, intellectual sect.

All this makes the attitude of certain Non-European papers who portray the Africanists as a powerful group, poised to “capture” Congress, and who allege that Africanist ideas are fully accepted in the ANC, seem rather puzzling. Do they support the Africanists or are they merely sensation-mongering? One is especially surprised at “Drum” announcing solemnly: “Congress is turning Africanist, and doesn't even know it”.

Evidence?

To Congressmen, who after all, should be in the know, this will come as news. If the Africanists were really so powerful, surely the last ANC conference should have afforded some evidence, however slight, of the fact? Yet whenever Africanists emerged in their true colours they were severely rebuffed by conference. A daring racialist amendment to the ANC constitution proposed by Africanists elicited only 2 votes — those of the proposer and seconder. Later, when the Africanists mounted an all-out full-scale attack on the Freedom Charter, they succeeded in mustering no more than 5 (out of 305) delegates to support them.

So much for the theory of “Drum” and “Bantu World” that Congress has been split and/or captured by Africanists. It is a lamentable reflection on the journalistic standards of these papers that racialism is “better news” than multi-racial co-operation. And even more lamentable is their depiction of the Africanists in such a way as to enhance the prestige of this malodorous group at the expense of Congresses' consistent struggle for freedom and democracy.

icanists”

2. “No!” Says Umlweli, “Loyal Congress=Men of the Future”

It is easy enough to be cutting and sarcastic about the so-called “Africanists” as Mr. Swann is. They are noisy, and they are a nuisance, and they are wrong. I don't agree with them at all, and because some of these people are forever intriguing and making mischief they can be positively dangerous to Congress unity in these critical times. For all that, I can't agree at all with Mr. Swann's approach and attitude.

I think he makes the cardinal mistake of equating the nationalism of a subject, downtrodden people with that of a dominant group.

People who are humiliated and despised at every turn, who are inculcated in a thousand disgusting ways, with the false idea that they are racially inferior, turn naturally, when they awaken to political consciousness, to feelings of national pride and assertiveness. They reject with scorn the pretensions of the “master race”, they come to hate and despise the so-called “Herrenvolk” itself — and not entirely without reason, for those who think and behave as if they were supermen invariably become less than human.

First Steps

No advanced South African, least of all a Congressman, has the right to sneer at this sort of nationalism when it shows itself among the African people. For it is a basically hopeful thing. It is the first step away from the servile spirit and dumb acceptance of one's lot which are the chief allies of oppression. It is the first, essential, step towards the lofty humanism to which the leaders and older members of the ANC have graduated in the school of experience and struggle side by side with democrats of other races who proved under fire their right to partnership. Indeed I can well remember the days when many of the senior leaders of the ANC — today the staunchest upholders of the multi-national ideal and the Congress Alliance — used to think and carry on not very differently from the “Africanists” of today.

Two Nationalisms

That is why I don't like Mr. Swann's intolerance towards these so-called ‘Africanists’. Still less do I like his facile comparison between their outlook and that of the Afrikaner nationalists: “a black carbon copy” as he somewhat offensively puts it. Of course all nationalisms have something in common, and in any given situation it is not too difficult to draw parallels as he has done. But in seeking out superficial resemb-

FIGHTING TALK invites readers' contributions on this topic. Material for the March issue must reach P.O. Box 1355, Johannesburg by February 25.

lances (some of them pretty far-fetched) he has blinded himself to the fundamental objective difference between the nationalism of oppressed and oppressor groups.

Afrikaner nationalism as expressed by the present Nationalist Party, belongs to the latter category. It has lost whatever progressive content it had in its anti-imperialist heyday (always compromised by its colour-chauvinism) and devotes itself exclusively to inflaming racial arrogance and exclusiveness in order to fortify and extend the selfish privileges of a national minority. The Nationalist Party today is looked upon with contempt and disgust all over the world, whereas fifty or sixty years ago its predecessors enjoyed universal sympathy and respect. Why? Because it has turned into reactionary imperialism with a strong smell of Nazi ideology into the bargain.

There is no section of the African National movement which can, in its objective historical role, fairly be compared with this notorious Party. (Of course I leave out of account those jackals and puppets of White domination; the collaborators who represent nothing and nobody.) However crude and backward the views of some African nationalists

may seem to the more advanced section, they nonetheless represent an objectively progressive tendency, which must be educated and brought forward, not scorned and driven out.

Who Are These “Africanists”?

Considered within this frame of residence, who are those whom Mr. Swann refers to as “Africanists”, and what should be done about them? It seems to me important that we must distinguish here. I think we have, on the one hand, a large number of enthusiastic young Congress members who, sometimes get critical of some section's of Congress leadership — and sometimes make political mistakes.

There are, let us be frank about it, people in leading positions in Congress who seize upon these mistakes, label all these people as “Africanists” and try, thus, to smear, to silence, and even to expel them.

Secondly, on the other hand, we find a little intellectual clique which calls itself “Africanist” and is obviously out, by intrigue and manoeuvre, to “capture” the Congress. I don't think there is any danger of their succeeding — the ANC is far too mature and firm of principle to permit any such thing. But I would say this: Congress, however broad and tolerant, must draw the line somewhere if it is to preserve discipline and unity. If members infringe the rules and constitution; if they continuously run to anti-Congress newspapers with hostile and untrue stories; if they use the Congress platform to propagate views which they know to be in conflict with Congress policy; if they run from branch to branch building a separate organisation inside Congress with its own separate platform — then I agree, sooner or later, after a fair enquiry, such people, whatever their views, must be excluded from Congress.

This is quite a different matter from trying to deal with incorrect views by means of administrative methods. Of course every good Congressman will do his best to see that all members share the outlook and support the agreed policy of Congress. But how are we to

(Continued on next page)

BARBARA CASTLE: Britain's Next Colonial Secretary?

By
LIONEL FORMAN

A wide-awake progressive journalist doesn't need more than a week here to obtain the material necessary for a fair word-picture of South Africa. Racialism disfigures our whole face. Racialist drivel slobbers from the mouths of most of our White countrymen. It blackens the columns of our newspapers.

All the same, whenever a visitor comes here to write about us the press puts up exactly the same performance. Let the visitor dare remark that he sees a pimple on our ugly face, or that the words we

use are obscene, or that the harshness of our voice sends a shiver up the spine, and the newspapers call in their hacks to jeer and sneer and jibe. Not, of course, that they deny that there is a pimple. No, not even they would be brazen enough to deny that. What makes them cross is the fact that the visitor has claimed to see the pimple after being here only one week. The idea, apparently, is that if the visitor stayed and looked at the pimple from all angles for a lifetime, he might decide that it was really a beauty spot.

To this normal course of events, Barbara Castle's visit was no exception. Mrs. Castle came here knowing exactly what to expect, because even in England there are books and lectures and discussions on South Africa, and to a discerning reader like her our State Information Office's official propaganda digest gives a more revealing picture of Nationalist hypocrisy than Eric Louw dreams of.

Knowing what apartheid means, Barbara Castle came here convinced that it was something damnable. The purpose of her visit was to see some of its iniquities for herself, to write it up for the Sunday Pictorial, to win further support for the Treason Trial Defence Fund in Britain, to collect material for articles and speeches in parliament.

Cabinet Candidate

Why? Partly because she is a journalist on an assignment which interests her, partly because she is a socialist and a life-long fighter against fascism. And partly because she has a clear eye on a seat in the next Labour cabinet. The ministry she wants is the Colonial Office. South Africa is very much bound up with the problems the British Colonial Secretary will have to face in Africa, and the Federation, which she also visited, will probably be the toughest nut a Labour government will have to crack. When Gaitskell picks his cabinet Barbara wants him to remember that she's an expert on Africa — hasn't she just been there?

Not so very long ago a British Labour leader who visited South Africa would automatically look for his main

source of information and opinion to the big shots of the old Trades and Labour Council, the Labour Party and the United Party. He wouldn't go near the Congresses. One of the most significant things about Barbara Castle's visit was the fact that she took it for granted that the only really important people to see were those active in the Congresses. She spent much of her time with members of the African National Congress, the Congress of Democrats, the S.A. Congress of Trade Unions and the Indian Congresses.

It didn't even enter her mind to visit the Trade Union Council officials and ask for their assistance. The once authoritative White trade union leaders have, as a result of their craven compromises with apartheid, lost whatever respect there was for them in the past.

She couldn't find a prominent Nationalist who was willing to defend the Nat point of view, and the United Party people filled her with disgust. "They would agree with every thing I said and then wail 'But what can we do about it?' without an ounce of fight in their bodies," she told me.

The Woman

What sort of a woman is Barbara Castle? A week's acquaintance with South Africa is enough to lay bare the soul of apartheid. But it isn't enough time in which to get to know a woman, specially a complex one like Barbara Castle.

The surface sketch is easy. The first time you talk to her she gives the impression that she is flustered, a little breathless and bewildered by the complexity of everything. "Ah", everyone says at once. "An act. She's not like that at all underneath. Underneath she's a pretty hard cookie." And everyone is right. She certainly is.

She has a delightful personality, bubbling over with good humour, brimful of vitality, alert and keen-witted. And, like most women with these qualities, she is nice to look at.

I'd sum her up like this. A wonderful person to have as a friend. But certainly a hell-cat to have as an enemy.

A few questions, and this is the background to Barbara.

Climbing Up

Her other name is Anne. She's 46 years old. She's one of those relatively
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THE AFRICANISTS

(Continued from previous page)

do that? By patient explanation and persuasion, surely; not by organisational methods and expulsions. If we try to do the latter, especially on a group basis, and especially with so amorphous and ill-defined group as these "Africanists" we shall find we have set out on a dangerous road. Witch-hunting and "smelling-out" will become the order of the day. Incompetent and unpopular office-bearers, resentful of criticism and anxious to retain their positions, will accuse every critic of disloyalty and "Africanism". Free, creative discussion will disappear. Congress will dwindle to a narrow sect, permitting only one orthodoxy, instead of the broad democratic movement we know today, embracing every patriotic shade of opinion, and every class of society: workers and business men, farmers and farmworkers, students, professional men and women, chiefs and commoners.

"The World" and "Drum", for reasons of their own, exaggerate as Mr. Swann rightly points out, the influence and importance of the "Africanist revolt". Some people will always, out of malice or a desire for sensation, magnify every difference that arises in the people's movement. But these things must not throw us off balance. They must not lead us to adopt harsh and uncomradely methods against those who, however confusedly, are on our side.

Some of these "Africanists" may turn out to be mere windbags, self-seekers and mischief makers. But I predict that others among them, given experience and responsibility, will turn out to be logical and valuable Congressmen.

Diego Rivera

American novelist ALBERT MALTZ writes a tribute to Mexico's artist of the people.

Diego Rivera died along toward midnight of a Sunday night. The Monday morning newspapers were able to carry only a brief announcement, but that was sufficient to bring many hundreds of people to his studio. Allowing for his extremely wide acquaintanceship — since he was a friendly man who even enjoyed conversation while painting — this response to his death was both natural and conventional. By five o'clock in the afternoon, however, his coffin was lying in state in the National Palace of Fine Arts — and then something began to occur that reveals a good deal about the meaning an artist can have for his society.

It is Mexican custom for burial to take place within a day, or a day and a half, after death. The family maintains an all night vigil by the bier, and the night of mourning is shared by friends of the deceased. In "Diego's" case the friends who came during the night were in the many thousands — the estimates have varied from twenty to thirty thousand — and most had never spoken to him or shaken his hand. I speak of him as "Diego" because that is how he was known to the populace at large. If one asked a cab driver to take one to Diego's studio, there rarely was any question about who or where.

The Palace of Fine Arts is a very large building of mixed classic and rococo architecture. It has an immense foyer that was designed to be impressive, and is. Built upon several levels with intervening flights of stairs, it has a high, domed ceiling that is supported by towering columns of exquisite marble. At its rear the foyer gives entrance to an auditorium and, by flanking staircases, to upper floors where one finds murals by Rivera, Orozco, and Siquieros, as well as a State collection of paintings. Rivera's coffin, draped with the green, white, and red of the Mexican flag, and with candles five feet high burning at each corner, rested on the middle level.

As might have been expected, among those who came to express condolences to the family, and to stand honour guard by the coffin for five or ten minutes, were many of the most celebrated public figures of the country — political leaders, educators, artists, scientists — professionals from every field. It was apparent, moreover, that despite the widest range of philosophic and religious differences among them, all were

moved by a sincere desire to pay homage to an artist of unusual stature and achievement who had been a communist, an atheist, and a general all-around hell-raiser.

By seven o'clock at night, however, the nature of the gathering began to change. Until then the majority of those present had been dressed neatly or well, and it was clear that they moved in circles that had made for previous acquaintance — the handshakes and the embraces were frequent. But then, as university classes let out, as offices closed and workingmen left factories, the anonymous began to arrive. For the most part they were less well dressed or shabby, less well nourished or bone thin, and they encountered no one there with whom they were acquainted. There were a good many students in wind breakers or worn jackets, books under their arms — those students of whom one knew that too many were suffering under a heart-breaking grind of school, poorly paid outside jobs, and malnutrition. There were men in overalls or denim, and there were many of the hard-driven white collar class — the elementary school teachers whose pay is thirty-two dollars a month, and the government employees who sell textiles or drive a taxi after hours. There was at least one group of farmers in white cotton shirts and trousers, straw sombreros in their hands, rope sandals on their feet, who looked precisely like the photographs of the generation that had marched with Zapata for land and liberty. One speculated whether they had taken a bus to the city upon hearing the news, or already had been there on business and had postponed their departure. It meant the same, of course. Most surprising of all were the number of women with infants wrapped in rebozos or leading minor children — more Indian than Spanish in complexion and feature — these women and their children whom Rivera had painted on wall and canvas for thirty years.

If one had any doubt of why these "anonymous" mourners had come to the Palace of Fine Arts, their actions made the reason clear. It was not to express condolences to a family unknown to them; they never could have been so forward. It was not for reasons of sensation, or from the desire to gawk at the celebrated people they assumed would be there. They came quietly,

they stood quietly on a line that stretched seventy-five yards out to the cold street, and they waited their turn to stand by the coffin and say silent farewell to a man who had meant something to them. And when they had done that, they departed.

In the late afternoon the guard around the coffin had consisted of five people or so on either side, and these had remained for ten minutes before giving way to others. As the evening went on the guard began to number thirty, and the time allowed them for their silent homage was reduced to five minutes, and then finally to one. So it continued throughout the night and until the next day at noon when the cortege left for the cemetery with a multitude walking behind it.

If one were making a thorough analysis of this phenomenon, more than one factor would have to be taken into account — for instance, national pride in a celebrated figure. This pride, in a nation of Mexico's size, with Mexico's history of colonial and semi-colonial oppression, is always expressed when one of its sons walks upon the world scene. Thus, it would be difficult to exaggerate the groan of dismay that recently sounded in Mexico on the night its contender for the bantam weight championship of the world lost a close decision. Nevertheless, I feel sure that two factors predominated in the creation of this vital relationship between Rivera and the Mexican people.

The first is that Rivera and other artists were given government walls to paint on, and subsidised by government funds to create their murals. Historically, this has been one of the fascinating results of the 1910-1920 revolution. The ancient peoples of Mexico, before the Spanish conquest, developed the mural art to so fine a degree that pigments they used still cannot be duplicated. But for four centuries after the Conquest this form of painting was not cultivated. It was the revolutionary government from 1920 on that sponsored the revival of wall murals in public buildings. This means something extraordinary: that thousands upon thousands of Mexican public officials, for three decades and a half (1922-1957), have consistently been art conscious. Many factors have operated to make this so, but the fact stands. Without this fact Rivera undoubtedly would have remained the easel painter

South Africa Now

Have you locked the doors?
Is the fire dead?
Do you hear the paws
Of plushsmooth mice that smelled the cat, and fled?

Have you put the wool
In the tiger's mouth?
Then sleep, sleep, fool —
All your sad and stricken dreams in rout.

Have you tested the catch,
Put up the chain?
Then strike a match
And burn the whole safe structure down again.

When you awake,
The dawn's red eye
Will show the grey flakes
Ashcrumbled, the walls gone; the roof open to the sky.

RUTH MILLER.

he was before his return from Europe to Mexico. He was then a man in his middle thirties who had been painting a good many years — but he was not a muralist. And if he had not become a muralist, his powers as an artist never would have become the property of a people. Those who enter art galleries in Mexico are as small a section of the population as in any other land.

The second factor that created the vital link between Rivera and the people of Mexico was the content of his painting, the very purpose behind his mural work. Rufino Tamayo, for instance, is an artist of undoubted technical skill, but what he paints is esoteric, if not empty. His work is of no importance to the Mexican people at large. It is a peculiar irony, incidentally, that the two walls of the Palace of Fine Arts that are covered by Tamayo's private musings are in the foyer and looked down upon Rivera's coffin.

On illustration can give an indication of the meaning of Rivera's murals to the Mexican people. An hour south of Mexico City is Cuernavaca, capital of the agricultural state of Morelos. The main government offices are in the Cortez Palace — an enormous, stone fortress built by Cortez himself. On the highest level of the building there is a long, covered portico where Cortez undoubtedly strolled, and from which look-outs could have surveyed the entire valley that stretches off to the horizon. On the walls of the portico Rivera painted a clear, dramatic and

passionate representation of the Spanish conquest of Morelos and Cuernavaca, and of the nature of the brutal rule that followed. He also, in one panel, memorialised Zapata, the incorruptible leader of the peasants of Morelos, who stands in this work as the symbol of the revolutionary forces that freed Mexico from its feudal strait jacket. To view this mural one must ascend several flights of stairs, and there is no purpose in climbing these stairs other than to see the mural. Peasants who come to the many, varied offices in the Cortez Palace do not have to pass the mural in order to accomplish their errands. Yet, on the dozen or so occasions in which I have been standing on that portico, the flow of "non-art-goers" has been ever present. I recall a particular Sunday and a particular family consisting of moustachoeed grandfather in his white cotton suit, a couple in their thirties, and their five children ranging from an adolescent boy to an infant wrapped in a rebozo. It was clear, not only that they were farmers, but that they were poor farmers, and one knew that all but the children of school age were likely to be illiterate, or near illiterate. The grandfather was talking softly, pointing to this panel and that, reading aloud from a "book" that even he could read, anxious that his family should understand their history and their revolutionary heritage. Rivera's mural has been speaking like this to untold thousands of Mexicans in the thirty years since he completed it.

His death was premature in two senses. He was a man of immense vigour and, like Titian, was made to paint until he was ninety-nine and only then to be cut off by the accident of a plague. As late as a few years ago one could observe Rivera on a scaffold from seven thirty in the morning until dusk made work impossible — and know that he would be up half the night in conversation, participating in a song fest, preparing sketches for another work, or escorting a lady. The cancer that destroyed him was truly wanton. In addition, it was regrettable that he couldn't have had more time to work in a new technique that has come into being in mural work in this decade — the outdoor mural executed in coloured glass or stone. This, using the skill of Italian artisans, is a remarkably fruitful development. It frees the artist from the limitation of working only within buildings because it gives him a technical medium that can withstand the weather. One has only to see the stunning murals by José Chavez Morado at the National University or on the Department of Communications building to appreciate the rich significance of this development.

Thirty-five years have passed since Mexican mural painting began its splendid course, and the Mexican government today is no longer the child of a revolution eager to experiment in every direction. But, to its immense credit, it still is giving walls to its artists. One wonders when other governments will become equally mature in appreciating the contribution that art can make to the life of a society.

"In the Kingdom of Tribnia, by the Natives called Langdon . . . The Bulk of the People consist, in a Manner, wholly of Discoverers, Witnesses, Informers, Accusers, Prosecutors, Evidences, Swearers . . . It is first agreed, and settled among them, what suspected Persons shall be accused of a Plot: Then, effectual Care is taken to secure all their Letters and Papers, and put the Owners in Chains. These papers are delivered to a Sett of Artists, very dexterous in finding out the mysterious Meanings of Words, Syllables and Letters."

SWIFT.
Gullivers Travels.

STOP RE-ARMING — TALK NOW

A plea for the stopping of nuclear tests and arming and for top-level peace talks by
PROFESSOR J. D. BERNAL, one of Britain's leading scientists.

The decision to continue or end the cold war cannot be put off much longer. It will have to be settled in a debate in which now not merely governments and parliaments, but the whole of the people must take part before it is too late.

For the material danger is great: indeed, it cannot be greater.

Planes carrying hydrogen bombs are flying overhead, sites for rocket bases, aimed at Soviet cities, are planned in Britain. The United States military budget has been increased by £2 billion — more than the total cost of Britain's own swollen arms budget — for a defence that now even our Government does not claim to provide.

What does that mean, concretely?

At any moment a hydrogen-bomb-carrying plane may crash in flames somewhere in England. The bomb may not go off, but merely burn, and its contents are very combustible in the ordinary way.

● Where the smoke carrying plutonium comes down — and it may be quite a stretch of countryside or town — there will be contamination far worse than Windscale, and it will last far longer: the half life of plutonium is over 20,000 years.

A 'Mistake'

But that will be nothing to what would happen if an American pilot were to drop a hydrogen bomb by mistake anywhere in the world. Bombing and counter-bombing will start, leaving little but corpses in this country and only a remnant of the human race anywhere else. For now the cities of the United States are also in range, and war has become total madness and mass suicide.

Instead of plunging deeper into preparations for faster and more expensive slaughter, we should be finding the way to international agreement. This is fully realised in the Soviet Union. Mr. Khrushchov himself told me: "Co-existence is the only sane policy left for mankind."

But it is still a lesson that has to be driven home to politicians on both sides of the Atlantic.

Scientists, who saw the danger first, have been getting together from all parts of the world to denounce the folly and wickedness of nuclear war and its preparation.

Nearly 10,000 of the most eminent — from America and the Soviet Union, from Britain, France, Japan and Germany — enemies of the cold war as of the world wars, all uniting in signing Professor Pauling's anti-war protest.

Long and serious discussions on the dangers of nuclear war and nuclear tests have been held on the same wide basis, and, this is perhaps more important, no body of scientists has dared publicly to take an opposite view. They cannot deny the facts, and, in Bertrand Russell's phrase, "Those who know most are the most concerned."

In the face of this, it is redoubled folly to cling to policies of building more and more bombs and rockets and rejecting any serious talk about disarmament, the banning of bomb tests and the settlement of outstanding disputes in Germany and the Middle East.

U.S. Policy

This is (stripped of its phrases) the present United States policy, and the one to which Britain's Government

has committed us without consulting Parliament or people.

It can lead to nothing except war, and it may not always be possible in the future, as it has been in the past, to stop right on the brink.

Some of the military men and their political and business backers, who persist in this policy, have put forward a half-way house of "limited" nuclear war, where bombs far greater than those which destroyed Hiroshima are to be used on selected military targets.

The deaths of hundreds of millions of people who, in a crowded country like our own or Germany, happen to live near military targets, would be incidental.

And once the bombs start falling, how will it be possible to avoid slipping into a general indiscriminate bomb-dropping of total and final war?

No, the only good rule is to abolish nuclear warfare altogether and to stop all other kinds of warfare as well.

Most people in the world have enough sense to want to stop it all as from now in one great international decision.

But if there is still too much distrust to do this, we could proceed by stages, as long as there was a clear decision that we were going in the direction of peace, and not just marking time, as disarmament discussions have done for 12 years.

● We could start with such proposals as an atom-free zone in Central Europe, as the Poles have suggested, and stopping arms exports to the Middle East, the next most likely starting point of another war.

Common Need

That is why it is essential, as soon as possible, to get the Heads of Governments together.

This time, the peoples of the world are anxious, aware, and determined to see that the declaration of peace is not whittled away in Foreign Offices but leads to immediate and effective action.

The people of Britain are roused as they never have been on this issue of atomic warfare.

Already the hopes of a better future are being destroyed and the Welfare State for which they struggled so long is being dismantled bit by bit in the interests of profit and war preparation. This is more than people can stand.

All over the country old and new organisations are forming and merging into one great movement with a common policy, which includes:

- The stopping of tests and of making nuclear weapons;
- The refusal to set up rocket bases in Britain;
- A nuclear weapon free zone in Europe;
- Progress to real disarmament.
- And, as a means for securing these objectives as soon as possible, the immediate calling of a meeting of the Heads of Governments.

This is the policy which was urged on the Parliamentary leaders by the British Peace Committee deputation on January 23.

It was put forward clearly and forcibly by Aneurin Bevan in his world radio interview of January 9 last.

It is, in effect, the policy not only of the whole Labour

movement but of the majority of the people of Great Britain today, as opinion polls show.

There are differences of emphasis and of the order of putting such proposals into action. Some want Britain to act alone, others to strive first to influence its allies.

No 'Split'

The enemies of peace will make much of such differences; but they should not be allowed to split a movement when its activity is already shaking the Government and forcing it to pay at least lip service to peace.

An organised movement of this strength and extent could, if it remained united, force the Government to change its policy and take the lead in securing world peace.

MULTI-RACIAL CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 7)

organisation. Much though the delegates sympathised with the idea of an umbrella multi-racial body, the suggestion was rejected as premature.

The issues raised by Rev. Blaxall's proposal exposed both the strength and limitations of the conference.

On the one hand the conference showed that all the anti-apartheid forces could get together, in formidable strength, and map out an impressive, common area of unity. On the other, however, the very diversity of interests represented, made it difficult to harness them for concerted, common action.

In other words the conference emphasised points of agreement but could not — and wisely, did not attempt to — create the organisational machinery to realise its unity in political action (although a Planning Committee will implement conference decisions).

The Multi-Racial Conference turned out to be a grand inquest on apartheid, an affirmation of faith in tomorrow's

free South Africa, a forum in which accord could be found between the forces which are moving to change South Africa.

Once Britain does so, its N.A.T.O. allies, already under strong pressure from their own peoples, would join in breaking away from the sterile and fatal policy of Dulles and Eisenhower.

In this decisive moment Britain's people bear a great — perhaps the greatest — responsibility.

They are not alone, but are supported by a great movement for peace throughout the whole world — which will find expression at the Congress for Disarmament and International Co-operation, called by the World Council of Peace for this summer.

With determination and unity, national and international, the madness of hydrogen-bomb war can be checked, and the resources of science turned to making a world where all the peoples live in wealth and security.

The mood of delegates, as they left the conference, however, was that it was the opening, not the end, of a chapter. "Where do we go from here?" seemed to be the question in their minds. And rightly so. In charting an encouragingly wide area of agreements, the conference laid the foundation for unity in action in many fields. To realise its potentials, however, the Multi-Racial Conference must develop muscles.

But muscles are not acquired overnight, and the conversion of theoretic agreements into starting points of political activity is a step by step process. In the present favourable atmosphere, however, the possibilities for strengthening the unity found at conference are great. A first and necessary move in this direction should be an attempt by organisations — whose members attended conference — to get together and hammer out political concepts which they can agree to pursue in joint action.

If the unity-in-spirit of conference can be paralleled by practical unity-in-action, the Multi-Racial Conference may indeed turn out to be a turning point in our history.

Angry Man's Curse

Don't read this
If your stomach is weak,
If you shock easily.
Rather turn the page,
Close you ears,
Eyes too,
Than face this.

You thought poetry
Was of pressed roses,
Moon-lit seas,
Love-songs,
Song-birds,
Wind in the trees!
To stroke you,
Soothe you,
Or perhaps to daze and
bemuse you . . .
Words,
Parodizing meaning.

Hell, no!
My verse bursts
In your face,
Like an angry man's curse!
I'm usually hungry,
Always tired;
You've burnt my temper —
Short!
You're caught —
Rat-trapped by the tail.
Caught — in Houghton,
Parktown, Anglo-Vaal,
Muizenberg beach,
Riding the Blue Train . . .
You will writhe,
Helpless,
A back-broken snake,
Broken
By my verse.

But you still look
For love-songs?
You listen —
You lie back,
Like a bloated belch,
In stomach-rumbling
Ease!

I caught T.B.
On the concrete
Farm-jail floors —
(Jou pas, kaffir).
My love retches,
Black spit bubbling,
In your mines;
Sobs in the "kwela",
Your tumbri patrol-van.
Motorized.
Efficient.

Love?
What sort?
Like mercy
Of the whirl-wind,
Or a beggar's charity?
My mouth's dry,
My heart
As bitter as Bethal's sand
(Once, Wise Men went there.
Now, they leave).

I can't tell you
Of the washed-out
Cinema-styled
Caricature
YOU call love —
Dressed in verse
Like a Paris model,
With a public smile —
The world's whore!

MERVYN.

Conflict in Africa

Recently, five delegates from Zanzibar on their way to the Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference in Cairo, were hauled off their plane at Nairobi, and bundled back home. Many of the countries of Africa had no representatives at that Conference—and not because they did not care about it. The frontier lines drawn across our continent, the fear with which our masters look upon us coming together, not only keep us physically apart, but tend to keep our eyes fixed on our own backyards. Now from across the Atlantic comes a book by an American Negro socialist, which sees Africa as a whole, as one unit.

Moving with ease in succeeding paragraphs from Kenya, to French Equatorial Africa and then to Liberia and South Africa, one gains a vital impression of the sweeping and irresistible surge of the peoples of Africa towards freedom from foreign domination and exploitation. This refusal to divide Africa into artificial compartments is one of the many virtues of this book, one that is going to have a lasting effect on African thinking.

Two Difficult Problems

The greatest value of Dr. Hunton's fourteen years of work lies, however, in the material which he has brought together to enable discussion, on a new and higher level, of two very difficult problems that worry national liberation and workers' organisations throughout Africa. Firstly, there is the problem of defining one's attitude to economic development with the aid of foreign capital. Secondly, a serious political movement cannot today stand aloof from the problems created by the Cold War, it must have a foreign policy.

Two examples taken at random will show how real these problems are. In Uganda there was considerable opposition to the Owen Falls project and the industrial development which followed. Right or wrong? Different African trade union centres are affiliated to different world trade union bodies. (The ICFTU break from the WFTU was after all a Cold War move). On our own doorstep there has been discussion about whether Congressmen should visit socialist countries.

On both these problems, although they are not dealt with as such, Dr. Hunton has brought together a mass of facts which have never before been so readily available.

Wealth Before Freedom?

It was rather amazing to hear Mrs. Barbara Castle, during her recent visit, say that for many colonies, independence would not be possible unless greater economic development first took place. On the contrary, recent experience shows that genuine economic development is impossible until a nation has achieved sovereignty. The industrial development which takes place as a result of foreign investment, while a nation is still under foreign rule, not only makes real sovereignty in the end more difficult to achieve; the agreements on which such investments are usually founded are invariably as unjust, and as deceitful, as the treaties by which the European imperialists originally established themselves in Africa.

The relationships between colonial government and capitalist enterprise, which enabled the Belgian corporations in the Congo to pay over £80 million pounds in dividends to overseas shareholders during 1947/52, can hardly be regarded by the people of the Congo as just. And such exploitation extends throughout the raw material producing lands of Africa.

Real Alternative

It is conceded that it was this capital investment which made Africa part of the world market, that capitalist development not only exploits but also creates the forces of freedom: workers' and national liberation movements. In this sense foreign investment played a progressive role — 20 years ago, but not today.

Then independence, if there had been the forces to achieve it, would only have meant economic domination, for there were no alternative outside sources of capital. Today it is different. Not only are the forces of liberation immensely stronger, but the socialist sector of the world has expanded its own economy to the point where it can, on a basis of a true partnership, provide capital equipment, knowledge and trade for far sounder progress in underdeveloped countries. Capitalism no longer dominates world economy.

Dealing mainly with American investment in Africa, this book underlines with facts and figures something which no-one will deny: that the purpose of capitalist investment and trade is profit. This inevitably involves exploitation in some degree. As against this the aim of investment and trade by socialist countries is mutual advantage, not profit and it involves no exploitation. Soviet leaders have repeatedly

stressed that the two world systems should engage in friendly economic rivalry. More and more countries are taking them at their word, and it is this competition which today gives newly freed countries an opportunity to enjoy a true independence.

Non-Alignment

It is the realisation of this fact which is causing an increasing number of countries to follow a policy of non-alignment. And it is this policy of independence and peaceful co-existence, as followed by India, Egypt etc. which creates the belief that a similar policy could be followed by the Congress movement in a country like South Africa.

It is here that Dr. Hunton's analysis is particularly important. It establishes

- (a) that the U.S. sees Africa entirely in the light of the role it can play in America's interest in the Cold War.
- (b) that in consequence of this attitude the U.S. Government has opted for Strijdom and Welensky.

One small fact: Three-quarters of all Export-Import and World Bank Loans, 1946-56, made to African territories, were made to South Africa and the Central African Federation.

The Congress movement is not the Government of India, or of Egypt. It has no choice but to oppose all war plans, to work for peace. It is Strijdom who dreads an end to world tension, lest the Americans drop him like a hot potato. If Mr. Dulles wants Africa's friendship, this book should convince him that he ought to do so right away.

M. MULLER.

"DECISION IN AFRICA" — Sources of Current Conflict by W. Alphaeus Hunton. Published by International Publishers, New York, 255 pp.

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BARBARA CASTLE

(Continued from page 10)

rare things, a woman graduate from Oxford (Politics, Philosophy, Economics). She got married, when she was 33, to Edward Cyril Castle, a journalist on the staff of Picture Post and later of the Daily Mirror. They have no children. (I should have asked why, but didn't).

When she graduated, in the early thirties, Britain, and the world, were in the middle of history's worst slump. She got a job as a shop assistant. A university socialist, she tried to organise a shop assistant's union — the girls' conditions were very bad — but when she tried to bring the workers out on strike they had more sense than she did and wouldn't have any. With millions of unemployed the girls were lucky to have jobs at all, and there were thousands only too eager to step into their shoes.

Then, says Barbara, "I went into the Jew-Jew business."

"What?" says I.

"Jew-Jews. Greasy ones."

"Hey?"

"Jay yew bee ee, jay yew bee ee, luv. Don't you know what a Jew-Jew is?"

With one hand she sold jube-jubes and with the other she fended off, she says, amorous jube-jube buyers. But her career ended suddenly when she let her ambition and drive run away with her. She drew up a memorandum to the company directors explaining how she could do the branch manager's job much better than he could, and submitted it right over his head.

Out of a job, she began to devote her-

self completely to politics, storing up for future reference, presumably, the lesson that you have to be at least a little subtle when you start climbing over people to the top of the tree.

In 1937 she was elected for Labour to the St. Pancras Borough Council in London. That was about as low down on the ladder as one could begin, and she set to, with disarming frankness, on the climb over the bodies cluttering the way ahead that led to the seats of Labour's mighty.

The electionless war years blocked the way to parliament, but in the first post-war election, she won the Blackburn seat in the Labour landslide, and has been in parliament ever since, although last time it was a shaky do and she held Blackburn by only about 400 votes.

Perhaps she's not quite as self-confident as her cockiness pretends to be. Ask her if she's a Bevanite and she says "Yes", and a little later adds, "The truth is that Bevan is really a Castleite."

She created a minor sensation at the 1956 Labour Party Conference when she headed the constituencies ballot in the election to the National Executive, in a strong field of twenty candidates. With 952,000 votes she beat such veteran personalities as Anthony Greenwood, Harold Wilson, Tom Driberg, Richard Crossman, Ian Mikardo and Sydney Silverman.

Last year the Colonial Secretaryship came within shooting range when the Executive appointed her to introduce the official colonial policy resolution at the 1957 conference. Although this time she came down 100,000 votes in the constituencies ballot, and was third behind Greenwood and Wilson, among the seven elected to the Executive, this was amply made up for by her election as vice-president to Tom Driberg. This means that she will automatically be this year's chairman.

Although Barbara Castle makes no secret of her cabinet ambitions, she has yet to convince a Labour conference. Each year a shadow cabinet is elected, and it is the trade union votes which are most important here. With almost all her backing coming from the constituency branches and little support from the right-wing trade unions which dominate the ballot, Barbara Castle has not, at either of the past two conferences, come close to being elected. James Callaghan, a right-winger, has the shadow nomination for the colonial office.

But Barbara's in there fighting — for the choice of a cabinet depends not on the conference but on Gaitskell — and her visit here is part of that fight.

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