



LIBERATION

ONE SHILLING.

No. 33, OCTOBER, 1958

**Matthews: THE SIXTH PAN-
AFRICAN CONFERENCE**

**Connolly: THE RELUCTANT
REPUBLICANS**

Editorial: The Vision of Verwoerd



A JOURNAL OF DEMOCRATIC DISCUSSION

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CONTENTS

Editorial: THE VISION OF VERWOERD	1
THE SIXTH PAN-AFRICAN CONFERENCE	9
by Joe Matthews	
TAIWAN, by Walter Sisulu	15
THE RELUCTANT REPUBLICANS	17
by Patrick Connolly	
JUST FOR A RIBAND	23
(The Case of Howard Fast)	

THE VISION OF VERWOERD

SOME people ascribe the rise of Verwoerd to the top of the Nationalist hierarchy to his intelligence, efficiency and integrity. It is no doubt true that, in comparison with the dead level of petty mediocrity, blundering incompetence and unprincipled opportunism which surrounds him in the Nationalist Party, Verwoerd's ruthless and drastic handling of Native Affairs stands out. As Marx once said of a contemporary politician, he derives his eminence from the flatness of the surrounding scenery. Yet if Verwoerd has been able to overcome the disadvantages of alien birth, personal unpopularity and inability to handle human relationships, even in his own party, it is not really because of his rather limited talents, but because he has a purpose, a sense of direction, which his colleagues lack or have lost; because he drives towards this goal with grim, inflexible ruthlessness; because he knows, or thinks he knows, where he is going. And the rest of his Party does not.

The impetus of Afrikaner nationalism has run down. Most of its original goals have either been attained — such as equality of political and language rights — or have been bypassed and made meaningless in a world where other issues — the conquest of space, the potentials of nuclear energy for plenty or for destruction, the collapse of colonialism, the choice between capitalism and socialism — have come to dominate the minds of men. The nationalists are frightened and bewildered in this dynamic, new post-war world, so hostile and threatening towards those theories and practices of caste and race privilege which went down to shattering and irretrievable defeat with Hitler's Reich. They know how to win elections, according to formula (stimulate Afrikaner chauvinism and conditioned-reflex fears; rig the constituencies; pack the Senate; pack Parliament, pack the electorate) and the fruits of office are doubtless sweet to them.

THE COUNTRY OF THE BLIND

But apart from clinging to office, what are they after? What is their blueprint for the future? The Republic? More and more that long-postponed and vaguely-defined goal (for a more detailed examination on this theme the reader is referred to an article in the current issue, which it is hoped will evoke further discussion in our columns) appears not as the answer to problems but as the source of new and more serious problems. For the rest, the nationalists are increasingly developing the lager mentality, digging in to preserve established conditions and unable to see

beyond the next koppie, not planning the future but placing their trust in providence that it will turn out all right for them. The so-called wave of prosperity during the past decade — which in reality has made the rich richer, while spelling only higher prices at pegged wages to the poor — owes nothing to any nationalist foresight or skill. It arises out of two circumstances completely beyond their control: firstly, the wonderful windfall of a world demand for uranium (out of which the actual mine workers, black and white have not benefitted by a penny); secondly the new flood of American investment capital seeking outlets such as the Union which promise high rates of profit.

In these circumstances, turned cynical, opportunist, defensive, Afrikaner nationalism has lost its way. The sense of a mission, the appeal to idealism, the initiatives and wider goals, essential to provide a movement of this nature with the emotional spirit which fuels it, have departed. The rising Afrikaner youth, growing up into a world whose horizons have boundlessly been expanded, and from which they cannot possibly be insulated, must inevitably reject and turn away from a creed so intellectually poverty-stricken and morally indefensible. Even though the party hacks and ambitious careerists who make up the M.P.'s and Senators of the Nationalist Party may not be fully conscious of all these signs of decay, they cannot but be dimly aware of the profound inner sickness of their movement, and the utter impossibility of finding a remedy within the ranks of their own cynical opportunism. Among this crowd of disillusioned office-seekers, seekers for a bigger share in the imperialist cake for "Afrikaner" capital, higher prices for farm products, more and cheaper black labour, a man like Verwoerd, who seems to have some sort of plan, some ideology, some vision appears like a new Messiah. Even though the saner among them must recognise that the plan is a fantasy, the "ideology" a sorry patchwork of shreds from Calvinism and Hitlerism, and the vision defective and false, they have nevertheless plumped for Verwoerd with very much the same desperate recklessness that the French bourgeoisie have plumped for De Gaulle. And for very much the same reason — they have nowhere else to turn. In the country of the blind, it is said, the one-eyed man is king.

Indeed, the vision is one-eyed. "My dream may run ahead of the natural progress of events," Pisarev wrote, "or it may fly off at a tangent in a direction in which no natural progress of events will ever proceed. In the first case the dream will not cause any harm." Unfortunately, Verwoerd's dream is not of this kind; it is not the broad vision of the statesman, but the absurd phantasy of a crazed visionary. It bears no relationship to "the natural progress of events," or to the realities of South Africa and the continent and the world beyond; rather, it is fundamentally out of harmony with both. The more energetically and "efficiently" Verwoerd attempts to impose his romantic dream upon a situation which makes it impossible of realisation, the more damage he will do the country, and the more the people will suffer.

"LIEUTENANT-GOVERNORS"

Sometimes the use of a revealing phrase, or even a single word, can expose and sum up for us the whole character and outlook of a man. One of these rare occasions happened during the closing stages of the 1958 Union Parliament. The former Rajah of Bantustan, Dr. Verwoerd, newly elevated to Prime Minister, was speculating on future relationships between the White South African State and its African subjects, after the three African representatives have been ejected from the House of Assembly, after the Advisory Boards and all other semi-representative institutions have gone the way of the Bunga, after all vestiges of the "Cape Liberal" period have been obliterated, to be replaced by the absolute autocratic rule (unknown in African history or tradition) of Chiefs ("Bantu Authorities")—themselves but paid tools and hirelings of the almighty Native Affairs Department.

The State, said the Prime Minister, would deal with these "Bantu Authorities" through the medium of Lieutenant-Governors.

In its context the phrase is infinitely evocative and illuminating: it casts a bright ray of light into the mysterious, obscure recesses of the Prime Minister's mentality. Lieutenant-Governor: what a picture it conjures up, of the palmy days of the British Empire! Waving over the well-kept lawns and wide, shady verandahs of the vice-regal mansion, the good doctor sees in this vision not the Union Jack (Heaven forbid!) but the Union Flag (or is it the Vierkleur?). As the great shiny car rolls up to the entrance, uniformed African sentries smartly present arms (assegais) and out steps — not a mere Native Commissioner, but a Lieutenant-Governor, the Representative in Vendaland (or wherever it is) of His Exalted Majesty, By the Grace of God, Hendrik the First, President of the Republic and Emperor of all the South Africa. This high personage, the Lieutenant-Governor, presiding over a whole separate "Colonial Civil Service" (the humble N.A.D., glorified and ennobled), dispenses justice, firmly but uprightly, collects taxes, receives Chief and Indunas in formal audience — carries in fact what Kipling and other Victorian apologists for imperialism used to call "the White Man's Burden."

THE END OF THE N.A.D.

With the announcement of Dr. Verwoerd's new Cabinet, we are witnessing the beginning of a new phase in Dr. Verwoerd's attempt to force South Africa into the strait-jacket of his lunatic conception. Among its most striking features is the disappearance of the Native Affairs Department, as we have known it since Union. For the first time, there is no Minister of Native Affairs. Instead we have two Ministers, a Minister of Bantu Administration, and a Minister of Bantu Education. There is also an "Under Minister" of Bantu Administration. All three, of course — Messrs. Nel, Maree and Mentz (of the notorious "Mentz plan" for Johannes-

burg) — are 100 per cent. Verwoerd men. There will be no tears for the N.A.D., which has never done anything good for South Africa. But, like Verwoerd's so-called "abolition of passes" the two new "Bantu" Departments really do not abolish something bad but merely change its name, greatly extend it and make it much worse.

The whole monstrous "Bantu affairs" structure will be co-ordinated and directed over by a Committee at Cabinet level, presided over by — guess whom? Right first time — the Prime Minister. Mrs. Ballinger once wrote a booklet called: "All South African Politics are Native Affairs." How right she was! No doubt Verwoerd's new sub-committee will be the real source and focus of power in the future — instead of the Cabinet taking over the N.A.D., the N.A.D. has taken over the Cabinet!

And with unlimited power and this vast new machinery at his disposal, there can be no doubt about what Verwoerd is going to do — he is going all out to enforce his idea of apartheid. Nor can there be any doubt what he means by apartheid. We have had it amply demonstrated already. It means: reaction, exploitation, repression.

Reaction: Sometimes people just use this word as a political insult, to describe the policy of those whom they disagree with. But the word has a specific meaning. It means going backward to a lower, outworn stage, instead of forward, to a higher level. It is in this exact sense that we use the expression about Verwoerdism. He wants to destroy the growing unity among the African people and force them back to tribalism. Hence Bantu Authorities and ethnic grouping and the move to abolish common African institutions of a representative character like the Cape African representatives in Parliament and even Advisory Boards. Hence all the empty chatter about "Bantu" development — in the Reserves. He wants to halt the urbanisation and industrialisation of the African people, and force them back from those levels of civilisation and culture which — so painfully and in the teeth of so much opposition — they have conquered. Hence job reservation and the petty persecution of African intellectuals and professional people: lawyers, nurses, doctors, teachers, skilled workers, businessmen. Hence vicious intensification of pass arrests and deportations, extension of passes to African women. He wants to indoctrinate the youth with a servile, backward-looking mentality. Hence Bantu Education and the plan for Bantu Universities.

Exploitation: We do not know if there are political innocents in South Africa or abroad who still imagine that "apartheid" means that Africans should not work for Europeans. However unrealistic and up-in-the-clouds Verwoerd may be in other directions, one thing he understands perfectly well: the exploitation of cheap African labour is the foundation of the Union's present economy. His measures are meant to intensify this exploitation. He wants to see that the stream of African labour is directed especially towards sectors of the economy where the rate of exploitation is

highest, where wages and conditions are worst: the farms and the mines. Hence the ruthless expulsions of tens of thousands from the towns. Hence the new increased taxes for Africans, the labour bureaux, the farm jails, the ceaseless police raids. The raiding police are really man-hunters, like the pirates who used to descend upon the West Coast of Africa in search of slaves for the plantations of America.

Repression: Like all men with an obsession, Dr. Verwoerd cannot brook opposition. If such men are not humoured, they try to destroy everything that stands in their way. If a chief does not lick Verwoerd's boots, if he stands out against removal of his tribe from its traditional lands, or against passes for women, or against "Bantu Authorities", he is summarily sacked and dethroned and sent to starve in some wilderness — regardless of the fact that such a procedure makes obvious nonsense of the Government pretence that African Chiefs today represent their people. What is the good of telling the world that the Chiefs, the "genuine" spokesmen of the African people, support apartheid — when all the world knows that the Chiefs are terrified to do anything else? If there is one organisation which annoys Verwoerd more than any other it is the African National Congress. In place of the retribalisation of the African people into separate and hostile groups, turning backward to the primitive past, turned inward towards themselves, Congress stands for the unification of Africans marching forward to a modern enlightened future, turned toward the great world outside. In place of Verwoerd's vision of a permanent caste-society, divided by impenetrable barriers between South Africans of different origin which preclude all human contact, relegating Africans to an inferior position forever, Congress looks forward to a fraternal multi-racial democracy, affording equal rights and opportunities for all. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that a man like Verwoerd, with his marked streak of intolerance, his wartime record of admiration for Hitler and the Nazis, and his deeply-rooted contempt for the African people, should seek to take repressive measures against the A.N.C. Already, when still in his position as the Union's last Minister of Native Affairs, Verwoerd used his powers to ban Congress outright by proclamation in certain areas, calling on his colleagues in the Cabinet to do likewise. We can have little doubt, then, that despite his assurances, on assuming the premiership, that he believed in free speech, democracy and so on, he means to continue the job begun by his predecessors, Malan and Strijdom, of transforming South Africa into a totalitarian state; and that Congress is first on his list of victims. The sinister Swart, who has already condemned countless people without trial, is retained as Minister of Justice and Leader of the House. And, as we write, we learn that Swart's chief policeman Rademeyer has announced that the mass protests of African women in Johannesburg against the beginning of the issue of women's passes is a dangerous Communist plot. As Rademeyer's usual procedure is first to announce the crime and then start looking for evidence, we may confidently predict a new rounds of raids upon those much-raided people who make up the special branch's list of "Communists."

IT CAN'T WORK

Yes, Verwoerd has a plan. And it's a plan not only for the next year, or for the next five years, until the next general election, but for decades, even generations ahead. (Like Hitler and his "Thousand Year Reich" — remember?) He's got it all worked out, down to the last detail.

There's only one defect in Verwoerd's plan — it can't possible work. With his defective, one-eyed vision he has failed to take into account, even to see, those factors in the situation which make his plans hopelessly unreal, futile and unworkable; which, even within the few short years ahead, will increasingly set at naught and frustrate all his actions; factors which in the end he will either have to recognise and concede to, or else get out and make way for others who will do so.

We are not saying it is impossible for men to plan and dream for the future, and see their plans made real and their dreams come true. It is indeed possible, and it has happened many times. But those plans and dreams have to take into account realities, the laws of historical development, the will of the people and the spirit of the times; and what Pisarev called "the natural progress of the events." If they do not, they must fail. That is precisely what is wrong with the plans of Verwoerd and the nationalists. They leave out the realities of this world and this era.

We are in 1958. In Africa. The spacious days of the British Empire, when it could prolong its rule by prating about "indirect rule" by bought Chiefs and Rajahs, by Lieutenant-Governors and big talk to simple people about "the Great White Queen over the seas," — those days have gone. The Empire has gone: but little remains of it, and that is fast disappearing as well. The French Empire has all but gone; De Gaulle battles to retain what is left of it by bloody repression in Algeria and by trickery and concessions elsewhere in Africa. The Dutch Empire is gone. The whole concept of the empires, of rule by self-proclaimed superior nations with fair skins over allegedly backward ones with darker skins is gone never to return, discredited past redemption. Practically every country in the world, sickened and angered by what the racial myth led to in Hitler's Europe, or bitterly recalling the limitless suffering and degradation it caused in former colonies of Asia and Africa, and still causes in the remaining ones, repudiates and opposes racialism. And all their disgust at racialism, and their determination to eradicate it, is concentrated, above all, on apartheid (which has become an international term of contempt) and in particular against its principal practitioner and high priest, Verwoerd.

It is not only this imponderable, but irresistibly potent spirit of the age, a spirit of change which has already swept far the greater part of the world's population in its train in an incredibly short period of historical time, which the nationalists seek to defy. They are also running counter

to the stern and implacable imperatives of economic necessity. Capitalist industrialisation knows no laws except its own expansion; invariably it sweeps aside older forms of economy and artificial barriers; it had already gone far towards transforming South Africa before 1948, and has proceeded apace under the Nats. in spite of their attempted restrictions, at an ever greater speed. Tribalism belonged to and suited a pre-capitalist form of economy, it can no more survive or be revived in modern South Africa than can the hand loom or the wooden plough. Verwoerd may bring chiefs and indunas into the urban townships: they will be no more than African location superintendents, utterly out of place in a society of modern factory workers, teachers, business and professional people. The progress of South Africa demands a settled, well-adjusted urban labour force; enjoying a return for their labour sufficient to make them an effective and expanding consumer public for the products of industry. Verwoerd's plans impede such development. They impose a ruinously expensive administration on the country; they stress economic relations between employer and employee to breaking point; they swallow up the fabulous advantages of the country — its abundant natural resources and capable labour force — in fundamentally uneconomic and wasteful ways. In the long run Verwoerdism will no more be able to resist the overwhelming needs of the economy, expressed by a capitalist class which itself includes an ever-increasing proportion of Afrikaner nationalists — for a society corresponding to its own needs, than was Paul Kruger sixty years ago.

THE PEOPLE

Above all, Verwoerd has reckoned without his main host: the people of South Africa. To the philistine it may seem that, armed with the might of the State, a loyal civil service, police force and military machine, the South African government can do anything it likes, that it can go along its present road unchecked for an indefinite period of time, that disarmed, terrorised, increasingly forbidden the rights of political expression and organisation, the people can do nothing about their position. But the philistine is mistaken. Within the people resides tremendous, unconquerable strength. More and more, with every year that passes, with every new imposition the Government loads upon them, they are moulding, harnessing and realising that strength in organisation and unity.

It was not "Communist agitators" that brought out the women of Johannesburg into the streets day after day, to face arrest with such unbelievable courage, even enthusiasm. It was Verwoerd's pass laws. Rademeyer need not send his special branch men into their routine raids to look for agitators. Never in any country have there been such effective and systematic agitators as the members of the South African Police, or the laws of the Nationalist Party. They thrust their way into the peaceful countryside, upsetting long-established practices, dispossessing honest folks, awakening and provoking the "sleeping" masses into fierce, even violent, opposition.

And that awakening of the people, stimulated by constant experiences within the country and the news of far-reaching changes in the world beyond — now even as close as Basutoland, the resistance of the people, the unity of the people, is a force which Verwoerd cannot withstand, any more than the great empires of Western Europe, with infinitely greater resources than the nationalists can ever hope to command, were able to withstand the awakening of Asia and the Middle East and other parts of this continent itself.

In the months since the General Election of 1958, there has been a wave of pessimism in South Africa among opponents of the Nationalist Party, extending from the United Party to sections even among the liberation movement itself.

The United Party, seeing that it cannot win the game of parliamentary elections, in which its opponent makes the rules and keeps changing them to its advantage, and keeps on cheating into the bargain, is tending to lose heart and throw in the towel. They spread abroad a spirit of defeatism, try to come to terms with the Nats., haul down the Union Jack (which hardly arouses any enthusiasm in the country any more) and replace it with the White Flag.

Even well-wishers of democracy have been infected by the prevailing defeatism. The election victory of the Nats came as a disappointing shock; the stay-at-home in April did not come up to expectations; and now comes Verwoerd with all his outward appearance of strength, confidence and determination.

And so these "pessimists" give way to despair. They forget all about the great mass demonstrations of 1957; they ignore the fundamental weaknesses and contradictions and flaws beneath the surface of Nat. confidence and apparent success; they tell us that the struggle is in vain.

But they are wrong. Every day life confirms the truth of the lesson that the Nats. and all their works are doomed. Apartheid cannot succeed because it sets false, unattainable goals, and because the people will not permit it.

There is a vision of the future of our country that is true, in accordance with our needs and our destiny, and therefore bound to prevail. But it is not that of Verwoerd. It is the vision of the Freedom Charter.

Joe Matthews writes

about the

SIXTH PAN-AFRICAN CONFERENCE



There are many reasons why the Pan-African Congress due to be held on the 8-12th December this year is more significant than any previous conference of its kind.

Ever since the great American Negro thinker and freedom fighter Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois founded the Pan-African Congress in 1919 it never held a meeting on African soil. This will thus be the first Pan-African Congress to meet on the continent itself. That alone would be sufficient to render the conference memorable.

But of even greater importance is the fact that at this conference representatives of liberation movements from all over Africa will be present. Already at the fifth Congress this development was foreshadowed. Among the delegates were Jomo Kenyatta and Kwame Nkrumah. At this Congress representation of the continent will be complete.

For obvious historical reasons it was not possible to hold previous Pan-African Congresses in Africa. With virtually the whole of Africa under the control of foreign imperialist governments there could be no venue in Africa itself. This naturally tended to restrict representation at such Congresses and meant that the leading was very often in the hands of persons who were not in actual contact with conditions throughout Africa.

It may well be asked whether the calling of the Pan-African Congress at this particular stage in world history is timely. Bearing in mind the vastness of the continent (the second largest) and the great variety of problems faced by its peoples will it be possible for a common message to emerge from the Congress? What are the real problems with which the Congress will have to deal, and in what international setting is a solution of those problems called for?

Over three hundred years ago the traffic in African lives was launched by the so-called Western Christian nations of Europe. The slave trade involved the removal from Africa of millions of her sons and daughters and their transportation to the Americas. It must be borne in mind that the slaves who were thus bought, transported to the Americas and sold were not the worst representatives of their race. On the contrary the best equipped physically and mentally were required as slaves. A continent's greatest asset is its people and it can therefore be imagined what harm the slave trade inflicted on Africa. It is estimated that 100 million Africans left the shores of Africa during the period of the slave trade.

Much of the development of modern capitalism is historically closely linked with the slave trade and this can never be forgotten by the African people.

Not satisfied with the tremendous human and material damage done in Africa through the slave trade, the Western powers barely 80 years ago organised the so-called Scramble for Africa. Sitting in the gilded chancelleries of the European powers, foreign statesmen discussed the best manner by which Africa could be divided amongst the countries they variously represented.

Since then the destinies of the people of Africa were not in their own hands.

It needs to be said that not only Africa but the whole world and its peoples were under control by the same metropolitan states, Germany, Britain, Belgium, France, Portugal, Spain, United States. The whole world was controlled and exploited for the benefit of small privileged groups in these imperialist states.

The first breach in the system of imperialism occurred in 1917 with the great October Revolution. For the first time there came into existence a state irrevocably opposed to imperialism, colonialism and racial discrimination. In the place of the tsarist "Prison of Nationalities" there was created the multi-national, united, equal Soviet Republics.

The next climacteric in the struggle against imperialism followed as a consequence of the Second World War. A whole host of countries in Asia and Africa which were formerly dependent achieved independent status. Among these can be mentioned, India, China, Indonesia, Morocco, Tunisia, North Korea, North Vietnam. In Eastern Europe states emerged which were committed to an uncompromising struggle against imperialism and colonialism.

There is thus found in the world today a majority of mankind that has no interest in the preservation of the infamous colonial system.

Africa still remains however, largely under the control of foreign imperialist states. The continent has not been completely cleared of domination and exploitation by states in Western Europe and America. This constitutes the major problem for the peoples of Africa . . . freedom from foreign control.

And indeed the peoples of Africa are only too keenly aware of this. The continent is awake. Everywhere a struggle is being waged against imperialism for freedom, democracy, equality and national independence. Where a few years ago there were only two nominally independent states in Africa there are now eight independent states. Others are on the verge of independence such as Nigeria,, Algeria, Uganda, New Guinea and Somaliland. Powerful national liberation movements are challenging the status quo ever more powerfully and successfully.

Mention must be made of the special situation that exists in South Africa. Here we have an independent state in which a minority oppresses the majority of the population. Here we have a state that has instituted a system of racial rule or Apartheid that reduces the vast majority of the people to the position of third class citizens. Here the African National Congress and its allies in the Congress Movement are building up on sure foundations a multi-racial people's power that will inevitably usher in equality and democracy in our land in our lifetime. The African National Congress has played an important role in the calling of the Pan-African Congress and will put forward the views of the entire peoples of South Africa strongly and powerfully before the Congress itself.

It is clear from the developments described above that the call for a Pan-African Congress is a timely and correct one.

Of course the imperialists and their flunkies cannot view any of these events with equanimity. There is a great deal of opposition to the freedom and independence of Africa and its peoples. This opposition is offered by the imperialist powers which include, Britain, France, the United States, Belgium, etc.

It may be convenient here to deal with the myth that is so assiduously fostered by United States propagandists that it is not a colonial, imperialist power.

The whole history of the United States belies this claim. The century-old interference in the affairs of Mexico and the South American states; the history of Puerto Rico and the Phillipines; the enforced opening up of Japan in 1853 by Commander Perry of the U.S. Navy; the century of American imperialism in China which persists to this day; all these are sufficient indication of the character of the United States.

Even more fundamental from the African point of view is the internal treatment of peoples of African origin in the United States of America which is ruthlessly discriminatory to this day.

It is no accident that the United States frequently sides with the Colonial powers at the United Nations against the oppressed peoples. The excuses based on strategic interests and treaties are not valid at all. Nor is it surprising that the United States is incapable of issuing a clear categorical statement that it favours the establishment of independent states NOW and an end to racial discrimination and inequality. All we get is vague indications of goodwill, sympathy and a faith in a gradualistic, evolutionary path that may someday in the dim future lead to freedom.

In order to conceal these realities attempts are now afoot to divert the attention of the peoples of Africa towards the pet bogey of the Western Powers — Communism. This sometimes takes the form of urging that Africa become a third force between Communism and the West. At other times the question is posed as if the issue before the African people were one of choosing between Pan-Africanism and Communism. Just as similar attempts were made to sabotage the Bandung Conference so efforts are now being made to dissipate the work of the Pan-African Congress by introducing speculative problems that do not face the African people today.

The problems that Africa are faced with — the Real as opposed to the Illusory problems — are clear.

The tremendous resources of the continent are in foreign hands. The riches of the Congo are exploited by Belgian interests. The great lakes of Africa — Nyanza, Tanganyika, Nyasa — are regarded as British. The immortal Nile has its source in Uganda, under the control of a foreign power. This can be said with regard to the vast bulk of the continent's resources. A clear statement on the ownership of these resources is called for.

There is the question of the so-called plural societies in which European minorities, who have Africa as their home, exercise inordinate control over the destinies of African majorities. This will call for an investigation into racial discrimination and apartheid in South Africa, the Central African Federation, Algeria and Kenya.

There is the great problem of War and Peace. This affects all mankind at the present time. It is true that some racialists in our country feel that the African people possess neither the equipment nor the right to declare their attitude on international affairs.

But the latest weapons of mass destruction — atom and hydrogen bombs and ballistic missiles — have shattered forever the myth of international affairs as the preserve of professional diplomats and commentators. The

inevitability of total destruction in the event of a new world war has made the question of war and peace vital to every thinking human being.

Western bases of war are placed on our continent. France intends polluting the atmosphere by testing nuclear weapons in the Sahara desert without so much as a 'by your leave' from the peoples most concerned. The voice of the African must be heard on angry protest against this imperialist outrage.

There are some groups on the continent that foresee the possibility after freedom is achieved of establishing a federation of African states or even a unitary Pan-African state. Some people believe in this ideal and others do not regard it as a practical problem at all. This must not be raised at the Pan-African Congress as an issue which can produce unnecessary dissension over what is academic and speculative whilst Africa still remains largely under the iron heel of the conquerors.

Summarising then . . . the co-ordination of the struggle for freedom; the control of African resources; racial discrimination, apartheid and segregation; peace . . . These are the issues facing the peoples of Africa and they should be the issues on which our united voice should be heard at the Pan-African Congress. Africa Must Be Free! Africa! Mayibuye!

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by

WALTER SISULU

It seems incredible that the world is brought to the very verge of war time and time again through the calculated acts of policy of the United States of America. And that all the painful tensions that people must endure are brought about deliberately by the leaders of this great nation; while at the same time these leaders mouth pious generalities about peace and freedom at gatherings of the United Nations.

The time has come for people all over the world not only to expose America's grand imperialist design which is so clearly demonstrated in the Middle East and Far East, but also to take decisive action to put a stop to it.

The situation brought about over Taiwan is a serious threat to world peace, and its consequences can have a devastating effect not only in China and in the United States, but to the entire human race. America's irresponsible and provocative acts in collusion with that played-out, doddering and dissolute old traitor, Chiang Kai-shek should be brought to an end. Where the United Nations are unable or unwilling to act, the people of every country must force them. The United Nations Charter places an obligation on all member states to preserve and defend world peace by seeing that all nations have the right of self-determination.

It is easy for representatives of powerful governments to speak of peace. And it can be meaningless. The United States claims to be the champion of peace and disarmament, at the same time as their sixth and seventh fleets wander around arrogantly trying to intimidate the nations of the east. And who is it that is interfering with the internal affairs of China? Unless it is claimed that Taiwan and the other islands such as Quemoy and the Matsus do not belong to China?

During the war in China, the U.S.A. threw in everything in an attempt to defend its vast vested interests in what it considered as practically its colony. America sent troops, thousands of advisers, nine air groups with 1700 'planes, and in money no less than 12,000 million dollars in an attempt

T A I W A N

to bolster up Chiang's corrupt regime. When counter-revolutionaries were routed from the mainland of China, they fled to Taiwan (Formosa), itself a part of China. And America continued to support and to prod Chiang into provocative acts against China.

America openly declares that she has no intention of abandoning Chiang Kai-shek and Formosa, because to do so would open the way for the 'expansion of communism' and endanger neighbouring Asian countries. This island is of strategic importance to America in its evil design to recapture the Chinese mainland.

The Chinese people migrated to these Islands five hundred years ago. 98 per cent of the population of 8 million in Taiwan consists of Han, the largest national group in China.

The Cairo Declaration of 1943 recognised the right of China over these Islands, and this was further confirmed by the Potsdam Declaration of 1945. From then on it was accepted by all, and no country ever doubted that Taiwan was part of China. Only in 1950 did America decide to challenge China's right to rule these Islands. The challenge itself is fantastic and contrary to all rules of logic. What would the American people say if England claimed sovereignty over America on the grounds that it was once an English colony? The position in Taiwan does not even conform to this example, since Taiwan never belonged to America, even in the past. Taiwan and these Islands belong to China. To argue against it is to deny simple facts and logic.

What, then, are America's real interests in these Islands? Simply the statements made by Americans themselves: that to lose Taiwan means that the West has lost Asia. Why shouldn't they lose it? It does not belong to the West. Asia belongs to Asians. "Our aim is to prevent the expansion of communism and protect democracy," the American leaders say. Accord-

ing to this theory, China or the Soviet Union have an equal right to conduct war on Britain or America on the grounds that capitalism is a menace to socialist countries, and is interfering with the internal affairs of socialism.

There is no question of protecting Chiang Kai-shek. America simply wants to make Taiwan its colony for the protection and expansion of its own imperial interests, for the purpose of conducting a policy (if necessary a war) of subjugation against the emergent Afro-Asian nations. More and more people in Western countries have become aware of this dangerous policy followed by the U.S.A. America, however, turns round to say that Formosa must be given independence — in other words, to create 'two Chinas.'

The position is made more dangerous by the fact that China, today a great and strong nation of 600 million people, is not permitted to become a member of the United Nations. America does not 'recognise' China, only the cardboard puppet Chiang, and prevents China from taking its rightful place in the World Councils. The United Nations is supposed to be a world organisation built on sound principles with the main object of maintaining world peace. Yet America is permitted to dominate the whole scene and to prevent one of the greatest powers of the world from taking its rightful place in the United Nations, simply because America's rulers don't approve of China's policies. Even if Formosa were an independent country, to accept its representatives on the United Nations, acting on behalf of 8 million people, while rejecting the representatives of the 600 million of China is so absurd and unreasonable that it must be obvious to all.

It is difficult to see how other governments today can justify this position, and support the exclusion of China from the United Nations.

It is not too much to say that those who are fighting for the inclusion of China have themselves been slow in forcing what is an obvious and correct step and in the best interests of world peace. The membership of China in the UNO should be made an issue even if it means the withdrawal of the Afro-Asian Nations in protest until America sees reason.

Is this all 'no concern of ours' here in South Africa? On the contrary, it is very much our concern. Not only because we are deeply involved with the rest of the world in the fight for maintenance of world peace and against total destruction of mankind; but also because we see clearly how the national liberation struggle in country after country is confronted with the material might of huge imperial powers. We will, therefore, take our stand on the side of peace, progress and national independence. We will join progressive mankind in demanding the admission of China to UNO, and that America should, once and for all, take its gun-laden hands off China and China's affairs.

**A South African Republic —
democratic State or new form
of oppression ?**

Should democrats oppose the idea of a Republic? Should they support it? In this interesting statement of one point of view, Patrick Connolly airs his views on this question.

Do you agree, or not? Why not write and tell us — your letter, article or statement will be welcome.

THE RELUCTANT REPUBLICANS

by **PATRICK CONNOLLY**

The Nationalist Party, especially at election times, goes round the country telling its supporters that it is a republican party. I suppose many of the rank-and-file members of the party really do believe in republicanism — of a special sort (I'll come to that just now). Yet, after ten years in office, they haven't taken a single step towards a republic. The only time the question was seriously raised in Parliament was by Sam Kahn: he moved that we set up a republic right away. Of course the Nats. didn't support him. (In fact it wasn't very long before they found a way to remove him from Parliament altogether, and told the voters they could send anyone to Parliament they liked as long as it wasn't Sam Kahn. Or Ray Alexander. Or Brian Bunting. Or anyone else on Swart's blacklist of reds.)

I am a republican too. There's nothing very odd about that. The great majority of the world's people today are republicans. They live in republics and don't want to go back to monarchies. Kings and Queens are a

hangover from the past; they're a hundred years out of date. There aren't many of them left either. There isn't a king or queen to be found in North or South America. All the newly-independent States of Asia and Africa are either republics already, or want to be. In Europe only a few countries in the North-West (Britain, Holland, Belgium, Scandinavia) run to the senseless extravagance of maintaining a royal family and all the parasitic Court aristocracy surrounding it. In the brief years since the war quite a few countries — Italy, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Egypt — have sent their Kings packing, with all their hangers-on. Just the other day Iraq dispensed with its monarch, rather violently. I suspect that when the British leave Jordan they'd better take King Hussein with them — he won't last long without them.

The concept of a republic is a very old one. It stems back to ancient Greece and Rome. The word (*res publica* — public affairs) comes from the Latin. Though the ancient republics of Athens and Rome were really aristocracies (slaves and "barbarians" couldn't vote) they at least showed that the public could run its affairs without a king or dictator.

But the modern conception of a republic, which has conquered the world over the past hundred-and-fifty years, really stems from the great French and American revolutions. Inseparably bound up with these revolutions were two glorious conceptions which won the hearts of men everywhere: democracy and national independence.

The French Republic was carried to victory under that wonderful slogan which still inspires people everywhere who suffer under tyranny, discrimination and oppression: "Liberty! Equality! Fraternity!" The American Republic was born in the fires of a war of independence against foreign domination. It proclaimed to the world that all men were created equal, and that government of the people, for the people and by the people should not perish.

Of course you can point to crying contradictions and hypocrisy. While France proclaimed liberty at home it continued to oppress millions in its colonies abroad. While America declared for equality it continued to hold millions of Negroes in slavery within its own borders. Nor could De Gaulle or Eisenhower be held up as particularly inspiring upholders of freedom and democracy in the modern world.

All the same, the fundamental principles of republicanism are valid and inspiring ones. If crimes have been committed in their name, it was because the criminals betrayed those principles. They turned from the shrine of liberty to worship the golden calf.

Any good principles can be distorted to evil ends, and the devil, as we know, can quote scripture. When republicanism came to South Africa it lost most of its libertarian and equalitarian content. Instead of liberty,

Paul Kruger's South African Republic openly proclaimed: "There shall be no equality in church or state." Rousseau, Danton, Robespierre and Washington must have turned in their graves.

What was it then about republicanism that appealed to the Voortrekkers? It was the national-independence, anti-imperialist side of it. They were striving to get free from British imperialism: naturally, like the American colonists of 1776 they thought of a republic. But their concept of a republic had very little of revolutionary radicalism in it. They did not imbibe at the clear fountain of Rousseau, Paine and Jefferson: their Calvinist clergy would have seen to that. The whole concept did not come to them, I should imagine, from France or America directly, but probably through the very diluted source of the Batavian Republic, a pretty respectable, bourgeois, commercial sort of affair.

Above all, while they were proclaiming their own right to independence from British imperialism, they were busy destroying the independence of other people — the Africans — and imposing upon them their own particularly revolting variety of imperialism, rooted in the degrading slave-owners' mentality they had brought with them from the Cape.

That's why the Afrikaners' republicanism was always contaminated, emasculated and suspect. They fought a rousing and heroic struggle to maintain their independence, against the greedy grab of Rhodes and British imperialism; and they won world-wide sympathy from freedom loving people in this struggle. But the sympathy was tempered by an unhappy consciousness that the freedom the Boers fought for for themselves was the very freedom of which they deprived others.

The Afrikaner people are justifiably proud of the war their grandfathers fought fifty years ago. For two years the two tiny Boer republics defied the mightiest empire in the world. But in the end God proved to be, as usual, on the side of the big battalions. The British won. War is a dirty business, and the British used cruel and merciless methods — though not nearly so cruel and merciless as those they have used before and since in their various wars against dark-skinned colonial people. After their victory, the British subjected the defeated Boers to various forms of humiliation and degradation, denial of language rights, discrimination in the economic field, refusal of self-government etc., — though none of them so severe as have been inflicted by Britain on its dark-skinned colonial "subjects", and still are today.

British brutality in the war, and arrogant imperialist jingoism in their victory, left deep and bitter scars on the Afrikaner people. That's why, even today, nearly sixty years later, republicanism and anti-imperialism are potent emotional levers among the Afrikaner people, capable of evoking a vigorous mass response. (Though, it should be added, there is something peculiarly narrow and self-centred about this sort of anti-imperialism:

Afrikaner nationalism has never shown the slightest sympathy with the sufferings of other victims of British or any other imperialism, or the least sign of rejoicing at their splendid victories; quite the reverse.)

Nationalist politicians and businessmen have cashed in heavily on these sentiments and aspirations of the Afrikaners. That is how they have won three general elections in a row and built up a flourishing Afrikaner capitalism. The republic is the carrot they keep dangling in front of the electorate. Every time they promise they are going to do something about it. Every time the promises are more emphatic, as Malan gives way first to a Strijdom and then to a Verwoerd. Yet they do nothing. (This is where we came in — excuse the long digression!)

Why not? Why this strange reluctance? Surely it's not so very difficult! Nehru's India has declared herself a republic — inside the "Commonwealth" Ireland and Burma have proclaimed republics outside the British connection altogether. What's stopping us?

The Nationalists claim that they are good democrats, and don't want to offend the English-speaking section of the population. But that has never stopped them doing anything they really wanted to — they have ridden rough-shod over the most bitter opposition from every non-Nationalist section of the public. Remember the uproar over the Suppression of Communism Act. And the High Court of Parliament. And the Senate Act. And Church Apartheid — and a score of others. If they were really worried about not offending English-speaking lovers of the Empire, why did they abolish God Save the Queen and the Union Jack?

The fact of the matter, it seems to me, is that most of the proclaimed "republicanism" of the present Nationalist leaders is sheer bluff, cynical demagoguery to deceive their voters and followers. I don't say that Verwoerd and Company have any love for the British Empire. But their association with Britain and the Empire offers them certain solid advantages which they are exceedingly loath to part with. For one thing, Britain always backs them up at UNO when, as usual, they are in the dock on charges of deliberately flouting the Charter. For another, Britain is still their best customer for agricultural exports, and still (though America is overtaking her rapidly here) the main source of investment capital in the Union. Despite the Statute of Westminster, the Union remains tied to London by a hundred invisible ties of economic dependency. In reality, the Nationalist Party is terrified by the collapse of the British Empire and colonialism generally. It regards the advance of Asia and Africa to inde-

pendence as a mortal threat to the maintenance of White minority rule in the Union — and rightly so too! And, therefore, it has to recognise that the Empire, or what is left of it, is a bulwark of baasskap.

As against all this, it may be urged, there are powerful reasons why the Nationalists nevertheless should and will seek to set up a republic. Afrikaner capitalism is jealous of the preponderant role which British and other foreign imperialist interests still play in our economy — especially in gold and uranium mining. This resentment was recently given outspoken expression by the doctors Louw and Hertzog (we have passed from the era of the Generals into the era of the Doctors!) Republicanism is a political expression of the desire of the Afrikaner capitalist class for economic independence. But, if you come to think of it, the Afrikaner capitalists are not all anxious to end the dependence of the Union on foreign imperialist capital. In fact the Government spends a great deal of time and energy trying to coax more British and American investment into the Union. All these fellows are really doing is whining for a bigger share of the cake for themselves; the Chamber of Mines has never had a more obliging and abject administration, not even that of Smuts; at the least suggestion of foreign capital being withdrawn they nearly have a stroke — Verwoerd, Hertzog, Louw. the lot of them.

Again, it is said, a republic will facilitate the more radical and drastic transformation of the country into a full-fledged fascist state. The Nationalists will take advantage of a constitutional change of this character in order to put an end to such vestiges of democratic rights and institutions as remain after a decade of their government. The independence of the judiciary will be abolished, once and for all, city councils will be replaced by the "burgomaster" system, appointed by the State, the last remnants of legality, open opposition, court procedures and civil rights will be abolished. The notorious Transvaler "Draft Constitution" will be imposed on South Africa.

There is much weight in this argument, and it is probably for this reason that the democratic forces of our country will, willy-nilly, find themselves involved in a bitter struggle against any attempt by the Nationalist Party to introduce its conception of a republic.

Yet we must not forget that there is nothing in this evil programme which the Nationalists cannot do, and are not already attempting to do, within the framework of the present State and within the Empire. The bulwark of our liberties is and always has been not the Crown or the

British Empire, but the determined resistance and unity of the people of our country themselves. The British Government sold out the Non-European people of this country at the time of Union; it never has and never will lift a finger to protect them from persecution at the hands of White South Africa. All the British ruling classes are interested in in this country and this continent is high profits and cheap labour, they remain one of the most bitterly reactionary forces in the world, the stranglers of the peoples' liberties everywhere.

If the situation should change, if pressure from their followers, or new relations of international forces should impel the Nationalist Party into pretending to honour their long-dishonoured promises by establishing fascism in the name of a republic, we who belong to the forces of democracy and liberty should never forget that it is the fascism we are fighting against, not the noble principles of republicanism.

Indeed, now while there is yet time, we should be rescuing the proud banner of republicanism from the soiled hands of those who have betrayed it; who have prostituted its name and forfeited all right to call themselves republicans. Are we not, indeed, the true republicans? And are we not, by default, allowing that noble title to be usurped by ignoble men, who have no claim whatever to follow in the illustrious tradition of Cromwell, and Milton, Washington, Paine, Jefferson and Lincoln, Rousseau, Danton and Robespierre, Toussaint, Bolivar, Sun Yat-Sen, Wolfe Tone, Pearse and Connolly, and other great Republicans of the past?

Well, for the most part I have just been thinking aloud in this essay, on a subject which I feel is long overdue for fresh thought and open discussion. And I should much like to know what other readers of our magazine, "Liberation", think about the matter.

I cannot, however, leave the subject, without a final thought. No democrat can for a moment tolerate the idea that a new state form and structure should be decided upon in this country by any sort of vote or referendum of the White minority alone. Any such procedure would run counter to the whole basic conception of self-determination, the foundation of the U.N. Charter. The spokesmen of the voteless majority, therefore, have a most urgent duty immediately to serve notice that this is the concern of the whole people, that the whole people must take part in deciding it, and that no changes otherwise decided upon can be recognised as having any validity. If we are to have a republic, let it be a republic of the people; not another monstrosity like the Union, decided upon by a privileged minority in order to maintain its privileges.

THE CASE OF HOWARD FAST

JUST FOR A

RIBAND . . .

One of the better publicised reverberations of the Hungarian uprising of 1956 was the public break with communism and the American Communist Party announced by Howard Fast. Doubtless the news came to thousands of other readers and admirers of Fast as the staggering bombshell it was to me. Not that I considered — then or now — that Fast was one of the literary giants of our time; but rather than he had come to symbolise that exceedingly rare, almost extinct creature — the Western writer of Leftist principles who stuck to them through all the years of intellectual blackout and surrender of the cold war period. How was it possible to explain this defection or to understand it?

Fast himself set out to answer these questions. In the well-worn fashion of those who renounce their past faith, he wrote a breast-beating, self-incriminating book, "The Naked God." Those who read it found it hysterical, incoherent and contradictory. Much of Howard Fast's intellectual glamour was tarnished by this confused grappling with the problems of the motivations for the great decisions he had taken. The problem of what made Howard Fast tick was not answered by "The Naked God." It was inevitable that someone should attempt to answer it.

Hershel Meyer has given a masterly answer in 'History and Conscience' — subtitled 'The Case of Howard Fast.' It would be easy just to take Fast's own confessions in 'The Naked God' and hurl them back at him; Meyer has resisted the temptation. His examination of the case of Fast is not of significance for Fast alone. He has taken the wider canvas, the study of what makes intelligent, emotional thinkers sheer off on wildly contradictory tacks at sudden turns in the world's development. Fast is only an example; there were others before him and will doubtless be others after, for whom the course of progress does not fit the preconceived ideas of its supporters. "The exalted hopes of utopian idealists are always in advance of what is realizable at a given historical period. Disillusionment is consequently an aftermath of every progressive social upheaval", writes Meyer, looking back beyond Fast to Southey and Wordsworth generations before, and to those who turned from supporters to enemies of the French Revolution because of its "excesses", its miscarriages of justice.

Armed with this philosophic understanding of disillusion, Meyer turns to the study of Fast's own explanations for his rejection of Marxist philosophy and communism, dealing with the sociology, the politics and the psychology of the man and the type. "Formerly destitute, discontented intellectuals, having participated in the post-war and armaments prosperity, gradually succumbed to the philistinism of suburbia," he writes. "But for the former publicly-avowed and committed Communist intellectual, the process of transformation is more complex. He must find reasons . . . He may have joined the party unobtrusively and clandestinely, but when he defects he finds it necessary to make official announcements accompanied by passionate accusations. Almost always, at the point of departure, he takes the "sins" of the October Revolution."

In a rational, balanced manner, contrasting sharply with Fast's own "Naked God" hysteria, he traces, stage by stage, the development of such a man from his first act of defection — 'I am neither anti-Soviet nor anti-Communist.' (Fast, February 1957) to call for the destruction of all communist parties, and anti-Soviet tirades over Mr. Dulles' Radio Liberation. Meyer evades nothing—neither Fast's horror at the facts given by Krushchov to the 20th Party Congress of the Soviet communists, nor Fast's anguish at alleged anti-semitism in the USSR, nor Fast's praise for the freedom of the artist in America. Each point is weighed, argued, and critically considered. From it emerges not only a portrait of Fast as a rather pathetic, self-inflated figure lost in the wilderness of his own confusion, but also a balanced statement in defence of the socialist world and the Marxist philosophy which has guided it into being.

In one of his moments of bitterness, Meyer writes: "Fast had been considered a leading writer on the Left. For political reasons, his books were ignored by the literary world in his own country. But in the socialist sector of the world his books sold in the millions of copies, eagerly read by large audiences and sponsored by socialist governments which approved the humanist, freedom-seeking heroes of his volumes. Now Fast proclaimed in bitter and anguished accents that the world which had spitefully ignored his work was free, while the world which had raised him to the stature of a world literary figure was enslaved and oppressive." But the real bitterness is left for the end. Here, in a postscript to an outstanding piece of social-literary criticism — albeit compressed into some sixty pages — Meyer quotes Byron's biting words to a renegade of his time, Robert Southey.

"Mr. Southey may applaud himself to the world, but he has his own heartiest contempt; and the fury with which he foams against all who stand in the phalanx he forsook . . . is the rancour of the renegade, the bad language of the prostitute who stands at the corner of the street, and showers her slang upon all, except those who may have bestowed upon her her 'little shilling'."

L.B.

History and Conscience. By Hershel D. Meyer. Published by New Century Publishers, New York.

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