



LIBERATION

ONE SHILLING

No. 17, March, 1956

THE NATAL SOCIETY
COPYRIGHT SECTION

-3. APR. 1956

CAPE SOCIETY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

—by H. LAWSON

Walter Sisulu on
THE EXTENSION OF PASS LAWS



A JOURNAL OF DEMOCRATIC DISCUSSION

**WE WILL SEND YOU LIBERATION
EACH MONTH**

Send a postal order for 10/- to LIBERATION,
Box 10120, Johannesburg, and we will post you a copy
of each issue.

Fill in this form.

Please post me LIBERATION for one year. I
enclose a postal order for 10/

NAME

ADDRESS

.....

LIBERATION

A Journal of Democratic Discussion

No. 17. March, 1956

One Shilling

CONTENTS

Editorial—The Myth and the Reality	.....	.....	.....	.....	1
Can the Congress of Democrats Win Mass Support?	.....	.....	.....	.....	6
The Social Basis of the European Political Groups	.....	.....	.....	.....	8
The Extension of the Pass Laws	.....	.....	.....	.....	12
Cape Society in the Eighteenth Century	.....	.....	.....	.....	15
A Communication	.....	.....	.....	.....	20

Editorial

THE MYTH AND THE REALITY

“In order to suppress you need not only laws, police forces and weapons. You must also have a mental arsenal of conceptions justifying your actions and guaranteeing a good conscience.”

—“The Problem of South Africa,”
by Professor Herbert Tingsten.

WHEN, during the infamous joint session, Strauss attacked the Government’s “new cult of blatant, unashamed race discrimination,” he was attacking not the fact of race discrimination itself, but the fact that it is blatant and unashamed, not covered up decently with mawkish hypocrisy and fake concern for the welfare of its victims, the way the United Party prefers it. As usual, he left himself wide open to a devastating counterblow from the Prime Minister, who loves nothing better than to strip the Opposition naked of its pretensions. Strijdom affected to misunderstand Strauss’s meaning. “I say that if as an honourable man you are opposed to colour discrimination it can only mean that you would not apply any such discrimination,” he said, and went on

to accuse the United Party as having as its ultimate policy "absolute equality between black and white." "Nonsense!" Mr. Lawrence valiantly interjected, and of course it is nonsense, but Strijdom has succeeded in destroying one by one the U.P.'s claims to an independent policy: apartheid, white baasskap, the destruction of civil liberties—the "Opposition" has been forced to swallow them, one by one.

A TWO-EDGED WEAPON

In accomplishing these easy victories over Mr. Strauss, however, the Prime Minister introduced a weapon—the terrible keen sword of logic—which he may well regret having unsheathed. For it is a two-edged weapon. Just as it has laid bare the myth of United Party "Christian trusteeship" in all its nakedness, so with the same merciless and shining blade it can destroy the hollow pretences of the Nationalist Party. "The justification of this Bill (South Africa Act Amendment)" says Strijdom, "is its assurance of the maintenance of the rule of the white man in South Africa." And then in the next breath he goes on to say that "Nothing should be done or said that would create the impression among non-whites that the whites were their enemies and that they were being oppressed." Come, come, Mr. Strijdom. You are the one who is creating that impression, all the time. You say the Coloured voters must be disfranchised to maintain white rule. Doesn't that mean that you regard the groups as hostile? If one group makes the rules and the other group has no say but just has to obey them, doesn't that mean oppression? Or don't you know the meaning of words?

LIVING IN DREAMLAND

If ever there was a large group of people living in a dreamland of fantasy and unreality it is the majority of the white inhabitants of our country. They are wrapped in blankets of myth and illusion. The myth of race superiority. The myth of the benevolence of the white people: coming to Africa to bring the blessings of Christianity and civilisation, paying out good money in taxes to give the black people schools and hospitals. The myth that the purpose and justification of the monstrous structure of discrimination and unfairness we live in, is the preservation of the mythical purity of the mythical white race.

All around and about is the real world: but neither the awesome boom of the H-bomb nor the earth-shaking disintegration of international imperialism can stir them from their daydreams. They live in the midst of the real South Africa—the land of suffering, starvation, merciless exploitation, sickening violence: but they see it not.

Every now and again an ugly court case gets into the papers and reveals the brutal face and mind of the man who does the dirty work—the *Man with the Sjambok*.

Doesn't it jolt them, for a moment, this ugly glimpse behind the scenes? ("Don't hit me again, baas. I am dying now.") Who wields the sjambok? Who draws dividends on gold shares? Who profits from cheap labour on the farms? Could it be you?

DRAW THE CURTAIN

Quick, quick! Draw the curtain! The bemused dreamers shut themselves away from these realities and these cruel questions. They pull

the fleecy blankets of illusion about their heads. They see not the naked mealie lands and pastures of the Transkei, the awful locations of the cities, the anguished eyes of starvation and suffering. They are blind and deaf.

They have never been into a location. They don't know the most obvious and simplest facts about, for example, police raids for liquor, passes and tax receipts. They have never, in their whole lives, met or spoken to a single African, Indian or Coloured person as a human being, as anything except a servant.

REAL EUROPEANS

Real Europeans, people from Europe, come here to have a look at our country. They are shocked and amazed, and they say so. **Then they must be Communists.** No, look, here is Canon Collins from St. Paul's Cathedral. He says South Africa is a madhouse. Here is Professor Tingsten from Sweden, the editor of the Conservative newspaper "Dagens Nyheter." He says:

"Nowhere so much as in South Africa have I met prejudice as a way of life . . . Nowhere have I found prejudice fortified by such strong walls of self-confidence, ignorance and aversion to discussion."

Well, what a piece of impudence on the part of these visitors! They spend a month or two in South Africa, and they claim to know more about the country than we do, who have spent all our lives here, and whose parents and grandparents were born here! Yes, not only do they claim to know more, but they do know more. They have read some books, they have studied the statistics of population, they have studied some of the laws, they have been to visit the non-white living areas which you avoid like the plague, and they have taken the trouble to meet some leading people and some ordinary people among the non-white majority and talk to them on even terms, which you would never dream of doing.

Again, to quote the admirable Professor Tingsten: "The really fantastic thing is that these people know nothing about the racial groups the characteristics of which they describe with great emphasis and unanimity." They know nothing and they do not want to know. They do not want to hear the Swedish Professor, with his sharp vision and his sharp logic, or the English Canon with his warm heart and his bluff common sense.

OBLOMOVS

In his brilliant novel "Oblomov," the famous nineteenth-century Russian novelist Goncharov paints a picture of an idle landowner who hides away from the world. He never leaves his flat. When he is not sleeping he lolls about in his dressing-gown, eating or daydreaming or making plans which he never carries out. When visitors enter, he cries: "Don't come near me; you're straight from the cold street!"

Precisely thus do our South African Oblomovs react to all who come from outside, bringing with them the cold air of reason and reality.

But it is becoming more and more difficult to ignore the crescendo

of angry criticism of the Union's racial laws and the psychotic colour-phobia of its Government. It is not just a matter of an occasional visitor who could be dismissed as an eccentric crank and busybody.

UNITED NATIONS

Our politicians and newspapers can denounce the U.N. General Assembly. Many of them are not white. And some are Communists. But that is what the world is like. The West European countries are in the U.N. as well, and nearly every one condemned colour discrimination in South Africa. They didn't agree that it's "purely our domestic affair." They say it relates to the fundamental human rights of the Charter, and to the issues of peace and war.

So we marched out of the General Assembly and dashed home to get our head under the blankets. But we cannot ignore the United Nations, or forget about it—it represents the overwhelming majority of mankind.

VIOLINISTS AND FOOTBALLERS

It is not only the General Assembly. There is no end to it. The famous American violinist Stern says he won't come to South Africa, because of the colour bar. Says he refused to play in Germany before the war, won't play here for the same sort of reason. Menuhin is prepared to tour provided he is allowed to give free concerts for non-whites. Oistrakh can't come because the Government doesn't want any Russians here.

The International Soccer Football Federation has just sent out a commission of enquiry to consider whether it should not disaffiliate the all-white S.A. Football Association. The international rules do not allow colour bars. (The SAFA's reply is a lovely piece of daydreaming—they say they are prepared to take over the administration of non-white soccer, on an apartheid basis!)

Our All-Whites have already been excommunicated from international Table Tennis. The whole question of future South African participation in the Olympic Games is in the balance, because the rules exclude race discrimination.

South Africa has been excluded from the International Youth Hostel Federation, which facilitates cheap world-wide tours for young people. Reason:— South African colour bar.

BREAKING THE LINKS

One by one South Africa's links with the outside world are being broken.

We have no relations with India, because they object to the way South Africans of Indian origin are treated here, and our Government refuses even to discuss the matter with them under United Nations auspices.

We have no relations with China: for one cannot really imagine that the gentleman with the Chinese name who occupies the Chinese Consulate is anything but an additional American representative.

We no longer have any relations with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, since their Consulate—having invited some non-white guests

to its annual official reception and there served them with drinks—was found by Mr. Louw to be a danger to the country.

Soon, it would appear, we shall have no contacts at all with other countries—diplomatic, sporting, cultural or any other—unless perhaps we can arrange some special relationship with the State of Alabama.

JUST ANOTHER FANTASY

But of course the conception that the South African ruling class can live in splendid isolation and tell the rest of the world to go to the devil, is just another fantasy, as unoreal and absurd as all the others. "White South Africa" could not stand for a day without the backing of the British and American financiers who have sunk investments in this country and whose sole concern with it is to extract the maximum dividends therefrom.

Although the Nationalist Party still pretends every five years, at election time, to be anti-imperialist and republican, we have never had a Government more servilely and loyally devoted to the Empire. They have never had a word of sympathy for the people of Malaya or Kenya, suffering at the hands of the British forces barbarities infinitely worse than those endured by the Boer homesteaders of half a century ago.

The Union's economy remains so dependent on that of Britain that every time one of the Governors of the Bank of England sneezes in London, Mr. Eric Louw says "God bless you!" in Cape Town.

FIFTH COLUMN

In his recent speech on his return from London, the Minister of Defence, Mr. Erasmus, told the House of Assembly that Africa was the greatest prize for the West, and that the Union was committed to defend it for the West. But, we are not "in the West," Mr. Erasmus, we are in the South. As a matter of fact, we are in Africa itself, and one would think that Mr. Erasmus would understand that Africa is a "prize" for no-one but the people of Africa—after all, he calls himself an Afrikaner. Instead, so besotted and bemused are he and his Cabinet with Mr. Dulles's "global strategy" and "brink of war" policy, that he forgets where he is and quite openly announces himself and his Party (and one feels he speaks for the United Party as well) as nothing else but the Fifth Column for "Western" imperialism here on the Continent of Africa.

How tragic and ignoble a role they have cast themselves for! How infinitely perilous—and not for the ruling caste alone, but for all South Africans!

THE WAY OUT

Ever more and more insistently the non-white people of our country are knocking at the door, demanding the rights and liberties that have been proclaimed in the Freedom Charter. They are united and determined as never before, and if the door is not opened they will break it down.

And they are not alone. With them march the millions of people of the rest of the continent, advancing towards the goals that have already been reached by hundreds of millions in China and India and elsewhere in Asia: national liberation, independence, self-government.

All of Asia and all of Africa, with the exception of an utterly insignificant smattering of European settlers, regards the claims of the non-white South Africans with the warmest sympathy, and indignantly rejects the arrogant racial theories of the Nationalist and United Parties. Russia and East Europe adhere to principles of proletarian internationalism which are incompatible with any theory or practice of white supremacy. And all the best people of West Europe and of North and South America find the whole conception of autocratic rule by representatives of a "master race" disgusting.

Those are the realities of the world in 1956: a world in which the minority rule of a self-chosen group in South Africa cannot for long survive. The political leaders in this country who close their eyes to these realities, who preach in the name of "the survival of the White man," are false prophets, false saviours. The dangerous road they travel leads to destruction, not survival.

The true road to survival and to a happy future for South Africans of European descent, as for all the groups of our population, lies in renouncing all claims to a special status, in joining in fraternal co-operation to build a society of equals, where the measure of the worth of the individual is not in his pedigree, but in the value of his contribution to the common welfare.

To awaken them to this robust reality is the urgent and honourable task of that enlightened minority, within and outside the Congress of Democrats, who have the vision and character to break out of the mental prison of racial ideology.

CAN THE CONGRESS OF DEMOCRATS WIN MASS SUPPORT?

By C. GOLDBERG

"I am a newcomer to the Congress of Democrats," says the writer of the following letter; and he therefore expresses his views with a certain amount of diffidence. LIBERATION is pleased to publish this further short comment.

BOTH Johnson— ". . . (C. O.D.) must act in European affairs as an independent organisation . . ." and Press— "We must . . . proclaim our organisation and our aims fearlessly and independently" agree, that C.O.D. must present "an independent policy and programme" (Johnson). Their analysis of the class forces reveals however, that at the moment

there is no mass base amongst white South Africans, on whom, and to whom we can direct our programme.

Johnson does see in the "Covenanters, the Women's League for the Defence of the Constitution, the Anti-Republic League, etc." an indication "that some of the anti-Nat whites are beginning to look for a new political home," but Press tends to discount these organisations as potential allies in the fight for national liberation, because "we cannot expect those sections of the Europeans who get the sticky end of the fascist bargain to come over to the side of the Non-Europeans, where they would lose those economic privileges which they are fighting to preserve from fascism."

Seeing therefore that there is no economic base for a white mass movement, and as long as the Nats can assure the capitalists, big and small, their profits and the European workers employment—both attainable at the expense of, and through the intensified exploitation of the Non-European peoples—there does not seem much prospect of that base arising in the immediate future, what role must The Congress of Democrats play in the struggle against fascism?

We represent neither a class force nor a people's movement, yet we stand in the forefront of European thought and activity, alongside the vanguard of Non-European thought and activity as represented by the A.N.C., the S.A.I.C., and the S.A.C.P.O. The Congress movement has assigned us an independent role, yet our strength is derived from the magnificent struggles being waged by the national liberatory movements. The role demands of us, that we render maximum support to our allies in the Congress movement, for it is they who represent the advancing forces, the forces for progress and democracy.

To rally all possible white support we must take the message of the Freedom Charter into every European home in the Union. At the moment we are not likely to find a sympathetic audience, but as the contradictions of fascism become more economically apparent, and provided we have consistently put our policy and programme before them, we will inevitably find an increasing number of white South Africans drawn into our ranks.

We must constantly point out the consequences of Nat rule for all the people, black and white: its urge to expansion, for example, reflected in the annexation of South West Africa and the demand for the Protectorates, whilst of benefit to white South Africans at the immediate moment, must be shown to lead to war as a means for solving the contradictions of fascism and the Socialist challenge presented by the development of the U.S.S.R., the People's Democracies and the Chinese People's Republic. In this we can no doubt support the Peace Council in their work, and they in turn ours, pointing the way to peace and friendship not only in international affairs, but also in South Africa. The danger, therefore, of South Africa entering into an alliance similar to NATO, SEATO or METO, must be brought home to the people.

Press says we must be "consistent, staunch and fearless," I would add the quality of alertness. Did we, for example, fully utilise the opportunity of presenting the Freedom Charter as the way forward for

South Africa, provided by the Nats' "rape of the Constitution?" We allowed the initiative to pass to the Black Sash, a movement, which because of limitations inherent in its make-up, could call for nothing more than a return to the Constitution, or for a new National Convention attended by the representatives of those entitled to the vote. Only after the new Senators had been appointed did we call a public meeting, and its lack of success can only be attributed to the fact that by then public interest had dissipated itself on periods of "mourning" and calls for the "honouring of our Constitution." We know that the Freedom Charter points the way forward to a new Constitution for South Africa, but we lost the chance of letting the people know whilst the Senate Act was still a source of apprehension and anger at the Nats to white South Africans.

Press says: "When freedom is won, when democracy is achieved, we shall inherit the leadership of white South Africans." We shall only be entitled to that inheritance, if we prepare ourselves in the struggle being waged now, if we show by example, that we are entitled to that leadership not only of white South Africa but alongside African, Indian and Coloured South Africa as well.

THE SOCIAL BASIS OF THE EUROPEAN POLITICAL GROUPS

By D.H.

This article is yet another contribution in the discussion started in the pages of **LIBERATION** by the article 'Can the C.O.D. Win Mass Support?' Further contributions are invited.

THE articles by Johnson and Press in recent issues of Liberation are interesting and useful. But they demonstrate that while it is widely recognised that some sort of social, economic or class realities underlies the two big parties there is little real knowledge of what these realities are. This article outlines some facts about the historical development of the Nationalist movement. It concludes with a few remarks about the social bases of the U.P. and C.O.D.

The Afrikaner nationalist movement was originally based on the farmers and intellectuals. Farming in African-inhabited areas was based on the labour tenancy system. In exchange for a certain amount of labour (usually 3 to 6 months in early days) the African was "given" a plot of land on which to grow food and build a house and

the right to keep a few head of stock on the farm. The system was imposed by conquest and maintained by constant direct personal violence. The ideology which arose on this basis was of fear, hatred and contempt of Africans. The Afrikaner intellectuals (at first almost exclusively Dominees and teachers) were interested in obtaining rights for the Afrikaans language, religion and culture. The fight against British Imperialism gave the movement an additional anti-imperialist and partially-progressive character. These elements determined the nature of the movement from its inception up to the 1920's.

Two new elements emerged to complicate this comparatively simple force about this period. Firstly, the impoverishment and urbanisation of many Afrikaners and their mass entry into the working class. This accompanied and slowly transformed the struggle of the white trade unions against the capitalists culminating in the general strikes of 1913 and 1922. (Comrade Bill by J. Cope.) The entry of the Afrikaners with their established colour prejudices into the ranks of the white workers led to a struggle between the ideas of socialism and class-struggle and the ideas of racialism. It must be admitted that so far racialism has been winning. The first result was the pact government of 1924 when the by-then reactionary Labour Party and the Nats gained power and instituted the "civilised labour policy." This was the policy of giving unskilled and semi-skilled work to "poor whites" and paying them many times what had been payed the Non-Europeans who were displaced. This was not an isolated act as is often imagined but was and is accompanied by a continuous drive to provide (primarily through the State) education and improved opportunities for whites and especially Afrikaners. This has led to an enormous growth in the numbers of Afrikaner white-collar workers—clerks, civil servants and professional people. Thus the Nats succeeded in capturing a new force and building it into a major new social base for their movement.

In connection with this development another closely connected one took place. That is the development of South African state capitalism, Nationalist capitalism built up under the wing of the State, and the new fascist ideology which is its natural expression. Landmarks in this process are: 1924—setting up of the Board of Trade and Industries to study and advise on commerce and industry, 1925—introduction of legislation for tariffs to protect and develop secondary industry, 1928—setting up of ISCOR (pushed through by Hertzog against Smuts' opposition). This development was continued under the combined Cabinet of Hertzog and Smuts by, for example: 1937 the Marketing Act which codified and developed the law concerning the marketing boards, which are state-backed boards of farmers to raise prices for particular farm products in South Africa, dump surpluses overseas and supply farmers with aid to modernise and expand production. Thus the State was used to establish a heavy industry, expand power and transport services, and organise and protect farming and secondary industry, while arranging that Europeans only got good wages, salaries and business opportunities. Very important in organising the specifically Nat participants in this process was the holding of the "Economiese Volkskongress" in 1939

and the subsequent founding of the "Handelsinstituut." Thus the Nats launched and led a new economic policy very popular with the rising capitalists in industry and farming, of some value to traders in that it developed the "home market," and provided jobs for professional people.

Especially from the depression of 1929-1932 and the rise of Hitler in 1933 with his ideas of racialism and "Autarky" (economic self-sufficiency) a new element entered Afrikaner Nationalism, ideas of building up "Afrikaner" capital and using totalitarian, fascist methods to establish white supremacy and Afrikaner dominance for all time. This policy has been carried out with conspicuous success. The first step was to gain totalitarian control of Afrikaner life. A formidable battery of mass organisations and propaganda organs have been captured or created for this purpose: the F.A.K. for cultural affairs, the Dutch Reformed Church, the Afrikaans press and publishing business, SABRA for propaganda among intellectuals, "Christian National Education" for all Afrikaners from kindergarten to University, the "Handelsinstituut" and "Reddingsdaadbond" to guide and build up Afrikaner capital (which is now quite strong (see Dickson's articles in New Age) and the "Blankewerkersbeskermingsbond" to capture the white trade unions for the Nats. (Trade Unions in Travail by A. Hepple.)

Due to the limitations of space and my knowledge it has only been possible to present a skeleton outline of the evolution of the Nats. It must be emphasised that the whole thing is a continuous, relatively conscious historical process guided by the Broederbond, with, at least from 1933 Nazi inspiration. We may summarise the present position as follows:

NATS.

Character: A well-organised fascist social movement with a host of interlinked sectional mass organisations, propaganda agencies, and channels of influence of which the National Party is only one. Has a totalitarian grip on all aspects of Afrikaner life.

Class leadership: (1) The farmers. (2) Rising Afrikaner capitalists dependent on state aid and the support of the Nat movement.

Mass Social Bases: White labour dependent on the industrial colour bar for its employment and high wages. Dependants and employees of the state and state capital (SAR & H, SABC), The Steel Group (ISCOR, USCO, AMCOR, VECOR, SABAN, etc.), FOSCOR, SASOL, etc.

U.P.

Character: An old-style Parliamentary party designed to operate the two-party system. A relatively amorphous body led by place seekers.

Class leadership: (1) The mining capitalists. (2) Capitalists allied with or dependent on British capital and/or the mining groups. **Mass Social Bases:** White middle-class, professional strata; English-speaking sections of the working class.

U.P.

Ideological-political base: People influenced by Afrikaner Nationalism, extreme racialism, and/or the belief that a strong policy is needed against the Non-Europeans.

NATS.

Ideological-Political base: People influenced by British Nationalism and Monarchism, people fearing attacks by the Nats on their social position, people favouring the status quo and traditional political methods, people fearing that the Nats will provoke "trouble with the Non-Europeans."

The mining capitalists do not like being taxed to finance State capitalist development, nor do they like tariffs which raise the prices of their supplies. Tariffs, by raising the cost of living, also bring on demands for higher wages, and a rise in labour costs eventually as well. However, the U.P. helped carry out the policy of State capitalist development during the fusion with Hertzog and during the War. Partly this reflects the fact that the mining groups are buying into secondary industry in a major way, and also that the policy is popular with such wide sections of the middle-class whites that it must be supported by any bourgeois party trying to win Parliamentary seats. It may also indicate the rise to influence in the U.P. during the 1930's of groups of farmers and manufacturers. However, aside from the mine magnates and their hangers-on no important coherent class interests are clearly visible in the U.P. This is part of the explanation of the amorphousness of the U.P. and the ease with which it is disintegrating.

Another point which should be noted is the incorrectness of the idea of "progressive" secondary industry (Solly Sachs' "The Choice Before South Africa," and Press's article in Liberation for Dec. 1955). The manufacturers in the Nat group are dependent on the Nats to such an extent that it is ridiculous to imagine them coming into conflict with colour discrimination or even some of its worst features. Those in the U.P. are dependent in general on big mining capital or overseas capital (both in favour of white supremacy). A large proportion of the rest of manufacturers are dependent on state aid (e.g. through tariffs and industrial pioneering by the State firms and the Economic Development Corporation). Moreover, manufacturers benefit through the colour bar keeping labour costs down, the workers divided and Non-European competitors out. The argument that the manufacturers must emerge as a liberal force since they need to use Non-Europeans for skilled work and need to expand the home market by raising living standards is unrealistic. Because of competition (and independent manufacturers are not powerful monopolists in South Africa) no individual capitalist dare do anything else but fight for the highest possible profit, lowest wages and largest turnover for himself to avoid being put out of business. To expect weak manufacturers (I know of no powerful independent manufacturing groups) to fight the combined forces of the Nats and the Chamber of Mines in order to raise the conditions of the Non-European workers in the general, long-term interests of industry and the country as a whole is wishful thinking it seems to me.

Finally, what are the prospects for C.O.D.? To whom may it appeal? So far clearly it has found a response mainly among three groups: (i) youth and students who are less full of racialism than their elders; (ii) intellectuals who are more influenced by arguments, ideas and appeals to principles; (iii) white groups themselves threatened by racialism and religious prejudice—so far mainly Jews, but later no doubt also Greeks and other Continentals, Catholics and eventually Anglicans and British, as the Nats become ever more narrow and desperate. As powerful progressive trade unions are built up with mass Non-European support it should be possible to win widespread support among white workers whose trade union rights and living standards are under attack (albeit less so than those of their Non-European brothers). When we have begun to build mass support among all these groups we shall need to seriously think about methods for gaining a foothold amongst middle-class “Anglicaners” and Afrikaners. But for the immediate future the perspectives it seems to me are fairly clear and plenty of political work is available for all to do.

THE EXTENSION OF THE PASS LAWS

By WALTER SISULU

WHEN the Pass Law was first introduced to control the movement of slaves in 1760 by the settlers of the Cape, no one could have imagined that this slave measure was to cause so much bitterness and misery to millions, generations after its introduction.

It was this measure which gave an idea to Caledon who introduced a proclamation in 1809 requiring the African tribes (Hottentots) to carry passes when moving from one area to another. This infamous Caledon proclamation was the beginning of a forced labour system. It had its basis in the slave system which had taken root in the colony. Since then it has been extended from time to time to the various South African regions, by both Republican and Colonial governments. It has been one of the most important techniques to create a system, not only of forced cheap labour, but also the migratory labour system.

In this system today is found a method for regulating the economic relations between black and white, a method unique in its nature to South Africa. The extension of the pass system to children, African women, and other racial groups in this country, is in fact a continuation of this slave and feudal measure started almost 200 years ago.

A CHALLENGE TO SOCIETY

The Pass laws are therefore not only just one of the Nationalist Government's oppressive measures, but fundamentally a slave measure

deeply rooted in the economic system of South Africa. Hence a struggle against this system is both political and economic. It is a struggle against white domination and exploitation; a challenge to the ruling class, the Nationalist Government, and in no less way, to the mining and industrial groups, and the big farmers. Once we have grasped this fact, we shall be in a better position to understand the full implications and the full significance of the present anti-pass campaign. No short cut measures, therefore, no dramatic moves alone can advance such a struggle.

THE NAZIS AND THE JEWS

In spite of the various commissions that have had to be appointed to enquire into the whole system of the pass laws, and in spite of the fact that almost all of them have indicated that the pass laws are a cause of friction between black and white in this country, the Nationalist Government, instead of easing or abolishing this system, have consolidated and co-ordinated it; extending pass laws to women and children, and to other racial groups.

This system is designed to serve two purposes:—

1. To continue, in the case of Africans, to force them into the chains of farm and mine-owners, and to keep their wages down forever at the lowest possible level.
2. In the case of other racial groups it is a measure to entrench the herrenvolk policy; to classify each section into a racial group **for the purpose of discriminating against and oppressing certain groups**; just as the Nazis made every Jew wear a badge to identify him as a Jew. Can one claim this identification is in the interests of the group concerned? Was it in the interests of the Jews to be so distinguished from 'true aryan's'? Can such race classification ever be for any purpose but the oppression of one group by another?

A NEVER-CEASING STRUGGLE

It should be remembered that the pass laws and land question are the two issues which Congress vowed never to let rest until they had been uprooted. There has thus been a continuous struggle against the passes since the formation of Congress, waged in various forms and at different times. Deputations, demonstrations, passive resistance, strikes, up to the 1952 Defiance Campaign, are the various forms of struggle which have been used in the past.

There has been shooting and imprisonment in this struggle, but the fight against the pass laws has never been lost. Every campaign which has been conducted on this issue has had its own effect on the rulers, especially when we consider the struggle of women against the passes, a struggle which has at all times come out victorious. The women have had to suffer by going to gaol, some expectant, some with their babies on their backs, to defeat the introduction of passes to women.

BUT TIMES HAVE CHANGED

It would, however, be very wrong to imagine that we will do exactly what was done in 1913; and not to realise that times are different, and

that the methods of the oppressor are not exactly the same as they were in the past.

Although fundamentally there may be no change, yet it cannot be doubted that the tactics have changed. The Government's fear of the people is greater today than it has ever been. On the other hand, the hatred for passes and the political consciousness of the people have both grown. But methods of organisation have also been made more difficult. We would be foolish to minimise the strength of the enemy, to underestimate its propaganda. In other words, to take the campaign lightly, and to be carried away by emotion and sensationalism.

There is a tendency, especially on the part of the leadership, to ignore the preliminary stages necessary for the carrying out of an effective campaign; and at times to become extraordinarily militant, not so much in their work as in their words, thus misleading those who look to them for guidance.

It is, admittedly, very difficult to ignore in any campaign the traditional approach of the people, yet it is equally dangerous to conduct a struggle on traditions only, often with less regard for the changing situations; hence the question of waiting for an announcement of the date of action, or even by implication to give an impression that the leaders will mysteriously come out with the solution, can have serious setbacks on the entire movement.

What type of action is proposed in this campaign?

FAITH IN THE PEOPLE

Obviously, the present campaign must be properly planned, and provided the leadership at all levels correctly and honestly carries out daily activities, house-to-house campaigns, and discusses with the people every aspect of this nation-wide anti-pass campaign, together with the problems and difficulties which arise, then our struggle shall have been raised to a higher level.

In this campaign, we should place implicit faith in the abilities and intelligence of the mass of the people, and be inspired by their response in our protest meetings and demonstrations. We need, in such a campaign, both men and women who are not only courageous, but who are also determined, disciplined, and above all have a clear understanding of the task which faces them.

There are no short-cuts. There are no easy answers. There are no complete formulas. Only continuous campaigning among the people, with continuous response to their own activities, taking them a step forward each time, can lead us to our goal.

This is the only way to achieve our purpose.

CAPE SOCIETY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

By H. LAWSON

PRIMITIVE ACCUMULATION

THE Dutch East India Company established a permanent settlement at the Cape in order to replace the tribal subsistence economy of the area by a system of commodity production which would be capable of supplying its fleets with provisions. This production was to be carried on partly on estates worked directly by the company and partly by a group of independent farmers.

The first act of the new system was to systematically and forcibly deprive the indigenous tribal society of its wealth in land and cattle. This served the double purpose of ensuring the destruction of the old society and of providing the new system with the means necessary to carry on production. The process of primitive accumulation by robbery was begun on a large scale by the Company itself and was then continued by the independent colonists as soon as they felt strong enough.

Once the tribes in the vicinity of the settlement had been shorn of their possessions it became necessary to organise systematic cattle raids into the interior. These were euphemistically called "bartering expeditions," but contemporary sources mention that they took with them very few articles for barter but plenty of guns and ammunition. In 1702 one such expedition of 45 whites returned after seven months with a booty of 2,000 cattle. Some of the members of the group admitted subsequently that they had been on two or three such enterprises before. Their servants reported that defenceless Kraals were attacked and the occupants killed. These expeditions were generally undertaken by professionals who were hired on a commission basis by the prosperous farmers of the Western Cape. Edicts by the Company forbidding barter in cattle remained a dead letter for none had the capacity or the will to enforce them.

There is ample evidence of the impact of a brutally acquisitive civilisation on the "Hottentot" African tribes. In 1699, Capt. Bergh, commander of the Cape garrison, found the Hessequas who had once been rich in cattle, "ten kraals strong . . . with many people and few cattle. I have aforetime visited them when these people were 85 kraals one beside the other; now this nation is so impoverished that there is little to be got from them." By 1757 the effects of primitive accumulation could be felt far inland and a landdrost reported to the governor about conditions in the Bokkeveld and Roggeveld: ". . . the Hottentots there have scarcely any cattle, and complained that the Europeans who have farms there deprive them of their cattle under all kinds of pretexts . . ." It was now no longer necessary to think, as Van Riebeeck had done, of putting the indigenous people to work in chains. Economic compulsion was far stronger than any chain of iron, for when the people had been

robbed of their chief means of subsistence their only chance of survival lay in the performance of menial labour for those who now owned the means of production. Thus the traveller Dampier writes: "Those of the Hottentots that live by the Dutch town have their greatest subsistence from the Dutch, for there is one or more of them belonging to every house. They do all sorts of servile work . . . Three or four of their nearest relations sit at the doors or near the Dutch House, waiting for the scraps and fragments that come from the Table . . ."

This description must be contrasted with Van Riebeeck's account of the herds of 10,000 cattle that belonged to these paupers scarcely a half century previously. Those of the Hottentots that did not end up as servants of the Dutch were either killed by marauding parties of cattle thieves or else fell into a chronic state of malnutrition and destitution in which they became an easy prey to many diseases. Ruling class historians have sought to ascribe the destruction of the "Hottentot" clans to mysterious epidemics and to the ravages of smallpox. However, it is now clear that the reasons for these calamities were ultimately social and not biological.

EFFECTS OF SLAVERY

If the "Hottentot" population of the Cape suffered most severely from the ravages of the robber civilisation that was established by the Dutch East India Company, the contradictions within that civilisation itself were far from negligible. After the first few decades the rule of the Company developed into a force that was oppressive and retrogressive in all its aspects. The eighteenth century was marked by the struggles of the independent commodity producers against the shackles of Company rule.

The reactionary influence of the Company derived from two main factors: firstly, its policy of trade monopoly and market restrictions which were designed to assure to itself the highest possible mercantile profits, and secondly, the introduction of a system of social production based on slavery. Only the first of these factors was widely recognised at the time as retrogressive, but in the final analysis the second factor was probably the more important of the two.

The introduction of slavery, a pre-capitalist form of social production, by a typically capitalist group like the Dutch East India Company appears to be a historical paradox. The key to this paradox lies in the purely mercantile character of the Company's capitalism, that is to say, it was a capitalism that had not yet penetrated the field of production and therefore could do little more than extend older systems which it already found in existence. By gearing these older systems of production to the production of commodities for an extended market, capitalism did however greatly intensify the exploitation of human labour involved in these systems.

The slave system which the Company introduced at the Cape acted as a brake on progress in two ways. In the first place, slave labour is notoriously inefficient and unproductive. It has never been able to compete with free wage labour, let alone the labour of independent producers. For the Cape this meant that it could never hope to compete on the European market, and the plundered East provided no market worth

speaking of. The lack of an export market condemned the agriculture of the colony to a chronic state of stagnation which lasted into the nineteenth century. This economic stagnation meant stagnation in other fields as well. Such commodities as wheat could always be produced more cheaply by the expensive free labour of Europe than by the cheap slave labour of South Africa. The point is that cheap labour is inseparable from low productivity. This fact will continue to act as a brake on the development of South Africa as long as it retains its semi-colonial status.

A second pernicious effect derived from the inevitable tie between slavery and a low level of productive technique. The slave owner tended to invest his money in more and more slaves, instead of making improvements in his land or buying machinery. Thus the profits of slavery merely served to enslave more human beings, they left the actual basis of production quite untouched. The continuation of primitive methods and the failure to improve the land led to further stagnation in agriculture.

The slave owners of the Cape, with very few exceptions, were thus far from prosperous. In 1717 the Secunde to the Governor reports that "there are not thirty families who can be regarded as self-sufficient," the great majority being deeply in debt, with heavy mortgages on their properties. In South Africa there has often been a direct relation between the relative poverty of the master and the absolute poverty of the serf. It is only with the coming of capitalist methods of agricultural production in relatively modern times that new and far more vicious methods of exploiting rural labour led to the intensive accumulation of wealth in the countryside.

EFFECTS OF MONOPOLY

It is an outworn myth that capitalism thrives on competition. The natural tendency is always to raise profits by eliminating competition. The Dutch East India Company followed this rule as closely as the giant combines of today. The apparently exceptional free trade policy of British capitalism in the 19th century was of course designed to secure the maximum advantages from the monopoly position held by British industry at the time.

The monopoly of trade held by the Company manifested itself in various ways at the Cape. The farmers had to sell their products to the Company at a fixed price. The Cape traders led a precarious existence, depending increasingly on the smuggling trade with foreign ships when they visited Table Bay. They were repeatedly refused permission to trade in their own ships. Taxes imposed by the Company acted as a further brake on economic development.

These restrictions on the local unfolding of commodity production and of an indigenous capitalism led to political action on the part of those concerned. These were mainly the traders of Cape Town and the wealthier farmers of the Western Cape. They were a potential local capitalist class and they resented the restrictions of colonial rule. Their activities erupted in the so-called rebellion of Adam Tas near the beginning of the eighteenth century and in the more important "Kaapse

"Patriotte" movement towards the end of the century. In the writings of the latter we can find an interesting echo of the conceptions of men like Locke and Grotius who had formed part of the ideological vanguard of the capitalist class in Europe when it was fighting against feudalism. News of the War of Independence of the North American colonies also seems to have impressed the Cape Burghers.

THE TREKBOERS

The majority of the colonists were so impoverished that the privileges demanded by the wealthier sections would have been useless to them. They had practically no capital and no possible market for any of their agricultural products. Their only way out was to revert to a primitive subsistence economy not unlike that of the indigenous population which they had replaced. They spread out over the interior, adopting a system of nomadic pastoralism which was essentially African.

It needed very little capital to start out as a pastoralist. So the trekboer spread his primitive economy (and the primitive culture based in it) far and wide. During the 18th century there were many comments on the progressive deterioration of the land due to the trekboer's habits of overstocking and steadfastly refusing to make any improvements. When the land was exhausted he simply trekked on. He concentrated purely on the quantity of his stock and was indifferent to its quality. The boers were intensely conservative in their methods and the despair of all those who tried to teach them better ways. When de Mist tried to induce them to breed sheep for wool instead of meat he met with a blank wall of superstition and ignorance.

Because of their constant need for fresh land produced by their primitive and exhausting agricultural methods the boers were constantly quarrelling with one another over pasturage. The rising land values as settlement advanced during the 18th century made it impossible for the poorer farmers to acquire land in the older areas; the only way out for them was to trek to new and sparsely settled areas where land was readily available. The trekking movement had begun by the end of the sixteenth century and continued steadily for almost two centuries. Its peculiar character derived from the fact that it was impelled by poverty. This was no confident advance by a rich and expanding economy; it was a furtive, creeping trickle that seemed to transplant its own poverty, ignorance and cultural sterility wherever it went. It stifled rather than destroyed the indigenous societies in its path; it brought no economic advance, no civilisation, only stagnation and degradation.

When the white colonists arrived at the Cape they brought with them certain economic skills and certain institutions like private property in land. But because of the economic stagnation imposed by the Dutch East India Company deterioration set in with respect to both these factors. Among the pastoral boers there was a definite retrogression in agricultural technique, in some cases leading to the complete abandonment of the cultivation of the soil. Linked with this there appears to have been a distinct loosening of the institution of private property in land. Thus in 1809 at least 25 per cent of the Burghers in the Tulbagh district had no claim to any land of their own, and in Graaff-Reinet in

1812 only between 18 and 25 per cent of the independent farmers appear to have had any claim to land. The rest of the population consisted of nomadic trekboers who roamed the country in search of pasture. Their poverty was great. (Much interesting material on this subject is to be found in Dr. P. J. van der Merwe's book "Trek.")

The economic poverty of the boers was matched by their cultural poverty which visitors to the Cape invariably commented upon. Let us quote only one example out of many. Miss I. E. Edwards in her "1820 Settlers" quotes a report by the Commissioners of Circuit in 1813 to the effect that in the district of Graaff-Reinet out of 3,400 children not more than 100 had had the opportunity of any education.

It is obviously pure nonsense to suggest that the trekking boers were in any sense the standard-bearers of civilisation. The guns to which they owed their military superiority were the product of a civilisation utterly different from their own and had to be obtained by barter. The only "blessings" of civilisation that the boers ever conferred on anyone were the most primitive exploitative relationships in the form of labour tenancy and the serfdom of "apprenticeship."

However, it must never be forgotten that the boers were what they were only because of the miserable colonial status of South Africa. Like all Imperialists the merchants of the Dutch East India Company were governed by an overriding fear of competition and over-production. So they exerted a stranglehold on all their colonial possessions, restricting trade and stifling all economic development. They forced the majority of the colonists into a state of economic and cultural degradation. Colonialism was to become more brutal and savage in its methods in the nineteenth century, but never again was it to have such an utterly deadening influence, was it to be so completely devoid of any positive effects as in the days of the Dutch East India Company.

THIS MAN WROTE FROM FIVE THOUSAND MILES AWAY

One of our contributors this month sent his article from five thousand miles away.

It's a long distance for a person to travel, but a short distance for ideas to travel. This particular contributor wrote from England, but LIBERATION goes further than that each month. Copies of this small magazine are eagerly received not only by readers and subscribers in South Africa and in other parts of the African Continent, but by subscribers in Europe, America, India, China . . . ideas flow around the world; no barriers can stop them; no passport restrictions can confine them in one country; no dictatorship can silence them.

How important this is! People in other countries, reading about Strijdom and his laws, the impotence of our Parliament, the poverty of our 'official opposition,' the cruelty of apartheid, obtain a certain picture of our country. But it is only part of the picture. There is another side to it, there is another story to tell. Who is going to tell them about the people of South Africa, their organisations, their real problems? Who is going to portray the throbbing life of the liberatory movement, the controversies and debates, the battles, the failures, the triumphs?

Through the pages of LIBERATION, through the medium of its articles, passes the parade of ideas that are the life-blood of our movement. The ideas are debated up and down the country. And in other countries people read, and discuss, and begin to feel the new life pouring through our people . . .

It's a small magazine. Yet it's influence is extraordinarily wide. It is not easy to keep it going, month after month. Yet it would be a tragedy to let it die.

Whatever YOU can do, in any way, to support and extend LIBERATION, do it now! Without the support of our readers, we could not continue to appear.

**SEND DONATIONS TO LIBERATION
BOX 10120, JOHANNESBURG**

LIBERATION

invites contributions in the form of articles on political, scientific, literary and other matters of general interest; short stories, poems; or factual material upon which articles can be based.

If stamped addressed envelopes are enclosed with the articles, the Editor undertakes to return them with critical comments in the event of their not being considered suitable.

Address all letters to the Editor,

**LIBERATION,
P.O. Box 10120,
JOHANNESBURG.**