

NEWS
NEWS
NEWS
NUUS
NUUS
NUUS
NUUS

from the South African Institute of Race Relations (Inc.)
van die Suid-Afrikaanse Instituut vir Rasseverhoudings (Ingelyf.)

P.O. Box 97

Johannesburg

Posbus 97.

RR. 18/1960. NOT TO BE RELEASED BEFORE 9 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 14.1.1960.

UNION MUST LEARN FROM WIDER AFRICA.

No World Help in Event of Uprising, Brookes tells Institute of Race Relations.

During the very period in which the wider Africa has been liberated, South Africa has rushed along in the opposite direction. World opinion has over-simplified the South African position. But, however imperfectly informed, over-simplified, dogmatic and occasionally sentimental, world opinion is fundamentally and essentially right. The Union has lost the sympathy both of the wider Africa and of the wider world : it cannot in 1960 expect, as it could have expected in 1910, sympathy or support from the world outside in the event of any African uprising within its borders.

This warning was given to the 30th annual Council meetings of the South African Institute of Race Relations in Durban tonight (January 14th) by Prof. the Hon. Edgar Brookes, the Institute's new President-elect. Prof. Brookes was summing up the Institute's evaluation of Fifty Years of Union with a public address on "South Africa and the Wider Africa, 1910 - 1960".

Afrikaners' Misfortune.

"It is the misfortune of the Afrikaner", said Prof. Brookes, "that the very real advances in thought which he has made are treated with contumely by a world which does not accept his premises." The instinct of the world is right "that the tradition of apartheid is a straight-jacket incompatible with the changing life of the world of 1960".

"The golden image of apartheid has been elevated above God, as is clearly demonstrated by the fact that those who worship will grant to a white atheist privileges which are denied to the most devout and faithful African".

more

The half century 1910 to 1960 had seen "quite revolutionary changes in the wider Africa, most of them during the last two decades". Colony after colony has gained its independence, and in these new states there has been an insistence on universal suffrage and on a twentieth century theory of democracy "very different from the liberalism of John Stuart Mill".

Universal Suffrage ?

"Universal franchise is not necessarily the best way to efficient government", Prof. Brookes told the Institute of Race Relations, "but the franchise has become a badge of manhood, and to refuse a whole group of people the vote on the grounds of their race and colour only is to deny their humanity".

For a time the Union may need checks and balances, and there might be differences as to the speed of enfranchisement and the details of the franchise. "But", said Prof. Brookes, "the world will not tolerate our denying all men of a certain racial group the franchise, and in this the world is right".

"Despite all the excesses of African nationalism or authoritarianism, the fact remains that between 1939 and 1960 we have passed a point of no return in Africa's and in the world's history. We can never go back to a world where Africans and Asians are inferior".

"World opinion does not necessarily support (African) nationalism or dictatorship, but it does support liberation and universal suffrage and is markedly against 'colonialism'".

The Lesson of Africa for S.A. Constitutional Reform.

All but the most radical of the Europeans would like to base the urgently needed reform of the South African Constitution on the principle of Partnership, but it is at this very phrase that all but the most moderate of Non-European political leaders tend to look askance, Prof. Brookes said. A study of the wider Africa showed that ultimately the most successful states in South-Eastern Africa will be those which are based on the partnership of individuals for common ends, irrespective of race. "But in countries like the Federation and the Union this cannot be obtained overnight, and a constitution which is totally unacceptable to Europeans, even to many of those of good will, "cannot help us very much, unless indeed we pin our faith to revolution".

"The forces of liberation can be fully as intolerant as the forces of oppression", Prof. Brookes warned the Institute of Race Relations. "If the

Afrikaner has to learn to refuse to accept dogmas the rejection of which means ostracism and often political ruin, so has the African in his turn. To say less is to treat him as an inferior, not as an equal, in this war of the spirit of which we are all a part".

In this war "between the juggernaut political dogmas crushing men's spirits and the freedom of the mind and heart, the Institute of Race Relations has for three of the Union's five decades fought not for Africans nor yet for Europeans, but for humans and for the values which most enriched the human spirit", Prof. Brookes said. "This is part of a cosmic struggle, and we have great allies."

Exclusive Afrikaner Nationalism.

"The Afrikaner Nationalism which excludes all from official service who do not accept its central dogma hurts us all," Prof. Brookes said, "but the person whom it hurts most is the Afrikaner himself. If the Afrikaner stopped protecting himself and poured himself out in caring and service for his fellow South Africans, of whatever speech or colour, he would lose nothing that mattered ; he would gain immeasurably. Whatever we do in the way of working out better constitutional machinery, the real problem is a question of the spirit in man".

Climate of Hope.

"In a climate of hope", Prof. Brookes told the Institute, "problems become opportunities. The Institute of Race Relations has always stood for the three F's - Facts, Friendship and Freedom. It still stands for them. Thank God that this Institute does exist, that in the welter of hatred and inflexible political dogmas, it does still set up a standard to which the wise and honest may repair".

South Africa's National Sin.

South Africans who desire to remain hopeful by evading the extreme rigours of truth were indulging "in our national sin - 'the lie in the soul'", Prof. Brookes said. "This is the evil in pipe dreams of apartheid which cannot stand the test of a map, a balance sheet, or an honest election with all the facts laid down".

The South African who, while remaining a South African, can accept that the world is moving in a direction which is fundamentally right and that South Africa's direction is fundamentally wrong, has achieved a great liberation for himself and his children", Prof. Brookes said. Many White South Africans despair of the future when they face the facts. "But hope is one of the supreme Christian virtues", Prof. Brookes said. "And yet no self-respecting man wants to build his hope on a lie. The facts, even if appalling, must be faced and accepted."

ENDS.