

THE BLACK SASH.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE CAPE TOWN 1971.

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BY

MRS. JEAN SINCLAIR - NATIONAL PRESIDENT

OUTWARD BOUNTY AND INWARD BAASKAP.

In 1966, General Smuts on his way back from the first session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, spoke in Ottawa as the guest of the Canadian Parliament. He said his advice was "keep your armour bright". When asked "Who is the enemy?" he replied "Do not ask me, perhaps it is ourselves." ⁱ

These were indeed prophetic words and although General Smuts was not referring specifically to South Africa, he foresaw that great changes in the political status of many countries in the world community would take place and he warned that South Africa would not be unaffected by them.

What he did not anticipate, I feel sure, was that South Africa would go to such lengths to resist and defy changing world conditions.

South Africa has always believed in the inferiority of the Black man and the inherent superiority of the White man, and has maintained the master-servant relationship. It was, however, only after 1948 that the Nationalist government entrenched this dogma and made it the cornerstone of its policy. This fallacious doctrine has an emotional appeal and in conjunction with the use of fear it has gained the support of most of the White population and provided the foundation on which to build the whole structure of baaskap apartheid. Baaskap was the rallying cry to the volk and indeed, until South Africa became a Republic in 1961, it meant baaskap over all groups other than Nationalist Afrikaners.

i. Vorster's Foreign Policy by G. M. Cockram.

When the Nationalist Party won the General Election of 1948 it had an overall majority of five in the House of Assembly. This hold of power was so tenuous that the government lost no time in finding ways and means of strengthening its position. It immediately stopped the immigration scheme introduced by the previous administration ; it swallowed the small Afrikaner Party lead by Mr. Havenga and brought South West Africa with eight parliamentary seats into the Union Parliament. The stopping of the immigration scheme was the first step which set South Africa on the road to isolation.

International criticism of South Africa began as early as 1946 and again the following year when India tabled a resolution in the United Nations General Assembly condemning the treatment of South African Indians. This subject was placed on the Agenda regularly every year until it was superseded by one condemning apartheid.

As more African States gained their independence, the number of critics of South Africa increased, both in the United Nations and elsewhere South Africa became the pariah of the world. Her trusteeship of South West Africa was brought into question and in the years to come a long and bitter campaign with regard to South Africa's mandate followed.

In 1960 Ethiopia and Liberia instituted an action against South Africa in the International Court of Justice for failing to carry out the terms of the mandate. After a protracted case the judgment of the International Court was handed down. It did not pronounce on South Africa's obligations with regard to the mandate, but the Court found that in terms of the Covenant of the League of Nations individual member states had no power to institute actions in the International Court of Justice with regard to the administration of a mandate.

This judgment did not satisfy many member states of the United Nations and South Africa's apartheid policy and her administration of South West Africa have been constantly attacked in the United Nations from 1947 until the present time when South Africa once more stands accused before the International Court of Justice. South Africa now rouses such intense emotional feeling where ever she or her policy comes up for discussion that, in the words of Andre Brink "it runs like a sewer through the conscience of the world".

Because of the inhumanity of the administration of apartheid ; because of the refusal to accept a Black South African as an equal ; because of the denial of opportunity ; of basic human rights ; of justice ; South Africa has suffered trade boycotts, an embargo on the sale of arms, denial of flying rights over certain territories, expulsion from world bodies and ostracism from international sport. Terrorist incursions into South West Africa have occurred and the threat of guerilla invasion from the north is ever present.

Despite this volume of antagonism, South Africa is not prepared to deviate one jot from her chosen path, with the result that the country has become more and more isolated. This was and is, a matter of great concern. Ways and means have had to be found of improving South Africa's image abroad. The government enlarged its Department of Information and spent large sums of money in circulating carefully selected information. The South Africa Foundation, a body of businessmen, opened offices in many parts of Europe and America, disseminated information and, inter alia, invited to visit South Africa, men from whom a favourable report might be expected.

Radio South Africa expanded and increased its foreign broadcasts. Trade missions were established in European and American cities. Faced with an embargo on the export of arms to South Africa, the government decided to strengthen the armed forces and to expand the manufacture of weapons inside South Africa. Nine months compulsory military training for all White youths was introduced. The defence budget was greatly increased. This defence spending undoubtedly gave a boost to industrial expansion. The equipment for an army led to the development of new industry and to the establishment of many factories in Secondary industry and with the partial success of the trade mission abroad industrial expansion has taken place.

Nevertheless, despite the improvement in the economic position of the country the political attacks on South Africa continue and intensify, and her state of isolation remains. In this modern and dangerous world no country "is an island entire of itself". It cannot build a sound economy without the free interchange of trade.

It is also unsound to be part of a continent in which three countries in the South are ranged against a mass of states which are bitterly antagonistic.

After South Africa's exit from the Commonwealth, the attainment of independence by African States, the break up of the Rhodesian Federation and the subsequent declaration of independence by Rhodesia, Dr. Verwoerd realised the need for making friends and influencing people. He therefore in 1965 laid the foundations for South Africa's Outward Foreign Policy. With the approaching independence of the Protectorates, Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland, Dr. Verwoerd made approaches to these countries with a view to co-operation after they became independent.

In that year, Dr. Hilgard Muller, the Minister of Foreign Affairs told Parliament that "It is the government's earnest desire to continue, now as well as in the future when they (the Protectorates) become sovereign states, to live in peace and friendship on a basis of good neighbourliness with those three territories"....."I believe that the time has come when all territories in Southern Africa will co-operate in all matters of common interest with a view to tackling their common problems and solving them in the interests of all the inhabitants of each particular territory".¹

1. Hansard 1965 Vol 18 Col. 7278 and i. 7280

Again a few weeks later he said "I also believe that it is possible for the Republic to maintain its position in Africa without any necessity for us to sacrifice our principles".²

South Africa therefore proceeded to give to Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland aid in the form of technical assistance, financial loans, advice in the field of agriculture, in industry, in the development of electricity projects and the conservation of water. She undertook to buy goods from these territories, agricultural products, electricity and water.

South Africa gives employment to the surplus labour from these territories mainly in mining and to a lesser degree in commerce and industry. A customs agreement was signed in 1969 between these three territories and South Africa.

To Malawi too the "good neighbourly" policy was extended. Technical aid with long term loans at low interest rates have been given. In 1966 South Africa financed the building of a R6. million sugar mill which was built by South African engineers. Another loan of R8 million was made to help finance the building of the new capital at Lilongwe and an R11 million loan is to extend a railway line to the Portuguese Border. In return Dr. Banda agreed to employ South African contractors and to buy material from South Africa should there be a necessity to import it.ⁱ

South Africa has signed a trade agreement with Malawi and formal diplomatic relations were established in 1967.

Much voluntary aid has also been given to Malawi. South Africa is doing a great deal of work in the medical field. Teams of South African medical students have visited Malawi from time to time. Dr. J.M.McGregor, a neurologist who has been in Malawi under the auspices of the Medical-Mission-to Malawi scheme pointed out that South Africa is providing medical staff to fill interim needs at various Malawian hospitals. Assistance too, has been given in the techniques of business management.ⁱⁱ

South Africa has also opened trade links with several Latin American States. The South African Reserve Bank was allowed to purchase bonds to the value of R2 million from an offer by the Inter-American Development Bank.

This gave

Page five/---

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2. Hansard 1965 Vol 19 Col. 7692.
i. Vorster's Foreign Policy by Gail-Maryse Cockram
ii. The Star 10/10/70.

This gave the green light to South African contractors and exporters to participate on a cash basis, in schemes financed by the Bank. South African contractors have been awarded substantial contracts on several projects.

In 1967 South Africa made R25 million available to back credit to certain countries in South America and elsewhere. A direct air link with America via Rio-de Janeiro has been introduced. Accredited representation has been established in five countries and there are Consuls and Honorary Consuls in several others.

More recently an economic agreement with Madagascar has been signed, and according to The Star the immediate profit is political and strategic.ⁱ Nevertheless South Africa has promised to assist the Malagasy tourist trade and other projects are under consideration.

The President of the Ivory Coast, Dr. Houphouet-Boigny has advocated dialogue with South Africa and other of the Franco-phone states have supported this suggestion. Ghana too is in favour of dialogue. South Africa has proclaimed the suggestion as a major breakthrough - as an indication that at last reason is prevailing, at last the premise of "no interference in the domestic affairs of other countries" has been recognised. However, later statements from President Houphoet-Boigny have been distinctly muted as opposition to his proposal has become more vocal.

Dialogue obviously is a better method of solving problems than is coercion, but there must be a willingness to compromise on both sides. It is South Africa basically who is at fault for the political impasse which has resulted between herself and the majority of African States as well as most other countries of the world. She has been unwilling to withdraw one iota from her policy of racial discrimination.

While South Africa's Outward policy, which was forced upon her by economic necessity, is commendable for the assistance it gives to developing countries, it contrasts dramatically with the inward policy of Separate Development and Apartheid at home.

Let us go back to 1961 when Dr. Verwoerd, the then Prime Minister made an announcement in Parliament. It was the year after Sharpville when pressures and opposition from abroad were mounting to serious proportions..

Dr. Verwoerd/— Page Six/

The facts about South Africa's assistance to the countries mentioned above were obtained from Vorster's Foreign Policy by Gail-Maryse Cockram.

i. The Star, December 24 1970.

Dr. Verwoerd said to Parliament "...we again unequivocally state the policy of the development of the different race groups. The Bantu will be able to develop into separate Bantu states. That is not what we would have liked to see. It is a form of fragmentation which we would not have liked if we were able to avoid it. In the light of the pressure being exerted on South Africa there is however no doubt that eventually this will have to be done, THEREBY BUYING FOR THE WHITE MAN HIS FREEDOM AND THE RIGHT TO RETAIN DOMINATION IN WHAT IS HIS COUNTRY, settled for him by his forefathers. ^{i.}

In the light of this statement one can be forgiven for coming to the conclusion that the whole homelands policy was devised not so much with the intention of creating viable independent states, but as a sop to critics abroad who abhor the apartheid policy.

Two years after this announcement by Dr. Verwoerd the Transkei, hastily, was given partial independence. Other Territorial Authorities were established in the intervening years and in September 1970 the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development told Parliament that over the past two years he "had already formed eight homeland governments with their own legislative assemblies, with their own executive committees, or call them Cabinets, and with their own government departments in those particular homelands where previously there were only territorial authorities with quite limited powers and functions." ^{ii.}

Quite limited powers and functions are the operative words.

The Republic has become a Colonial power within the borders of South Africa. This is interesting and is another manifestation of the cynicism of separate development. One has only to remember the Nationalist loathing in the past for what was considered to be British Colonialism in the Union of South Africa.

Apart from the Transkei no other territorial Authority is a geographical entity, which really makes nonsense of the assumption that homelands are separate states. What are the facts of the development of the Transkei? Consider the progress which has taken place there. It is the government's showpiece and is intended to demonstrate its sincerity in executing its policy. What is the overall picture of the Transkei?

It has a Prime Minister/---

Page Seven/

i. Hansard 1961 No. 12 col 4191

ii. Hansard 1970 No. 8 col 3505

It has a Prime Minister, a Cabinet and Parliament consisting of a legislative assembly consisting of 64 ex-officio chiefs and 45 members elected by popular vote. The number of Xhosa speaking people who are all deemed to be citizens of the Transkei is estimated at 3,907,000.ⁱ (Many of these, however, are people who either left the Transkei years ago or have never been there and are Africans settled in the White areas of the Republic). In 1968 the Transkeian Department of the Interior estimated that the male population of the Transkei was 700,000. Of these :

240,000 were under working age ;
105,000 were aged or unfit ;
105,000 were permanently on the land ;
250,000 constituted the labour force ; ii.

Of the 250,000 of the labour force 41,626 were employed in the Transkei, 15,693 of them in the government service. 155,400ⁱⁱⁱ were away temporarily as migratory workers in contract in the Republic.

In the fields of Secondary and Tertiary development only 7,000 workers found employment in 1968. In 1969 four White industrialists applied for permission to establish industries on an agency basis in the Transkei.

The following industries are controlled by Africans in the Transkei:

A cane factory in Umtata ; six brickworks; in Butterworth there is a maize roller mill employing 24 Africans ; a sweet factory ; a sheet metal works ; a mechanical workshop at Umtata ; a bottling undertaking ; the Vulibdlele furniture factory ; the Holmond handspinning and weaving factory employing 207 people. At Sada, Shuttlesea a brick making concern.

According to the Minister + - 945 Africans were employed in these industries on February 20th 1968.

In addition there are 209 trading posts administered by the Xhosa Development Corporation. Some of them are managed by Africans and five of them are training centres for Africans^l.

There has been an improvement in agriculture and Forestry, but the Transkei cannot yet grow enough to support its own population. The Border industries which provide employment for the Transkei and the Ciskei are situated in the East London, King Williams Town and Queenstown areas and employ (in 1969) 8,000 Africans.

From the above/---
Page Eight /

i. I.R.R. Survey. Page 132

ii. African Reserves of S.A. Horrell page 117

iii. African Reserves of S.A. Horrell page 119

l. Modernization of Apartheid F. Van Zyl Slabbert from Anatomy of Apartheid published by SPROCAS.

From the above it can be seen that the development is totally inadequate. The poverty of Transkeian citizens is acute. The average earnings are R135. per worker per annum and a large number of economically active men are unemployed.

The government has lent R25 million for three projects in Malawi. Why has it not granted loans in the homelands to allow private enterprise to tender for contracts. A railway, more roads and a power station would certainly assist the infrastructure which is necessary for the more rapid development of the homelands. If South African contractors and engineers have the blessing of the South African government to undertake contracts in Malawi, why are the same concessions not made available to contractors to undertake capital works in our homelands?

Another added embarrassment in the homelands are the + - 69 Resettlement villages which have been established. They are for the resettlement of Africans who are "no longer fit for work" or for Africans superfluous in the labour market. Those to be resettled are classified as follows :-

- (i) the aged, unfit widows, women with dependent children who do not qualify to remain in the urban areas ;
- (ii) Africans on farms who become redundant ;
- (iii) Professional men such as doctors, attorneys, agents, traders, industrialists etc. persons who are not regarded as essential for the European Labour Market ;

There are four categories of resettlement villages :

- (i) Self contained Bantu towns in the homelands where there are complete services.
- (ii) Towns in the homelands with rudimentary services and housing ;
- (iii) 1/8 to 1/4 acre lots with rudimentary lay-out. A Prerequisite is a common source of water within walking distance.
- (iv) Other rudimentary settlements with a common source of water in accordance with a system of controlled squatting. ^{i.}

The latter two types of village are for squatters and those removed from Black Spots. No housing is provided and the inhabitants have to erect their own dwellings and build their own "pit latrines". They are usually situated in isolated areas where there are few, if any employment opportunities.

The people removed from Black Spots were previously subsistence farmers. They grew their own mealies and kept cattle and goats. No livestock, with the exception of hens may be taken to the resettlement villages.

There has been/—

Page Nine/

i. Government Circular No. M1/16/1

There has been much publicity and much protest about these settlements and the conditions which obtain there.. It is common knowledge that the people who have been resettled suffer from poverty malnutrition and the diseases which flow from hunger - TB, Kwashiorkor and Pellagra.

These resettlement villages have not assisted in the development of the homelands. They have aggravated the poverty and the unemployment and they accommodate thousands of people, members of disrupted families, widows, children and old people.

The reasons for the half hearted development of the homelands are not difficult to find. The statement made by Dr. Verwoerd in 1961 as mentioned above, gives an indication of the unenthusiastic attitude to the Bantustan concept. Another statement made by him in 1953 during a debate on Bantu Education gives a clue to his attitude on the purpose of African education. He said "that Bantu Education must be controlled in conformity with the policy of the State. Good racial relations could not exist when education was given under the control of people who created wrong expectations among the Bantu. Education must train and teach people in accordance with their opportunities in life. In terms of the government's plan for South Africa, there was no place for the Bantu in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. Within their own areas, however all doors were open. Education should, thus, stand with both feet in the Reserves and have its roots in the spirit and being of a Bantu society".

The government's policy is to foster tribal culture and customs so that the African may continue to live according to "his traditional way of life". It is this premise which is inhibiting development in the homelands. As Dr. Van Zyl Slabbert indicates in his article Modernization of Apartheid : the fostering of cultural identity and diversity is not compatible with the development of modern political systems and modern industrial development.

It is unrealistic to assume that Africans will retain their own mores and culture while at the same time being exposed to modern industrial development and sophisticated political systems. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why development of the homelands has been so inadequate and perhaps it is intentional.

The employment in the factories of the Republic itself is surely the best possible training ground to teach Africans the skills which are necessary for the development of the homelands. The determination of the government to keep the African working in the White areas as a hewer of wood and a drawer of water certainly leads one to doubt the government's sincerity on the question of meaningful development in the homelands.

Job reservation e.g. the prohibition of Black and Brown bus drivers on Johannesburg's buses ; the blank refusal to allow Africans to perform skilled work ; the restriction on their belonging to trade unions; the recent threat to apply job reservation to African white collar workers, all successfully keep Africans as unskilled workers.

These are some examples of the intention that African education should have "its roots in the spirit and being of a Bantu Society".

The incident of the mines in the homelands is fresh in our memories. In the homelands it was stated that there was no limit to African advancement ; but when it comes to mines and platinum mines at that the story is very different. How can we regard this most cynical and revealing argument as to whether White miners would train Black miners in mining skills in their homelands? Between the government and the Mine Workers Union we witnessed one of the most despicable episodes in the history of separate development. To train African mine workers or not to train them, that is the question. This controversy would never have happened had this iron-willed government had the courage to stand by its stated policy instead of succumbing to the big stick of the super verkrampte Mine Workers Union. It is a happening such as this which confirms our doubts about the credibility of the government's Separate Development policy.

Then we have the 10 to 12,000 Zulus who are farming profitably in the Richard's Bay area in the Zulu homeland. Because Richards Bay is a growth point what do we find? The greedy Whites want it for themselves and insist on moving these Zulus to somewhere where they do not want to go.

In September 1970 the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development in answer to a question admitted that 120 mining and prospecting leases in the Bantustans were granted to Whites and not one was granted to an African. How do these incidents measure up to Dr. Verwoerd's statement "within their own areas, however, all doors are open?".

It is most inconsistent to provide technical assistance and technicians for the development of neighbouring states and to put restrictions on assistance which may be given in South Africa's own homelands ; to encourage private contractors to go to foreign parts and to allow them to establish industries only on an agency basis here ; in addition to make the conditions so onerous that White industrialists are unwilling to risk investments in the homelands. These conditions include such restrictions as that land and building on which factories are built must belong to the government ; that no foreign capital is allowed ; that no freehold for White concerns is allowed.

Surely the conditions under which White investment is accepted should be a matter for the homeland government to decide.

Voluntary work has also been given to neighbouring African States particularly in the medical field. The need of our own Africans is equally pressing and the shortage of doctors is a matter for concern. On July 24 the Minister of Health said that including personnel seconded by the provincial administrations, his department was employing 92 white medical practitioners, 10 Indians and Coloured and 3 Africans in the homelands. There were no statistics relating to the number of doctors in private practice in these areas. The number though is unlikely to be large.

The latest figure for the numbers of Africans living in the homelands is estimated to be 6,918,000. A total of 105 doctors employed in the Department of health cares for this population. The Homelands would surely benefit from the same sort of voluntary assistance as offered to neighbouring states.

While the Outward policy may be economically necessary and politically desirable for both South Africa and the developing countries to whom she gives aid, it will never, however, alter the opinions of most of the rest of the world as long as this government persists in its policy of racial discrimination. Racial discrimination is the important issue of the second half of the twentieth century and until South Africa rejects this policy the pressures will continue to increase.

The government lays stress on separate development, but it practises baaskap apartheid within the Republic. There has been no sign of a more tolerant attitude within the Republic, in fact apartheid is being applied with ever more severity as the years pass.

One reason for this is growing dissension within Afrikanerdom. The divisions in the Nationalist Party itself are becoming more evident. On the one hand the Party must try to appease the intellectuals who are disturbed by the immorality of breaking up Christian marriages of African people ; by the restrictions on employment opportunities ; by the tardiness of homeland development ; by the futility of the border industry policy. They are also disturbed by the facts of the resettlement villages and the poverty and malnutrition which exists in these areas.

On the other hand, although the Hersigtes, were soundly defeated in the General and Provincial elections, the extreme right wing in the country has by no means ceased to be a power. The reaction of the Mine Workers Union illustrated the government's dilemma and its inability to take a strong line in the matter.

It was significant that in 1970 Mr. P. J. Meyer was reappointed as chairman of the SABC ; Dr. J. D. Vorster was elected Moderator of the N.G.K ; Professor Swart of the University of Port Elizabeth was elected assessor member of the Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns and Dr. Treurnicht was made Editor of Hoofstad.

Recently there was the power struggle in the Nationalist Party over the leadership in the Free State. The divided opinions manifested in the elections do not indicate great solidarity.

The government therefore has to demonstrate its verligtheid for export in the interests of economics and its image abroad, but practises verkramptheid at home to appease its right wing dissidents.

At home it continues to pass legislation which is ever more totalitarian and unjust. Its use of Section 6 of the Terrorism Act has

made us realise/—

Page Twelve/—

has made us realise all the implications of indefinite detention for interrogation and have illustrated the horror of the "knock on the door". The public was greatly shocked by the case of the 22, and now we are appalled by the detention of the very Rev. G. A. French-Beytagh, Anglican dean of Johannesburg. The continuing abrogation of the rule of law and the arrogance with which the government has taken upon itself powers which should rightly belong to the judiciary is typical of the behaviour of contemporary fascist and communist states.

The laws which govern the lives of the Africans, the Coloured people and the Indians are devoid of any kind of humanity. The migratory labour system, influx control efflux enforcement, designed to reduce the number of Africans in the urban areas ; the restrictions on employment opportunities ; the breaking up of Christian marriages and the whole gamut of apartheid legislation is resulting in frustration and bitterness and in a withdrawal by the Africans. Good racial relations are becoming more and more difficult to maintain.

The treatment of the Coloured and Indian people, the disruption of their communities, the mass removals, the taking away of their livelihoods is reducing them to inanimate objects and creating hatred and mistrust.

In addition there are all the other laws which make us feel ashamed such as The Immorality Act and the Censorship laws. (By the way I hope that none of you are packaged in pornographic pantihose).

Our rulers are past masters in the art of making tactless and insulting statements and taking uncalled for action against intending visitors to South Africa. The cases of the Japanese jockey and Basil D'Oliviera are fresh in our memories. Mr. Blaar Coetzee and Dr. Koornhof however hold the palm. The residents of Dunkeld must be delighted to be told to "go to Hell" by a Cabinet Minister and Dr. Koornhof's reference to superfluous appendages and "redundant Bantu must do much to endear him to the African people.

It is the day to day insults which, quite apart from the discriminatory legislation are so hurtful and insulting. Suppose for a moment that "separate development" should prove feasible, there will always be millions of Africans working in the Republic. Are they forever to be subjected to this kind of treatment? The Coloured people and the Indians are permanent residents of the Republic, are they too always to be treated as inferior persons? The indignities are part and parcel of the system. The having to live in ghettos ; the travelling in separate trains and buses ; the prohibitions on their attendance at public places of entertainment, even in some Churches ; their state of inferiority with regard to skilled jobs ; the senseless separation from Whites in buildings where they work ; the arbitrary arrest for technical offences ; the obstacles which are put in the way of ordinary social/—

way of ordinary social contacts, both by certain laws, such as the Group Areas Act and even more by the attitudes which lead whites to avoid such contacts and willingly to conform ; the permits which they have to possess to fulfill the simplest of their aspirations and the innumerable indignities to which they are subjected all the time, even in forms of address such as "Boy" or "Girl".

The Government must realise after 23 years in office that its policy is unworkable and unacceptable to the majority of people in South Africa and in the world. We utterly condemn apartheid and all it stands for. Our rulers must accept that they are gambling with civilisation and that if survival is their motive for this oppression, the sooner they reverse their policy and put into practice a policy of social justice and decency, the sooner will South Africa be accepted in the world community.

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CONFERENCE 1971.