

# FIGHTING TALK

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# TURNING THE CLOCK

## COMMENT

### IN PEACE AND AMITY

"It would cause so much ill-feeling and resentment that the clock of racial partnership in Central Africa would be put back ten years." Thus Sir Godfrey Huggins, rushing in where angels fear to tread, to answer a resolution demanding equal treatment for all races in all public places in the Federation. If there had ever been any doubts about the meaning of "racial partnership," Sir Godfrey settled them. Speaking on behalf of the tiny minority of white settlers in the Federation, the Prime Minister who had long run a despotic show of his own, pointed an accusing finger. "Now, of course," he complained, "we stand in the way of ambitious Africans who want to be king of the castle, who want to be Prime Minister and run a despotic show on their own. We will save the rest of the Africans from these ambitious people." Viva Sir Galahad! To an unimpressed handful of African members of the Federal Parliament, Sir Godfrey Huggins appealed for "reasonableness." "Give us a chance to get around and improve the position for you." No sympathy from the African members for this solemn white man's burden. Before walking out of the house en bloc in protest at the Government refusal to put the motion, African members had the satisfaction of hearing one of their number, Mr. D. Yamba, silence Sir Godfrey's infantile chatter about what the Africans really think. "How can you gauge African opinion by talking to your garden boy?" he asked the assembled tobacco planters and ranchers. "He is your servant and will tell you what he thinks you would like to hear." The lesson could be repeated for the education of the many white South Africans who "know the native mind."

### SCHOOL FOR SERFDOM

THE decision of the Anglican Church to close St. Peter's school in Johannesburg rather than accept Verwoerd's subsidy with "Bantu Education" strings attached, has drawn sharp public attention to the meaning of the Bantu Education Act. In typical forthright fashion, Father Trevor Huddleston described the purpose of "Bantu Education." "There cannot and there must not be any kind of connection between European culture and Non-European learning. The native must realise—and realise at once, that the door which the missionary opened for him upon the golden path to Western civilisation is to be closed." Mr. Prinsloo, the Chief Information Officer of the Native Affairs Department, "answered" Father Huddleston with an airy reassurance that everything was for the best for both African and European in this best possible of educational systems. "Why should it be such a tragedy" asked Mr. Prinsloo in a letter to the "Star". "if Bantu education is brought on a par with European education from every point of view?" As Father Huddleston pertinently replied, "The operative word is 'if.'" Citing chapter and verse for his contentions, Father Huddleston describes Bantu education as "the transformation of education for natives into Bantu education . . . to extend the principle of apartheid historically as well as geographically, by ensuring that Bantu education fits into the doctrine of white supremacy for all time; to prevent the Native sharing in the privileges and treasures of Western culture."

Refusing to be a party to such travesty, Father Huddleston, announced the decision to close St. Peter's. "It is

still, happily, possible to prefer death to dishonour." The decision has evoked an immediate response. Once again Johannesburg has lived up to its tradition of unstinting support for the good cause. Dozens of offers have come in to help maintain the school without Government subsidy, amongst them one from the Congress movement. The survival of St. Peter's is becoming the test case of the opposition to "Bantu Education."

### SEEING RED

CULTIVATING the Goering manner, Brigadier Rademeyer has taken it on himself to give exclusive "exposures" to the press—pardon me, the Afrikaans press,—about the existence, of 'red plots, sedition, treason and espionage. At regular intervals, this would-be creator of cheap thrillers takes time off from his duties to slander the Congress movement, to call for publication of the lists of "named" Communists, and generally to produce the hysterical background for a Reichstag fire trial. The process is, no doubt, designed to send the Congresses scuttling for cover. If so, it has failed miserably. Sometimes, as in the case which has followed Mr. Justice Blackwell's interdict on police attendance at a Johannesburg conference, the process has misfired. There is a healthy and instinctive reaction amongst South Africans to McCarthyism. 'If the Government are against it, it must be alright.' That, at any rate, seems to be the reaction which is reported from all centres after the carefully staged, intimidatory police raids on Congress of the People meetings in Durban, Cape Town and Tongaat on the 15th August. The petty police interference was everywhere brushed aside; reports of the meetings speak only of the tremendous enthusiasm for, and the magnificent response to the message of the Congress of the People. Determination to carry on seems to have grown rather than dampened after the police intervention. A spirit of awakening has here been set in motion which no spine-chilling police fabrications will be able to stop. But let there be vigilance! There will be wilder allegations, more dangerous provocations yet before the Congress of the People campaign is at its end. For a time, the technique of the "big lie" paid off in both Hitler's Germany and McCarthy's America. There will be no lack of ambitious and unscrupulous politicians to try it here.

### ALL QUIET

NOW that the last recount in the Provincial Elections is over and done with, and the candidates have shaken hands in sportsmanlike fashion, not even the perennial fear of "losing votes" can stand in the way of a clear and forthright declaration from the United Party. Are they for the Congress of the People? If not, why not? The Congress of the People is coming to occupy the centre of the country's political stage; and the answers cannot be long delayed. By now, repeated election defeats have surely taught the United Party that they cannot hope to run with the hares and hunt with the hounds. This time, as surely as on every other occasion when they have tried it, they will find the act too tricky, too beset with pitfalls. If they want the support of progressive, democratic citizens, they cannot win it by

(Continued at foot of next page)

# MOVING TO THE LEFT

*A prominent member of the Liberal Party  
discusses the new turn in Liberal policy*

FACED with the necessity of writing an article on the Liberal Party's franchise policy, I must confess to a feeling of irritation. Once again the Liberal Party has had a Congress; once again certain sections of Left-wing opinion have shown no interest in any Liberal Party policy other than the franchise. The Left-wing opinion to which I refer — of which one imagines *Fighting Talk* to be representative — spent the first year of the Liberal Party's existence sniping at its franchise policy, apparently less concerned with its merits or demerits than with finding a handy stick with which to beat a dog it was determined to dislike. Often it misunderstood the policy it attacked; certainly it sometimes misrepresented it, as for example when criticising the Liberal Party educational qualification, it spoke of existing educational conditions, and determinedly ignored the Liberal Party's compulsory-education-for-all policy. Again, it spoke of the qualified franchise as if it applied to Non-Europeans only (see for example *The Threatened People*, page 17). So absorbed was this part of the Left in the alleged defects of the franchise policy that it allowed to go practically unnoticed and entirely unwelcomed the advent in South African political life of a party which stood unequivocally for the total abolition of the colour bar.

At its 1954 Congress, the Liberal Party declared as its goal universal adult suffrage. This of course represented a change from its 1953 policy. The Liberal Party recognises that adult suffrage may have to be brought about in stages: it is naive to imagine that an electorate can be quadrupled overnight by a smooth formula.

Congress did not however stipulate what the interim stages might be, for it is difficult to predicate interim quali-

fications without knowledge of the conditions which will obtain when the time comes for the Liberal Party to implement its franchise policy. Since 1953, for example, educational conditions have been drastically worsened by the introduction of the Bantu Education Act. Again, the Liberal Party would obviously have to consult, when the time came, with representatives of all disenfranchised persons.

The 1954 Congress therefore decided to lay down nothing but that the goal of the Liberal Party was universal adult suffrage on a common roll. It was, in my view, wise not to attempt a blueprint for its implementation.

The Party regards the franchise as a mechanism for the creation of a common society in South Africa. It is to be hoped that the attention of the Left will in the future be directed to the totality of the Liberal stand rather than to details of the franchise policy. However the mechanisms operate, they can at any rate affect one generation only. Let us hope that future disagreements, if any, over franchise policy will be seen in this perspective, and that any minor differences will not be elevated into differences of principle. Let the argument rather be between those who favour a common society and those who are determined to preserve the status quo.

CLAUDE FRANKS.

## AS WE SEE IT

*We trust that Mr. Franks does not include "Fighting Talk" in "those sections of Left-wing opinion" who are disinterested in everything about the Liberal Party except its franchise policy. It is rather our interest in the Liberal Party and its total policy that moves us continually to point out the contradiction between professions of "no racial discrimination" and the former policy of votes based on educational qualifications. Elsewhere such a policy might be justly claimed to be not racially discriminatory. But not in South Africa, where universal, compulsory education exists for Europeans only. If our "sniping" had no other good effect, at least it contributed in some measure to helping members of the Liberal*

*Party see the contradiction in their position, and thus assisted them to rectify their franchise policy. The new policy is a welcome step in the right direction.*

*There is still the question of where the Liberal Party's energies are to be applied; to campaigning against colour-bar theorists for the universal adult franchise? Or to campaigning amongst the left for acceptance of stages of restricted franchise? Notwithstanding Mr. Franks' irritation, "Fighting Talk" will, we regret, continue where necessary to "snipe" against the second tendency. In doing so, we will, we believe, be acting in the best interests of the Liberal Party itself.*

THE EDITORS.

keeping silent and aloof about the Congress of the People. An understanding of that fact has moved the Liberal Party, alone of the major political parties, to give a qualified "for" to the Congress of the People. It is that understanding too which has moved the Nationalist Party not to condemn the C.O.P. outright, but to snipe at it from the police sidelines while maintaining a rigid, official silence. The act will deceive no one. By turning loose his police, Mr. Swart has proclaimed loudly where his party stands. People every-

where have read Nationalist Party silence at the invitation to co-sponsor the C.O.P. as a vote "against". It is time that the Liberal Party made its position clear beyond misunderstanding. And it is equally time for the United Party, the Labour Party and the Federal Party to break their silence before they too are counted "against" the C.O.P. and against hearing the freely expressed views of the South African people.

# WOMEN WHO WORK

*“ They are the makers of our wealth ; the great basic rock on which our state is founded ; our vast labouring classes.”*

SO wrote Olive Schreiner, half a century of wrong ago. She saw the people of South Africa working in the fields, working in the mines under the earth, building the railways, but even she, who foresaw so much, could not foresee the vast rapid industrial expansion of the first half of the twentieth century. Even then, she pleaded for the workers of South Africa to be given a stake in their land, a share in the country of their birth. But she wrote of the men, the Indian, Coloured and African men. She who fought so fiercely for the emancipation of women, for their right to an equal share in everything in life, in labour itself, could not foresee that in fifty years' time tens of thousands of South African women would be working in factories, the factories that produce one quarter of the national income, nearly twice as much as from the mines under the earth and more than twice as much as from the fields that lie above the mines. Were Olive Schreiner alive today, how much more passionately would she cry for justice for the women of South Africa, the thousands of non-European women who have entered the fields of labour, but who are still denied a stake in the country which they build!

Today more than half a million people of all races are working in factories and, of every eight workers, one is a woman. Where do they come from, the women workers of South Africa? They are the wives and mothers, who produce not only the material wealth of the country, but its real wealth, its sons and daughters, the new generation of workers, who will keep the vast industrial machine moving. They dwell in the towns and cities, but they were not always there. A generation or two ago they belonged to the countryside, the farms, the platteland, the reserves. Half of them are Coloured, African, Indian women. Few of these were born in the cities, but they belong there now; they are a permanent part of the industrial urban population, that vast mass of human beings whom Verwoerd's apartheid would uproot, and re-plant — where? In the reserves? No room there. On the platteland? No squatters allowed on the farms. In the towns? Only in vast controlled transition camps for the duration of the working lives of their men; no longer than that.

Under what conditions do these women of South Africa work? Paradoxically, for many their conditions of work are better than their conditions of life. For the workers of South Africa, men and women, have fought bitter struggles, have sacrificed and won so that many can claim pay, proportionate to their labour, and good conditions in which to labour. But it is still a never-ceasing struggle to maintain and improve these hard won standards, a struggle whose ultimate success depends upon the unity of the workers, irrespective of race or colour, that very unity that today is split asunder by this Government's industrial legislation, dividing the workers of South Africa on racial lines.

What of the homes, the families of our working women? The mothers must bear a heavy burden, for while many hours must be spent at the machines

BY FEMINA.

and the production tables, homes and young children must be left, and for many European and for some Coloured workers, that very industrial expansion to which they contribute is removing the domestic labour on which they themselves depend for the care of their children and the labour of the household. But for most of South Africa's non-European working wives and mothers, the care of the home must be undertaken in addition to the daily work at the factories, despite the long and weary hours of travel. For these workers are not permitted to live near their work, they must add to the eight hours of daily work four hours of travel standing in long queues, standing in crowded buses and trains. For many months in the winter, they must leave before sunrise and reach their homes after dark, the unbelievable dark of a non-European township, with few, if any, street lights, and dimly lit houses. Mothers must leave their little children in the care of other women, or in the pitifully few creches available, and now, for the African mothers, there is no longer even the security of normal school hours for the older children, accepted the whole world over. But in South Africa, the Bantu Education Act will have no African child remain in school for more than three hours each day.

In the face of all these hardships, these inhuman conditions of life, the non-European woman makes a magnificent contribution to the industrial development of her country. She too has proved the justice of Olive Schreiner's claim for women as equal partners with men in the fields of labour; she overcomes her social and physical disabilities, she remains at her work despite illness, despite the heavy months of pregnancy, when the physical effort of travelling to the factory, the long queues, the crowded buses and trains, must be almost superhuman. Records show that the non-European woman stays off work on account of illness far less than the European, that the non-European factory mother carries her unborn child at work during the later months of pregnancy far more frequently than the European mother. This should not be so; no mother should have to struggle to work during these difficult months of pregnancy, but for the non-European working mother, there is no alternative. She finds the strength to do this, in the endurance which is forced from the conditions of life which are thrust upon her; she cannot afford to stop work as long as she can remain on her feet, be she ill or pregnant, for her family, her children depend greatly upon her earnings; her husband does not receive the true value of his labour, for the colour of his skin, not the level of his skill, determines his wages. For her the shadow of unemployment looms largely in the background.

These thousands of women workers are playing their part in the trade union struggle; they have organized themselves into militant unions, produced courageous and able leaders. Where the conditions of work are concerned, the women workers of South Africa stand steadfastly together, both with men, and, if need be, alone. When this force and determination can be mobilised politically in the struggle for the liberation of South Africa, for the right to live, as well as to work, as human beings, for a world fit for children to be born into, then the day of victory will not be far off. For women, and indeed all workers, must realise that the trade union fight is but part of the greater fight. It is not an end in itself.

# MAD DOGS AND ENGLISHMEN

Simon Zukas'  
Letter from  
London

CORPORAL punishment is part and parcel of colonial rule and British magistrates in East, Central and West Africa are still great believers in the Rod — for Africans. There have been a few cases where a British colonial magistrate ordered a caning for a European. One such case occurred in Nkana, Northern Rhodesia, in the 'thirties: a magistrate ordered a caning for a European minor who had assaulted an African. The caning was, however, not carried out; instead the magistrate got flown out of town in order to safeguard him from an angry crowd of white miners. (The Governor himself arrived on the spot to deal with the situation.)

The Northern Rhodesian administration never forgave the magistrate for this indiscretion; for the rest of his career in the administration he was kept away from the Copperbelt and other areas where there were considerable numbers of Europeans; he was by-passed in promotions and eventually left the "service" a few years ago to start in private practice as a solicitor.

No magistrate in Northern Rhodesia has since brought the Administration so near to the point of having to abolish corporal punishment or to write into the Penal Code the racial discrimination that was intended to be the practice.

It now seems as if Mr. Mason Begho, the Nigerian temporary magistrate, has created a similar crisis in Nigeria. By ordering canings for Europeans on two occasions within the last two months he has spotlighted the continued existence of corporal punishment in the colonies more than the agonising cries of thousands of Africans have done so far.

His June sentence to three strokes of the cane on a British Government Official for inciting a dog to attack an African hawker was first ignored by Fleet Street, but his recent sentence to caning of three British sailors for stealing was big news here.

Nigerian and other African organisations in Britain, have sent messages to Mr. Begho, urging him to stand fast on his decision and they hope that now that the indignity of caning has been applied

to whites, public pressure in Britain will help to put an end altogether to corporal punishment in the colonies.

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Mr. George Craddock, Labour M.P. for Bradford South, has now joined the large group in the Commons which is militantly critical of Tory Colonial policy. When he recently asked of the Colonial Secretary the numbers of Africans held in concentration camps of various kinds in Kenya, he was "shocked" to learn that there were about 40,000 Africans detained and pressed the Minister to look into the most unsatisfactory conditions in the camps.

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Colonial people will be glad to learn that Mr. Lyttleton has been made a Viscount on his resignation from the House of Commons! He is now once again Chairman of the Board of Directors of Associated Electrical Industries. The Times described his period of office as Secretary of State for the Colonies as "one of the most turbulent periods known in the Colonial Empire."

□ □ □

It seems as if we have come to the end of the period when it was necessary to give the impression that the British Colonial Empire was being preserved merely as a sort of school for Self-Government. We are now told that there are certain colonies which can never graduate from this school — Cyprus being one of them. The left-wing of the Labour Party is very uncomfortable about this pronouncement and it has given support to protests from tens of thousands of Cypriots living in London. Even the Times is uncomfortable about Cyprus' press-muzzling laws and urges that a Cypriot newspaper make a test-case of the question whether the support of Enosis (Union with Greece) is seditious! The Times is not satisfied with the Attorney-General's promise that he will "approach each case 'in a free, bold, manly, and generous spirit,' for 'the British tradition is that the liberties of the subject should depend directly on the law, and not on the forbearance of the executive.'" (10/8/54).

What a myth! I could quote hundreds of examples to show the absence

of such tradition in Britain's Colonial Empire, but one will suffice. Mr. Dixon Konkola, President of the N. Rhodesian African Railway Workers and Vice-President of both the African T.U.C. and the National Congress recently applied to go to Britain to attend a conference of the International Transport Federation. After a long delay and after a special interview with the Secretary for African Affairs he was eventually given a passport — valid for only 3 months and that for Britain only. His freedom to travel depended not on the law but on the "forbearance of the executive". And in quoting this case, I am being generous for I could have quoted the case of the President of the African General Workers who was refused a passport outright or the case of the African Mineworkers' branch Secretary who was openly intimidated for boarding a plane for the United Kingdom even though he was in possession of a passport.

However, the people of Britain are being constantly fed on such myths. How about this one: "I wonder where in our colonies today it could be claimed that 'exploitation' is being practised". (Lord Winster in an article in The Daily Telegraph 29.7.54).

□ □ □

Lawrence & Wishart have made a great contribution to African freedom by publishing Derek Kartun's "Africa, Africa! A continent Rises to its Feet!" (3/6). It presents the main aspects of British imperialism in Africa to the British Labour Movement and calls for "A completely new kind of relationship between the peoples of Africa and the people of Britain." (I think the author might have more correctly had his sides the other way round).

"In the first place, the Africans must have the right to determine their own future — the right to decide how they will be governed."

The author does not delude himself. He sees that only a truly socialist Britain would grant these rights; only a truly socialist Britain would offer to the African territories technical and economic aid "on a basis of absolute equality."

Of course, Kartun does not look upon a Britain under the present Labour Party leadership as a truly socialist Britain and he points out that while the rank and file of the Labour Party "recognize the rights of all peoples to manage their own affairs on equal terms with their fellow nations . . ." "It was the Labour Government that did not."

(Continued on page 7)

# IMPERIALISM'S LAST FLING

PETER MEYER LOOKS AT FEDERATION.

*"We are going to fetch you your bread and your butter,  
Your beef, pork and mutton, eggs, apples and cheese . . .  
We fetch it from Melbourne, Quebec and Vancouver —  
Address us at Hobart, Hong Kong and Bombay."*

— Kipling.

I DON'T know whether Mr. George C. McGhee, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near East, South Asian and African Affairs, ever read these proud lines of the poet laureate of British Imperialism. But he was in the same optimistic mood when he addressed an American audience in May 1950.

The imperial shuttle service has contracted since Kipling's time; but there is still Africa. Thank Heaven for Africa! — thought Mr. McGhee.

"In these troubled times," he told his audience, "it is gratifying to be able to single out a region of ten million square miles in which no significant inroads have been made by Communism, and able to characterise that area as relatively stable and secure. If there is one area in the world where no major crisis exists, then it is imperative that advantage be taken of the absence of pressure to plan against the time when such pressure may be applied."

The mask never slips off the face of the British diplomat: but the agents of American imperialism are always blurting out the truth!

Africa! — the last refuge in the storm. Let us at least preserve Africa for "Western civilisation."

There was a Kipling-like lilt in Mr. McGhee's voice when he spoke of Africa and its riches: its soap and its twine, its chocolates and spices, its manganese, chrome and asbestos, its rubber and industrial diamonds. Yes, Mr. McGhee. And its copper, cobalt, and uranium, and many things besides. Address us at Cape Town, Lagos and Accra!

In 1948, said Mr. McGhee, rubbing his hands, Africa's exports to Europe were worth 2,500,000,000 dollars, or about half as much as the United States itself exported to Europe. And not consumer goods, mind you, but the raw, warm products of Nature. Minerals and foods and raw materials.

And, finally, the way is clear for U.S. "aid". The economies of these countries, said Mr. McGhee, are primarily dependent on agriculture, forestry or mining, varying in their stages of development, "but all of them can be classified as economically under-developed."

Africa! — the last massive hunk of humanity on which the refugee parasites of imperialism can settle. Or so thought Mr. McGhee.

I have no intention of trying to cover in the space of this single article the full scope of American activity in Africa. I want to deal, actually, with the Central African Federation. First I want to show that behind many major developments in the African territories of Britain, France, Belgium, etc., stands the thin-lipped American imperialist in his white summer suit and rimless spectacles.

Central African Federation is the brain-child of big capitalists. It is the foundation on which a new era of exploitation is being built. It also marks the large-scale entry of American capital into the three Federation territories — Southern and Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Now that the Federal scheme has been forced through, American capital is ready to flow. The Federation has even opened a financial office in New York.

The setting up of an overall Federal authority was an essential preliminary to the new phase of exploitation. The situation in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland had hampered full exploitation. Two facts must be borne in mind: the Whites in these two territories are a tiny minority. (N. Rhodesia: 50,000 Whites; 2,000,000 Africans. Nyasaland: 5,000 Whites; 2,350,000 Africans). And the Africans are "British Protected Persons." They were not conquered, but came under British "protection" by "treaty".

However infamous that "treaty" might have been, the fact remains that the Africans have a certain status, and the Colonial Office, reluctantly, had to treat them with an overt show of respect. All this meant that the British Government could not hand over control blatantly to the White settlers.

But there is to be full exploitation of the territories, there must be full control over the Africans, and that is where the Federal Scheme comes in. It by-passes the Colonial Office. The three territories are combined, a single authority is set up, and in time it will run the three territories without Colonial Office "interference". In this way, the White settlers will achieve what they were not able to secure when the three territories were separate.

It must not be thought that the Colonial Office has the interests of the Africans at heart. It was simply in a difficult position. It was unable to order the new required exploitation of the Africans, so the British Government transferred the authority to the White settlers, who have no such "obligations".

There are various "safeguards" of course. African affairs remain the right of the separate legislatures, and the British Government will still keep a fatherly eye on the position. But it is merely a matter of time before the White settlers get it all their own way. That is the intention of the settlers, of the British Government, and of the big capitalists who engineered the whole scheme.

It must be remembered that the Federal scheme has come at a time when the whole of Africa is astir. Sooner or later, changes would have come about in N. Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The question was: in which direction? More freedom, or less freedom? The Federal scheme, a step towards less freedom, was devised to answer this question.

In their petition to the Queen, the Nyasa chiefs and citizens pointed out that the White settlers in N. and S.

Rhodesia had pressed for Federation when the British Government announced its intention of granting a measure of self government to the Gold Coast and Nigeria.

Before Federation, Africans in the three territories had been denied a voice in their respective governments. When the stirrings began elsewhere in Africa, the White settlers decided to entrench their position.

An African speaker in the Northern Rhodesian Council warned the settlers: "If any union comes, it will have to be imposed by brute force." This did not deter the gentle British critics of apartheid. They put the Federal scheme through with brute force. It was one of the most ruthless political moves ever witnessed in Africa.

And now the deed is done. The capitalist machine is squeezing harder. The grim process of blood-sucking is being stepped up.

In their haste to rob the territories of their riches, the capitalists have neglected its agriculture. For every loaf made of S. Rhodesian wheat, 49 loaves of bread eaten in the colony are made from imported wheat. Thousands of tons of sugar are imported. S. Rhodesia also imports half of its butter and cheese; it also imports deciduous fruits, and often maize and beef.

But it produces 100,000,000 lbs. weight of tobacco a year.

N. Rhodesia's economy is based on copper, and almost everything else is neglected (except, of course, its other minerals, like cobalt). The White miners earn between £100 and £300 a month, and the *average* wage of the African miner (contrary to false reports) is not more than £5 or £6 a month.

Even a brief glance at the economies of these territories will show that the whole structure is designed to advance the interests of the big mining companies — Anglo-American, Rhodesian Selection Trust, B.S.A., etc. The

two big copper companies (Anglo-American and Rhodesian Selection Trust) enjoy unbelievably low taxation rates. It represents a small part of their vast profits. Huge sums are allowed to leave the territory in profits — and the rest of the territory's economy lies neglected.

The Federal scheme will now give the capitalists a free hand. America has also demanded it, because impatient American businessmen want a government on the spot which thinks their way. They want no laborious negotiations via London. Federation means no restrictions, no barriers against American dollar invasion — and in return the dollar "loans" begin to arrive.

The recent pressure by Rhodesian Selection Trust (which is partly American-owned) against the colour bar on the mines is part of the scheme to speed up exploitation. Expensive White labour (it is also inefficient labour) is a luxury the capitalists are no longer willing to tolerate. They want to break the colour bar, not to confer equality of opportunity on the Africans, but to create a pool of cheap, *skilled* labour.

However, Sir Ernest Oppenheimer is advising caution. He does not want protest strikes by White miners on his mines in South Africa. He is urging the Americans to proceed carefully.

And that is Central African Federation: a financial deal. It is capitalist exploitation in its rawest state. But in forcing through the Federal scheme, the capitalists have hastened their own doom. A new awareness of what is taking place has swept through the African workers in the three territories; a new consciousness has gripped them. The old game of bluff played in London is wearing thin, and now the African people of Southern and Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland have learnt to know their friends from their foes.

The Central African Federation scheme, the brain-child of the capitalists and politicians, is the thing that has helped most to open their eyes.

## LONDON LETTER—Cont. from page 5

There was need in Britain for such a booklet to guide the awakening of the Labour Movement; that it is awakening against colonial oppression there are many signs. In the Welsh Miners' annual gala seven miners, stripped to the waist, with their bodies painted black, marched in chains with the procession. The Women's Co-operative Guild Congress condemned "methods of military force and brutality" against Coloured people in the Empire, demanded the resignation of the Colonial Secretary and the investigation of Colonial conditions by a body of working-class representatives. In the House of Commons Lyttleton is frequently questioned by Labour M.P.'s on Kenya . . .

And yet while Britain is granting millions of pounds to the Kenya Government for persecuting the Kikuyu, and Kenya's income tax rates remain far below that of Britain's workers, there is no real outcry from the British working-class.

## STRANGER IN THE CITY

By HILDA WATTS.

*There in the street where the breeze of the cars continually passing  
Caresses her limbs with fumes, dark body laden  
With bead-bright ropes, scarlet, white — in patience resting  
Among the quick-pulsing crowds sits a Zulu maiden.*

*She waits, her ochre-caked hair in stately stature rising  
Brown legs with copper heavy-burdened under  
Gleaming rings, while the summer street sings past the gutter,  
Quick-humming city beats on her as she gazes in troubled wonder.*

*Yesterday she came from the quiet kraal, the blue-hilled valleys  
The tawny grass, slow days, soft-moving, where lightly  
Her bare feet trod small familiar paths; now the tarred city  
Stretches before her, is strange, bears down on her strongly, tightly.*

*The city will cover her breasts, her thighs; it will take her  
Strip her of bead mosaic, grass skirts: will the city pattern  
Then rob her naked primitive dignity, beat her  
Into the shape of the slums, rough-voiced, sharp, a slattern?*

*For the years of the kraal are ended, have fallen forever,  
The soil of those years has washed down to the sea and gone.  
Yet still she may tread these grey hard pavements firmly and proudly,  
For the past is behind, but the future has yet to be won.*

# "THESE ARE MIGHTY YEARS!"

"The struggle does not end until every hovel has been rebuilt into a decent house; until the products of the earth will be within easy purchase; until profits from the factories will be returned in equal amount to the work exerted; until every family can have complete medical care from the cradle to the grave. When these necessities are equal to hand for everyone, regardless of race, colour, creed and residence in this world, then can we say we have reached our goal." (Soong Ching Ling.)

July 11th.

THIS is my first anniversary in China: arrived here one week ago. Have long ago lost the only calendar I have and though I don't notch the passing days on a stick, I have to keep count of them in my notebook. Here and there I found, mainly in airplane travelling, I have lost one or two and my dates don't correspond with the odd one in recognizable Latin characters that I have come across, so I've had to re-calculate and jump back into the present from the past or a day or two in the future! Days become important here: seven in China already used up. Only another 24 till the end of the month, and then another eight till the youth meeting opens, so too few left to see the vastness and learn the countless — literally countless — things that make up this new miracle.

Any achievement we have ever made in our country pales into utter insignificance in comparison with what has been done here, though you will have to wait for my return for amplification. But the changes of the last five years are explicable only by what preceded them . . . and those were mighty years! I never realized quite what human equipment these people had assembled for their tasks. Above all else that is new — the brick buildings several storeys high; (old Peking had barely any buildings higher than two storeys because in the old days it was forbidden to build any structure taller than the Imperial Palace); the Czech Tatra cars; the machine building industry (imagine, feudal China turning out heavy machinery); the hospitals, clinics, colleges opening one after another; the land belonging to those who work it in a country where peasants have never owned land — above all else one gets the impression that the very people are new. And it is so because otherwise none of these other things could have been done. In the old days the flooding of the rivers that swept away hundreds of helpless villages were awaited each spring with resignation and defeatism. Now 60,000 peasants turn out to build a canal or flood barriers. They dig with equipment their forefathers used and carry endless basket loads of soil away in a long human chain because only now is mechanisation being introduced and it will still take some time, but they do it with a will and a purpose, and in record time . . . and for the first time in history the floods do not sweep them away. In factories where new equipment cannot be introduced immediately the workers are improvising with the old. Last year a 'rationalisation' movement was started, to get workers to make pro-

posals for re-organisation in industry and innovations in technique and machines. Hundreds of thousands of suggestions have poured in, many of them technical innovations from women workers who for the first time in 1949 saw the lathe they were to be taught to operate. Many workers have become 'labour models'. Some are national figures. One of these is 26 year-old Wang Chung-Lao of the Anshan steel works, who designed a new machine that turned out in 45 minutes a part that had previously taken 2½ hours to complete. He designed it at night on the kitchen table of his home, using a glass, saucer and simple home-made models in place of the draughtsman's equipment. And then he settled down to use his machine when it was generally adopted in his factory, and he completed his 3-year work target in one year. Newspapers all over the country anxiously followed his progress after he had announced his work plan. Would he succeed? Workers everywhere would follow him if he did, and set a new pace in industry. He was pretty confident. In reply to one query one morning he is reported to have said: 'It's going well. I'm starting on my work for 1955 today!' The story of his progress was illustrated in charts at an exhibition I saw this week of labour models and innovations at the Anshan Steel Mills. The exhibition and the story of Wang Chung-Lao explain the rapid pace of industrialisation in China, and the furious tempo at which everything is going ahead. The exhibition of plants at the blast furnace, steel mills and so on were somewhat above me, of course. But at the exit were suggestion books for the comments of those who had viewed the models: ordinary people, most of them. One man wrote: 'The demonstrators talk too fast. It is difficult to follow.' Another 'Now I appreciate our great creative power.' Another 'This time the exhibition is rich'. (Implying that the last was?) But another man wrote: 'The explanations given were too simple. We want to know more.' Someone else complained that there was no guide to the size of the models in relation to the actual plants. And one man, himself a technician, had written in the book for comments a formula for an innovation to one of the innovations! What else have I seen: some parks, a fine nursery school for 300 children, the home of a printing worker in an old lane in Peking so narrow that we had to abandon the car and walk . . . but that was the only 'old' about that afternoon! I've had several talks in the last few days: this morning with the vice-principal of a primary school; yesterday with a 63-year-old woman who is a community worker in her courtyard and is now busy explaining the contents of the draft constitution to her families; with a 21-year-old model worker, a girl in a machine-shop; with a woman who today directs a factory but explains as clearly as though the events happened last week her struggle to go to school as a girl in Old China, her revolt against a forced marriage, her emergence as a guerrilla in her village under the Japanese occupation and now her new life. There are 601 million people in this country and in one way or another each of their lives is worth knowing and writing about, it seems.

July 15th.

Yesterday we went on a trip to see one of New China's flood control projects: the Kuangting reservoir, the largest in all China, which tamed the Yungting River.

## RUTH FIRST REPORTS FROM PEOPLE'S CHINA

I was told to be ready at 4 a.m. and having read somewhere that the reservoir was 60 miles northwest of Peking, I wondered why such an unearthly hour had been chosen.

However, I was ready at 4 and we all climbed into an army-truck and threaded our way out of the capital as the dawn was just breaking. As we neared the city borders the bicycles and pedicabs (cabs pulled by bicycles, the successor to the old rickshaw) gave way to a chaos of jostling mulecarts, many of the drivers nodding over their crossed legs as they prodded their animals on.

After five hours travelling the signs of the reservoir were apparent: a narrow gauge railway line along which people and materials had poured in the autumn of 1951; a new bridge on which bright red letters announced it had been completed in 1953; new villages where formerly there had been no inhabitants; and men dotted like ants on a hillside preparing elaborate bamboo scaffolding for yet another new bridge. Right near the reservoir we were held up for five minutes while giant wooden dams were dropped in position to enable our truck to trundle over the railway line still under construction, and then we had arrived. Balancing on our heads straw hats the size of bicycle wheels we clambered about the reservoir and were told the story of its construction.

Next to the Yellow River (China's Sorrow), the Yungting is the biggest, and had been the most dangerous, river in the northern part of the country. In the last forty years it has caused seven major floods, turning the rich plains of Hebei Province into an expanse of rolling waves, drowning people and their stock, and sweeping away their villages and crops. In 1917 and 1939 flood waters inundated the port of Tientsin, cut the Peking-Tientsin railway and silted up the river which connects Tientsin with the sea.

Each year the peasants awaited the rains and the flooding of the river with dread.

Since 1316 there had been attempts to curb the river. In the 17th century a Manchu Emperor built a stone dyke to protect Peking and solemnly renamed the river. It had been called the Wating ('Never Settled'). He called it the Yungting ('Forever Settled'). The river responded by thumping its nose at the Emperor and two years later it changed its course, left the dyke high and dry and continued on its career of destruction. The next Emperor used the flood-control money he collected from the people to build a temple to pacify the god who was supposed to rule the waters. The warlords and the Kuomintang hired engineers to draw up a succession of flood control plans, collected money from the people again and again, but did no building.

In 1939, after the establishment of the People's Government, a surveying team was sent to Kuangting and soon work started on the building of the reservoir.

It wasn't considered enough to build a reservoir to tame the flooding river. The project had also to conserve water for the lands in the dry periods; to generate power for China's new industries; to supply water and power to the cities of Peking and Tientsin; to create new navigable waterways and ultimately to change the appearance and the climate of this part of the countryside by making possible new afforestation schemes. And already today there is talk of stocking the dam with fish and turning it into a holiday

resort and beauty spot. 'Come back in two years,' they say. 'Spend a short holiday here.'

Work on the reservoir started in October 1951. All in all, 40,000 men laboured on the site. The great majority were peasants from the very land that the flooding river threatened and they worked at a breakneck pace, wanting the dam finished, it seemed, almost as soon as it was begun. Work had to go on in winter for with the summer the river would come down, to wash away their labours. And the project simply had to be finished in time. To be even ten days late might mean all labour was for naught, as it disappeared beneath the rushing waters. So the men worked three shifts through the day and night, in freezing temperatures and snowstorms. Peasants who tended their crops in the valleys during the summer climbed to the site of the reservoir that winter to tame the river that threatened their villages and fields. It had been planned to reach a certain height in the construction of the reservoir wall in 60 days. The work was completed in 50. And the marvel is that the tons of earth were moved by men using picks and shovels and carrying the earth in the old baskets used for centuries in China. Some jobs were done by bulldozers and earthcrabbers but there are far too few of these for the great construction works that China is at present undertaking and where there were no excavators and mobile cranes, men did the work with their hands. Work went on every Sunday, over holidays and Festivals, and even on New Year, and there is no more joyous festival in China, the men refused to call a halt.

The site was flooded at night and here the peasants from the valleys worked side by side with building workers from Tientsin, university-graduated engineers, mechanics from the Northeast.

The old Kuangting village, which would have been at the bottom of the reservoir, was rebuilt and given a new place on the map. The dam was built, with the help of two Soviet engineers who acted in an advisory capacity, not of reinforced concrete but in sections of permeable and impermeable clay, gravel and stone, and the tops of eight hills in the vicinity were levelled for these materials. Working in mid-winter on the floor of the dam workers' hands sometimes froze to the stones they were trying to lift. One man fell into the river but managed to swim ashore and started swinging his pick again. Urged to stop for a rest he said: 'I fought the Japanese here for many years. Do you expect me to quit just because I've got a bit wet?'

Peasants who had never before seen electric pumps and other equipment learned to handle them. Literacy classes and cultural performances were organised for those off shift. A new town, though largely temporary, grew up next to the reservoir.

The first summer after building began, a temporary reservoir had to be built to divert the river from the construction site.

Then, at the end of June 1954, when the reservoir was just over three-quarters completed the summer floods came down. But already the reservoir walls were high enough and though the river swelled menacingly after torrential rains the dam held. But for the new reservoir Tientsin would again have been flooded last year, and it is estimated that the loss prevented by the dam was sufficient to cover the cost of its entire construction.

The reservoir was officially opened two months ago, two months to the day that we arrived. The open-air stage on which Mao Tse Tung had himself delivered the opening

(Continued overleaf)



speech is still there. The day before we came the engineering staff had moved out, and the new administration offices had taken over.

But the engineering division had not moved far off. We heard blasting in the mountain nearby and there they have just started work on the new hydro-electric power station that will generate power by October 1955. Other workers were laying the tracks of the new railway that will soon enable one to catch the train in Peking and arrive at Kuanting three hours later. (Just think of a journey without that endless jolting!) And other workers, not busy at the time on either power station or the railway line, were sitting in the shade under the reservoir bridge, studying. As we walked past one group, eight men were reading together. Every one of them had a fountain pen either in his hand, or sticking out of his shirt pocket. Those fountain pens in China! Wherever you go, you see them. Pencils are no longer good enough. Students, workers, peasants, all need fountain pens. It is the sign of the wave of study movements sweeping over China, the new sciences the people are mastering, of their ability even to conquer nature and tame the proverbial floods.

What started as a letter has become an article. Perhaps it may be of some use somewhere? But I found it all very exciting. After a while one got used to these epic conquests in the Soviet Union, because there all construction is on such a tremendously high level . . . but think of these successes in near-feudal China, with a People's Government not yet five years old!

What else have I been doing and seeing? This morning attended a session of a People's Court, have had discussions on cultural work with people from the Writers' and Musicians' Union, have seen the Central Institute for training for members of Nationality Minorities.

July 18th.

I was due to leave for Shanghai tomorrow but it is not yet certain whether we have got on the train, so this trip may be slightly delayed. However, sooner or later, I shall go to the three cities in the south. Meanwhile here there is too much to see and talk about for all to be fitted into the programme, so there is certainly nothing lost by staying on longer. We managed on the whole three items each day. Yesterday I saw a case being conducted at the People's Court; in the afternoon had a discussion on the organisation of women; and in the evening went to a play on the May 4th movement in 1919 in China, which preceded the formation of the Communist Party. The day before I spoke on our country, went to a small district meeting of women discussing the draft constitution, and interviewed two people in the evening, one a young girl who had gone to work in a cigarette factory at the age of 11, and is today a national 'model' worker; and the other a combat hero who had joined the 8th Route Army at the age of 14 as one of the 'Little Soldiers', had taken part in the Long March, been a guerilla fighter and an underground worker in the villages occupied by the Kuomintang, had also volunteered for Korea and reached Seoul . . . and now is studying at a secondary school in Peking 'raising his cultural level'. This morning I went to the large prison here. The road in which the prison is situated is called 'New Life Road'. There were two policemen at the gate, but the gate was wide open. We went into the courtyard where there were some delicate pink lotus blossoms blooming, had a lemonade with the two prison officials who were to take us round, and then we started on a tour of inspection. Several thousand men and some hundreds of women are in this prison. It is like a small town. There are the dormitories where the prisoners sleep, but also

a very large printing works with over a dozen flat-bed machines (and in this printing shop they were printing school text books); a large iron works which is turning out concrete mixers; a flour mill and a textile factory in which over 1,000 work. Here there are most up-to-date machines, in one workshop one man tending 14 spindles. They weave calico and also make cotton socks and stockings of very high quality. I was given six pairs so you will see them. I didn't see a single armed guard, no one rattled any large keys (at one stage someone had to run about looking for a key, but it was the key to the storeroom, needed because I was to be shown their stocks of materials; and the locks on the doors of some dormitories which had been converted from the old cells (because under the Kuomintang part of this prison had been used for political prisoners) had been covered over with wooden slabs. In several courtyards there were stages for dramatic performances and meetings. There were blackboard newspapers everywhere, ping pong tables, charts showing the work targets of the workers in the different factories, coloured health charts on hygiene, prepared by the prisoners themselves. I had to pinch myself several times to convince myself I was not dreaming and this really was a prison. As we passed through one courtyard a group of staff members were sitting in the shade discussing the draft constitution which is now being discussed up and down China. The system used in the factories of this prison is as outside: each worker sets himself targets in the general production plan; progress is marked up daily and awards granted for individual and/or team work, and those who exceed their targets get variously a banner or large paper flower over their machines or work benches, a money award, or just praise in the shop blackboard newspaper. But the workers in the prison do not get paid (apart from awards for outstanding labour) for by their labour they are redeeming their past crimes. This is part of the punishment.

This system is all the more astonishing when one discovers what types of criminals are in this prison. Very many are lifers or long term prisoners (though there is the chance that the lifers will have their sentences reduced if they reform); men serving from 4 to 15 years for such crimes as being special agents for the Kuomintang, members of their secret police or officials of the Kuomintang government, counter-revolutionaries, gangsters or local despots in the towns or villages. In short, the scum of the old society and those who have committed crimes against the people and worked against the change. All had been sentenced in the courts, of course, and been given prison sentences for proved crimes.

And these are the people the prison is today educating. When they come in each has to go through a compulsory study course. They are told of the new society, how the old has gone forever and it is useless to cling to the hope that the old will be restored. They are educated to believe that labour is honourable and that parasites have no place in the New China. That the prison will train them so when they leave it they can find work and stand on their own. The type of educational approach used was explained in detail and it would take some time to get it all down here. But each prisoner has to face his crime and give his agreement to a course of re-education and training. There are hard obstinate cases, of course, but it seems the prison has few failures. Men are remoulded here. Even after they start work in the factories they have to study for two hours every day. The prison chief spoke and acted less like a prison warden than any I have ever seen, and of course when I asked him what he had done before, he turned out to be an ex-education organiser in the People's Liberation Army!

## “LIKE GULLIVER, SNAPPING BONDS”

THE Trades Hall was hot and crowded that fateful Sunday afternoon. It was one of the largest conferences ever held in the Transvaal. One thousand two hundred signed the register. Delegates had come from the four corners of the Transvaal to discuss ways of resisting the new apartheid laws. They were drawn from all walks of life — workers, clerks, nursemaids, house “boys”, teachers; and all national groups were there — Africans, Indians, Europeans, Coloureds. Through the day, one after another rose to tell of their opposition to the growing oppression of the Malan government: mothers, fathers, youth, brown, black, white, spoke with a single voice of one thing — Freedom.

But while these ordinary people of the Transvaal were expressing their passionate hatred of apartheid, their loyal support of Congress, their deep desire for a free South Africa, their anger that they should be treated like slaves in their motherland — others were speaking of resistance to apartheid too; on the tenth floor of Grays Buildings, the headquarters of the political police, another conference was in progress. What they were discussing became evident, when at 4.30 delegates saw from the windows an alarming sight. Two troop carriers drew up silently outside the building and disgorged a 100 armed policemen. They forced the doors. Then a plain clothes detective mounted the platform. Before anyone had time to act, the policeman made a shattering announcement: “I am stopping this conference to investigate charges of High Treason.” Two delegates who rose to condemn the disgraceful intrusion were seized by burly police and dragged from the Hall. The audience growled . . . Tension grew. Along the walls one hundred black-clothed policemen held bristling machine guns at the ready.

The detective on the platform announced:

‘The names and addresses of all those present will be taken by the police.’ The police roughly herded delegates into the centre of the Hall.



THE SCENE AT JOHANNESBURG'S TRADE HALL, THE DAY THE POLICE TRIED STEN GUNS. AND THE PEOPLE REPLIED: "MAYIBUYE!"



One little incident . . . a temperamental delegate obstructing the police . . . and those ugly, menacing sten guns would discharge their message of death. Everybody was covered. And restless fingers seemed to itch at the triggers. There would be big black headlines in the morning papers . . .

But the congressmen and congresswomen responded like true sons and daughters of Africa. They showed a dignity that transcended provocation and bullying . . . They sang. They sang of the greatness of Africa and her peoples.

The slow, beautiful chant of Nkosi Sikele Africa slowly engulfed the hall, floated into the streets, and across the rooftops of the deserted Sunday buildings. The police drew back. They knew that the spotlight was not on them or their mission. It was not a song for the police — it was a song for freedom. With a fervour that no threats of force could dampen, the people sang of liberty as they were marshalled into lines to be searched and interrogated. In the street a crowd of bystanders collected anxiously by the police cars, and listened in wonder to the spirited and inspir-

ing singing. There was drama in the air, the drama of a faith in freedom that burned stronger than the tyranny which tried to smother it.

“High Treason,” challenged the police.

“Nkosi Sikele Africa” answered the people.

It was a fitting reply! Like a Gulliver giant snapping his Lilliputian bonds the people lifted themselves out of the hall with its police guards and sang the song that would be the death knell of the tyrants and racialists: the song of freedom for the 160 million oppressed of Africa.

The police spoke of treason to the laws of the Nationalist government of South Africa, of treason to a system of racialism, inequality, exploitation. Unhesitatingly the conference gave its reply as a thousand hands gave the salute “Mayebuye Africa!” — an answer of significant symbolism because it came from those who knew their only treason to be their desire for racial harmony, peace, the brotherhood of men.

Summed up in the defiant cry “Africa” was the feeling that if to speak of freedom was “High Treason” then those who opposed freedom were equally guilty of treason — treason to the human race and to its desire for progress. It was insolence of the South African ruling circle to accuse the fighters for a better South Africa of peace, racial harmony and plenty for all national groups, of treachery to their land. The truth was the reverse! The Con- The truth was the reverse!

But the police apparently felt satisfied with the results of their intimidatory provocative performance. Two weeks later, on another fateful Sunday afternoon, detectives attempted to enter a conference to launch the Congress of the People. This time, the people were prepared. An urgent application was made to the Supreme Court to restrain the police. In an historic interdict, made under circumstances believed to be legally unique in South Africa, Mr. Justice Blackwell ordered the police to leave the meeting, with the remark, “This is not a police state yet.”

*Let us speak together of freedom!*

# Route map for M.P.s

## An Open Letter

*"If time permitted, we would like to have the opportunity of showing you something of South Africa, the common people's South Africa. It would no doubt be different from the official South Africa of monuments and game reserves which you will see; and it would perhaps, tell you something of this controversial land which you will not hear at all the official banquets and gatherings.*

*"We would like, for instance, to take you walking through the municipal slum of Moroka, where 55,000 people live in home-made hovels of hessian and cardboard; and perhaps to tell you how this erstwhile "emergency camp" has now become a model for a so-called "site and service" scheme, by which South Africa's housing shortage is to be conquered. We would like you to meet the Superintendent, living like some Sanders-of-the-River, a white man boss in a black man's territory; and then to meet some of the mothers of the area, who bring up children who run wild in the streets for lack of schooling and recreation, and who drift into gansterism for lack of opportunity.*

*"From this gateway to South Africa, we would like to move on to Johannesburg's Western Area, where 58,000 people live under the shadow of imminent, forcible deportation from their traditional freehold homes, to a municipal cantonment miles from the city where they work. We would like to give you an opportunity to talk with them, and hear their opinions of the so-called "black spots removal" scheme, which makes of them pawns in the creation of race-colour pattern plans devised by backroom boys of South African racialism.*

*"Perhaps here, or in any of our country's towns and villages, we could meet some of the African boys and girls who struggle each year to be in that one-third for whom there is any place in our schools. We could hear from them of the new South African educational policy, which will cut their daily schooling to a maximum of three hours, with Standard II as the general, almost universal, summit. And perhaps, too, of the cutting off of state subsidies from mis-*

*sion schools which will not adopt "Bantu Education" or teach the African child that "there is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour."*

*"Possibly we could take in a visit of Nylstroom, or Lydenburg, or any one of a hundred small towns, and gaze upon the rocky outcrops of waste-land to which the local town councils and the Government's Planning and Reference Council propose to relegate the local*

LETTER SENT BY THE THREE CONGRESSES TO THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION WHO RECENTLY VISITED SOUTH AFRICA.

*Indian community. We could meet the ten or fifteen Indian families, most of them small traders, who are the "problem" with which these towns and the Government grapple. We would discuss gravely, as the Land Tenure Board does, the serious problem of whether their trade and livelihood will not, perhaps, be affected when all are settled cheek by jowl, outcasts in an out-of-town ghetto. And perhaps we could meet a local councillor or Nationalist politician — or even one of those who hopes to take over the best situated Indian property — and hear how the Group Areas Act is necessary in the national interest, and how 'equality of sacrifice' will be its keynote.*

*"We could scarcely miss a visit to the local pass office, where we could mingle with the browbeaten, despised, patient waiters — if the apartheid regulations did not whisk you into a separate, shorter, more courteously received queue. There would be time to study and observe the shouting and cursing of*

*petty officials, banging their rubber stamps like minor Mussolinis, and condemning thousands of men each month, on pain of arrest and imprisonment, to leave the town, homes, perhaps their family. If you are sensitive to atmosphere, you would feel something of the bitterness and hatred which is manufactured here, on both sides of the counter, officials and applicants alike degraded by the sordid traffic in bodies. If you could break through the intolerant indifference of the official, you could learn that, like the thousands badgered from queue to queue, he knows not what he does, except that it is in terms of the Abolition of Passes Act.*

*"From here, it is but a short step to the Court, where daily hundreds of pass offenders are tried, convicted and dispatched to serve their sentence with a speed that many an abattoir would envy. We could meet some of the thousands who are jailed each year for failure to have the right pass at the right time — the most prevalent South African offence despite the much discussed 'crime wave'. We could perhaps, follow them to one of the private jails which are being built by local farmers in many rural areas at their own expense; and we could see how Influx Control regulations and Urban Areas Acts and Master and Servants Acts keep these jails conveniently and permanently filled with convict labourers, working on private farms to which free labour could never be attracted without substantial improvement in wages and conditions of work.*

*"For an adventurous evening, a taste of South Africa's night life, we could perhaps, spend a night in a home in any urban township for Africans. We would go to bed early, for we might be rudely awakened at 2 or 3 a.m. by police bursting in without a warrant, brusquely turning us out of bed, and overturning furniture in one of the perennial raids for 'liquor'. We would be obliged, of course, to produce our passes, and tax receipts instantaneously, or be bundled off in a pick-up van to the local jail.*

*"But perhaps, since politics is your interest, we would omit the night life,*

and rather spend the evening quietly at a political gathering — possibly a non-Government and non-Nationalist public meeting, possibly even one of ours. We would quite casually — familiarity, they say, breeds contempt — run the gauntlet of surveillance outside the hall by a group of plain-clothes detectives in a car outside. Once inside, sitting quietly, peacefully listening, we could experience that interesting South African political occurrence — a police 'investigation'. We would attempt to maintain our sang froid even when policemen armed with Sten guns burst in, and demand the names and addresses of all present, because they suspect 'high treason'. And we would spend the next few weeks anticipating a letter from the Minister of the Interior, in which he would curtly

inform us that, since he is satisfied that the objects of Communism would otherwise be served, we are prohibited under heavy penalty of again getting together with any persons whatsoever for any common purpose for, say, two years. This would, we feel, be an appropriate end to a serious attempt to see and hear South Africa for yourself, and a time to make a judgement.

"We regret we are unable to offer to conduct you on any such tour. Most of our leading figures have already been the victims of the banning process without trial or hearing. Most of their names do not, we repeat NOT, appear on a Government compiled list of former members of the Communist Party. Nevertheless, they have been subjected

to heavy restrictions on their liberty, their freedom of political expression and their movement, by decrees issued in terms of the Suppression of Communism Act. For many of our foremost figures, who were also the foremost opponents of the Government and its apartheid policy, even a discussion with you would bring down heavy penal sanctions.

"In the circumstances, we regret that we can only offer you again our best wishes, and the hopes that you will see South Africa for yourself, untinted by the rose coloured spectacles which are standard equipment handed out by Cabinet Ministers to distinguished guests and visitors.

## BY ANY OTHER NAME . . .

By ELWOOD C. CHOLMONDELY.

PERHAPS to you who had no hand in it, Dr. Nicol's announcement last month left you cold. But to me and many like me, it brought lumps to our throats. "From now on," said that glorious proclamation from Pretoria, "teachers training institutions for Non-Europeans will be known as 'Teachers' Training Colleges'; and those for Europeans as 'Colleges of Education'." Here is the full answer to those carping critics who ask repeatedly, "What has apartheid achieved?" Here at last is the fulfilment of all those dreams that have kept us, year in and year out, building the Party, talking Nationalism, even when sometimes the road looked hopeless.

It is difficult to write calmly about such glorious achievement. I remember as though it was yesterday the bitter battles of a small but loyal band of Nationalists against the liberalistic influences of the United Party, when we fought into the small hours of the morning for apartheid. How desperately we argued with them, bringing tears and reason to bear. But to no avail. Desperately they clung to the liberalistic concept of calling all such places "Teachers Training Colleges" whether they were for black or whites. Recklessly, almost criminally, they turned a deaf ear to our pleas that they save white civilisation. They laughed at our motions to call only white men's schools "Colleges of Education." They scoffed when the Vrouefederasie begged them not to open the floodgates to a bastard nation. The day of reckoning had to come.

And come it did. The people of the Transvaal rallied magnificently to the threat to white supremacy. Year after year, our vote increased. Throughout

the province, our growing band of militants stumped from meeting to meeting, from stoep to stoep, campaigning for our cause. In 1936, Potgietersrust took the lead, voting solid for the cause of "Colleges of Education". Four years later, twelve towns followed. We could sense the rising tide. Our offices were besieged by delegations of local patriots, urging us to make the change from "Teachers Training Colleges", before it was too late.

Our little band of Provincial Councilors fought like men inspired. While others fought their tinpot wars against the great German people, we fought for Colleges of Education. Always the need to keep South Africa a white man's land, and the Transvaal a white man's province was foremost in our minds. It is all there on the record. Ninety-seven hours of debate in 1941, before the SAP steamroller overwhelmed us. One hundred and fifty-five hours in 1943. Two hundred and twenty-seven in 1951. We knew that, with the people behind us, fighting as their forefathers had fought to beat back the outnumbering wave of black savages, our cause could not fail. And always, when our spirits would flag, there was Dominee Nicol to urge us on. "Did our women and children die in concentration camps" he would thunder, "that their sons should be educated in places of the same name as black men? Does the proud name of Nationalist mean nothing to you that you are prepared to sacrifice white men, made in the image of God, to a fate like that?" We would return to the fray, chastened and uplifted.

And now it is over, the long struggle which has taken the energies of some of

our finest Nationalist sons. Though the thromboses and the ulcers have been many, we have won through. Our majority on the Provincial Executive have finally carried the day, against the stubborn rearguard struggle of the SAP liberals. From now on — let the words ring out—black teachers will go only to Training Colleges, and whites to Colleges of Education.

"Joy it was in that dawn to be alive. But to be Nationalist was very heaven."

We who have grown old and weary in the cause of our people would dearly love, now, to lay down our swords. But for us — for all the followers of our great leader and inspirer, Dr. Daniel Malan, there can be no rest. Even now, in the flush of our victory, new foes are coming up to challenge us, headed by communism and the liberals. Already underground forces are at work, undermining our great principle of separate roads for white and black. Everywhere the sinister challenge to apartheid roads is being organised. Everywhere the black men are being incited to resist special roads of their own, on which no white man will be allowed to walk or drive. Everywhere fantastic allegations of madness are being levelled against us. There is no time for us to rest.

Back into the fray! We must fight again like men inspired for apartheid streets, separate but equal, to preserve the sacred European heritage. Let there be no cowardice or falling back by Nationalists in this hour of crisis. We in the Provincial Council will play our humble part for posterity on this, as we have on the matter of teachers' institutions.

# OLD ARTS ARE NEW WEAPONS

SAYS HILDA WATTS.

THE Bridge of Heaven — Peking's Tien Chiao — with its booths, stalls and motley amusements, was reserved for the pleasures of the poor. The well-to-do avoided it because of its dirt, beggary, down-and-outs and third-rate goods. Yet under the Bridge of Heaven flourished skilful performers of Tien Chiao — the magicians, tumblers, equilibrists, acrobats, sword dancers, jugglers.

There was the old man, over 70, who could make a 5-foot steel rod twirl in his hand like a propeller of light; and Hao Chu-wang, who can throw a 30-pound porcelain vase into the air and catch it on the point of its falling, either on the crown of his head or the tip of his thumb, where it rests securely, or spins like a top with a twist of his neck or wrist.

There is Kuan Yu-ho, the weight-lifter who holds a 500-pound block of stone on his hands and feet while four strong men wrestle and tumble on it. And the magician who shakes out a square cloth — and from its folds an 18-course banquet complete with a huge flower bowl; twelve red lanterns rise out of the bowl and a pair of doves flutter out like flowers. Cards and ducks disappear into thin air. Bowls of water and spinning plates on the ends of silver wands seem to defy the law of gravity.

Today the artists of Tien Chiao have been lifted out of their poverty, to form an honoured troupe that has toured not only China, but many countries of Europe, astonishing and delighting people everywhere with their skill, ingenuity and craftsmanship in entertainment.

These are peoples' artists — unknown once, except to the poor, like themselves; honoured today in an amazing new flourishing of folk arts that has swept the whole of China.

## SHADOW THEATRE

And what a variety of forms these folk arts take!

There is the Shadow Theatre, for instance. A square of white cloth stretched between bamboo sticks, a trunk of 'props', a lantern to throw shadows on the screen. With cymbals, drum, flute and violin, the Shadow Theatre would arrive in a village and the shadows on the screen would enact famous folk tales and dramas.

The Shadow Theatre has a thousand years of history behind it. The figures are skilfully cut out of donkey-skin

parchment. Embroideries and hair, the leaves of trees and ferns, are indicated by delicately cut tracery. The bodies are supported on thin fillets of bamboo held in the operator's hand. The movable hands and limbs are manipulated with thin threads. The parchment is tinted with rich colours which have a rare translucence when thrown onto the screen.

As war and the reactionary Kuomintang regimes threw China into increasing chaos and misery, the Shadow Theatre disappeared. Finally in all Peking only one company was left, and when they could no longer pay gangsters 'protection money' they too disappeared, their leader Lu Ching-ta becoming a pedicab driver, his company returning to villages and farms.

But one rainy evening in Peking, after the liberation, two professors and a writer came to Lu Ching-ta's house and invited him to work at the Central Institute of Fine Arts. He gathered his company together again, and soon the Shadow Theatre was operating again with many new tales in its repertoire.

## PING-CHU THEATRE

The theatre in China has many forms, many traditions. There is, for instance, the *ping chu* style, which is a dramatic narrative to music. It is a true peoples' art, the stories, the language, the atmosphere all coming from the hearts of working people. Old theatre-goers in Peking decried *ping-chu* as 'provincial', but the people loved it, for it had a lusty strength of its own. *Ping-chu* is just one more of the forms of peoples' art that have received new attention since liberation, and many regular troupes perform in Peking and other North China cities.

## OPERA

Famous Peking Opera is traditionally played by men, even the female characters. It has no sets or scenery. It is one of the most conventional of "theatrical" theatres in the world. The stage is quite bare, except for a curtain backdrop and tables and chairs which are made to serve many purposes as stage props. Various flags and symbolic objects are used to indicate settings or actions. A whisk of horse-hair denotes a spirit; a whip — a horse; two flags with wheels on them — a chariot.

Traditional, well-known gestures indicate the opening or closing of doors,

riding a horse or entering a room. A letter is written on non-existent paper with an imaginary pen.

Shaoshing Opera (from East China) on the other hand, is performed entirely by women, giving a certain ethereal softness to its whole atmosphere. It stands midway between the 'conventional' theatre such as the Peking Opera and the modern 'realistic' theatre.

While its sets are three-dimensional and illusionistic, there is a slightly theatrical exaggeration about them. Skies are the bluest of blue, the perspectives extremely deep. Costumes, on the other hand, are symbolic or conventional, not realistic. But make-up is natural, showing off the fine features of the women of Shaoshing, noted for their beauty.

Shaoshing Opera troupes never dared risk a tour of Peking before the liberation, as it was disparaged by the high-brow critics. Today the attitude of public and critics is very different, and Peking applauded the shows of the Shaoshing Opera with real appreciation for the beauty and originality of its performances.

## BALLAD-SINGERS

China's countryside is rich in songs, particularly ballads with or without musical accompaniment. Kwangsi is outstanding in this, and today new ballads are sung with new themes of contemporary revolutionary life. Each village has its own ballad singers, who compose impromptu songs on all festive occasions.

One famous ballad-singer is known simply as *Shanko*—"Ballad". He composes ballads quickly on any theme.

In September 1951, a ballad propaganda team was formed. They studied land reform policy and composed ballads about it, then toured the villages collecting new material as they went. In Lungta Village, *Shanko* sang about the crimes of the local landlord despot. "Every word is true!" cried the peasants. Another singer told how his brother had been killed by a landlord and how he himself had slaved for ten years as his serf. Singer and audience were moved to tears. "A hundred hours of straight propaganda work can't compare with two hours of your singing," said the cadres who were helping land reform in the district.

Many of the peasants' ballads have now been recorded and published to the delight of city folk.

## PEOPLES' ARTISTS

Stories of these peoples' artists — magicians and acrobats, ballad-singers and actors, opera performers and puppeteers, are told in a gay, illustrated book, "Folk Arts of New China." There is not space to write here of the many fascinating folk arts you can read about in this book. The players of the Waist Drum, for instance, a characteristically Chinese instrument, considered 'low brow' by reactionary ruling classes, now taking a new place in New China, its beat the symbol of victory.

Or the fascination of "egg books" — little books that were called "egg books" because they were as cheap as eggs, and found in almost every peasant household. There are fifty-odd egg-book publishing houses in Peking today, and more than ten million copies have been sold in a single year. Such famous writers as Lao Sheh (or 'Shaw'), who wrote 'Rickshaw Boy' and 'The Yellow Storm' now write short stories for the egg-books.

Or read about the blind minstrels, singing new ballads in the tea houses of Peking. After liberation they were gathered up from poverty and backstreets, trained at the Blind Artists' Training School, taught new ballads and melodies. Now they are in big demand at concerts and entertainments, and two blind minstrels were invited to participate in the National Conference of Writers and Artists.

You will read here the secret of the tremendous popularity of the play, opera and film "The White-Haired Girl", and how the finished version of the story was developed. You will be enthralled with the story of the Peking Puppets— who had disappeared entirely, and only

found again after liberation after many months of search. You will learn something about the beautiful scissors cuts, traditional dances many based on pastoral themes, plays, local dramas, New Year Pictures.

Two impressions are obtained from this book. The first is the tremendous, exciting and beautiful flowering of folk arts since the liberation of China, almost overwhelming in its range and development.

The second is the extent to which China's folk arts have been woven around China's changes — each working on the other to enrich the life of the people. No weapon proved so potent and effective as the peoples' songs, dramas and dances.

China, of course, draws much of this great wealth of peoples' art from its bountiful and ancient cultural heritage, for China's civilisation has developed through thousands of years.

But Africa, too, has its folk arts, and already in a small way they have been used to develop our own struggle. Let us not underestimate the importance of the little songs composed by defiers when they were in jail, nor should we forget the impromptu plays acted at crowd meetings. Won't some of these bring the message of the Congress of the People to many places in the countryside, and through their humour and mimicry become new weapons in the struggle for freedom?

Culture and art flourish when people are free. But it is South Africans who are today working, struggling and organising for freedom who will lay the foundations for our own folk arts, our own cultural treasures of the future.

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