

CIVIL RIGHTS

PC16/2/14/15



News Letter

(Box 3807, Cape Town)

May, 1957

REMEMBER!

Public Meeting in the City Hall, Tuesday, May 7 at 8.15 p.m. when the Acting Principal (Prof. R. W. James) and Prof. D. V. Cowen will put the University's case against apartheid. The Chancellor (ex-Chief Justice Centlivres) will be in the chair. Come and bring your friends.

Advance Notice

Mr STANLEY UYS (correspondent of the "Sunday Times") will be the speaker at a meeting organised by the Institute of Citizenship in the Mowbray Town Hall on Monday, May 27 on "The Congress of the People and the Freedom Charter". This subject is of particular interest in relation to the Treason Trials. Time, 8 p.m.

Withholding of Documents

The Secretary of the Cape Bar Council informs us that a deputation of two Senior members of that Council has interviewed the Minister and made representations to him on behalf of the General Council of the Bar with regard to certain aspects of the Police Amendment Bill. He says, "We understand that the Minister is giving these representations his serious consideration."

We hope so!

Having it both ways

Mr Strijdom recently stated in Pretoria that "the South African nation or state (♁) could not allow the universities to spread doctrines that were perilous to the future of the white race", and that the freedom and independence of the universities could only be "subject to certain important conditions".

"Die Transvaler" comments on the revised Separate University Education Bill: "the only remaining restriction is ... that non-Europeans may not enrol themselves at such universities ... (this) leaves the universities free to enrol any student. The universities' freedom is, therefore, not restricted." (Italics ours)

This is, of course, as the "Cape Times" points out, a completely untrue statement, as any university enrolling a non-European student would be "an accessory to the perpetration of a crime and would be guilty of an offence and subject to the same penalties as the principal offender, i.e. the non-white student..."

The Truth about the "Churches" Clause

Professor B. B. Keet, in a letter to "Die Kerkbode", says that this clause (29c) of the Native Laws Amendment Bill is "opposed to the autonomy of the Church", and that he fails to understand how the D.R.C. delegation to the Minister "could declare that this contentious clause was not in opposition" to the principles the Church Council had laid down. The principle of the Bill, he says, "remains the same - according to the Minister himself".

Dr Ben Marais, of Pretoria, has said that no reformed theologian would agree that any fellow-believer could be debarred from worship in the house of God - and it did not help matters to sidetrack issues. "The Church is the body of Christ and not yours and mine. How dare you say that others cannot worship in that house?"

No wonder the "Friend", declaring that "the principle of State interference in religious freedom is enshrined" in the Bill, adds:

"Even if the Bill were to remain a dead letter on the Statute Book for years, with its powers never invoked, their mere existence would make it a blot on the record of a Christian country."

The Bill's real motive

Dr Verwoerd, in replying to the debate on the Bill, according to the "Cape Times", said, inter alia, that

"it was of the utmost importance to South Africa that social integration was not allowed to develop. The possibility of the development of social integration by a general admixture in clubs and institutions and welfare associations was a danger in South Africa. He was completely in favour of welfare work amongst the Native people (!), but that work must be taken over to an increasing extent by the Natives themselves...."

"It was not necessary to maintain contact with the non-Europeans by means of joint meetings and gatherings. In South Africa a position could not be tolerated where all sorts of multi-racial organisations were established. This conflicted with apartheid. (Italics ours)

"Forging new shackles"

Dr D. L. Smit, speaking on the Bill in the Assembly, said that it denied freedom on principle. In addition to the interference with freedom of worship, it would deprive urban Africans "of some of the last vestiges of their freedom". He referred particularly to:-

- (a) the vastly increased number of officials who could demand pass and other documents from Africans;
- (b) the penalties imposed if such documents could not be immediately produced on demand;
- (c) the extra taxation to be imposed on urban Africans to provide school buildings;
- (d) the power given to the Minister to decide in which classes of work the Africans might be employed;
- (e) the prohibition on Africans carrying on any trade or profession without a licence.

We say again - suppose it happened to you! Imagine having to live under such shackling regulations - and these are only a few extra ones!

Consciences stirring at Potchefstroom

Professor L. J. du Plessis, of Potchefstroom University, has told a gathering at Klerksdorp that it was high time the Bantu were told that their national aspirations would be fulfilled when the time was ripe, otherwise they would turn to Russia. The Eastern power, he said, was promising the non-white nations the freedom which the West did not give them. In conflict with its principles, the Western world dominated the non-white nations.... In South Africa the Natives were becoming a nation and striving only for the same things for which the Afrikaner people strove. When the Afrikaner leaders rebelled, they were heroes. When the Bantu leaders did so, they were Communists and agitators. (italics ours) ... The Natives were not interested in better education. As they wanted was freedom ... The time had come to negotiate with the true leaders of the Bantu and to obtain their co-operation - first for the development of the Reserves, later in other spheres. Prof. du Plessis also said that in due course there would be no choice but to grant the Coloured people full citizenship in White (?) South Africa.

At a congress of the Afrikaanse Calvinistiese Bond in Potchefstroom Prof. du Plessis, Prof. J. H. Chris Coetzee and others said that unless drastic steps were taken to create new perspectives for the non-whites, especially the Bantu, a crisis situation would develop within a few years. One speaker, saying that the Bantu would repudiate "white Christianity" if the relations between White and

Bantu

/ were not good, added: "We will have to lay aside our eternal fear of the Bantu and show them that we mean well with them."

Professor Coetzee said that ways had to be found for White and non-White to meet in their own and opposition circles in sincere and personal exchange of ideas on the common problem. (What would Dr Verwoerd say to that?) "Precisely Calvinism demands that the old-fashioned idea of the Native in his place (i.e. only in the kitchen, only in unskilled labour, only as subordinate servant of the European apart from the European's behaviour), of no education for the Bantu (for educated Natives are supposed to be lazy, bad, impudent, etc.), no political say at all (for it is supposed to be dangerous for the European) will have to be revised... Apartheid in the sense of a continuing horizontal separation with the European on top and the Bantu under the line of separation is increasingly untenable in practice. In approach and in practice we will have to change to a situation where the dividing line will be a vertical one. It is based, literally and figuratively, on the territorial: a homeland and fatherland of one's own for each."

Of course the African might not agree with Professor Coetzee about the desirability of a separate fatherland! But it is at least heartening that the Professor sees the necessity for an exchange of ideas on common problems!

Subscriptions

We hope next month to be able to send reminders to those of our members who have not yet paid their 1957 subs, and apologise for not doing so sooner. But if it's on your conscience - why wait for a reminder?

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* DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE * * * * *

* UN I V E R S I T Y * * * * *

* A P A R T H E I D * * * * *

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