

# CIVIL



# RIGHTS



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## News Letter

Second thoughts on eating (Cape Times, 21-22-24/8/79; 6/9/79;  
Sunday Times, 19/8/79, 2/9/79)

The Secretary for Community Development is now prepared to consider applications for open restaurants "sympathetically". As a result an increasing number of restaurants in Cape Town and, we hope, elsewhere are likely to be open to all. No wonder that the recent segregation move caused "anger and bitterness" among coloured customers and employees.

If apartheid is really as moribund as some highly placed members of the Government say it is, permits should not be necessary. We hope the necessary legislation to remove this requirement will be passed early next session.

It is particularly deplorable that "complaints by whites" should have inspired the Department of Community Development to enforce apartheid in a city restaurant. The right of admission should rest solely with the restaurants which should, as Die Burger suggests, follow Mr P.W. Botha's recommendation of "the elimination of hurting and needlessly discriminatory measures that could cause bad feelings".

Racial friction (Cape Times, 27/8/79)

While the Railways are reported to be "phasing out" apartheid notices, an operator has stated that where racial friction might be caused by their removal, the signs will remain. And on the most important issue, desegregation of railway carriages, again an Act of Parliament is necessary. Why cannot the people who cause "racial friction" be dealt with in the same way as other disturbers of the peace?

Provincial discrimination (Cape Times, 4/9/79)

Church and other private schools in the Cape and Natal, apparently, do not face opposition from the Provincial Administrations to the admission of black, coloured and Indian pupils: but of 5 Anglican church schools on the Reef, only two are non-racial.

Why should the others not be allowed similar liberty?

Who should decide? (Cape Times, 6/9/79)

Mr Alwyn Schibusch, Minister of the Interior, is reported

to have told his party congress in Bloemfontein that "the National Party will have the final say" in the acceptance or rejection of aspects of the constitutional proposals now being investigated by a parliamentary select committee under his chairmanship; that is, apparently, that the Party will "have another chance to"ratify all deviations" from the principles agreed on by the National Party congresses.

Irrespective of what the rest of South Africa thinks?

The Cabinet has of course, as Mr Schlebusch said, the right to accept or reject any part of the select committee's recommendations. But under what law is this right extended to congresses of the National Party - and to no one else? A national convention should have the final say.

This makes nonsense of Mr Schlebusch's view, expressed at the same congress, that South Africa's security lies in "good human relations". How does he expect to maintain such relations if only one group has the final decision in matters of nationwide importance?

#### Adult education and unemployment (Cape Times, 29/8/79)

In a thoughtful inaugural lecture at UCT recently on "Adult Education - Action and Theory", Professor Clive Millar said that "in South Africa the issue of educational provision is inescapably the issue of citizenship". He doubted whether extended opportunities for adult education would be acceptable to blacks if they were seen as "alternative to white formal education or as compensating for the lack of it". Education for blacks, he said, was "an act of compromise" in the face of overwhelming political and economic realities. The situation would become explosive if the basis for this accommodation with political and economic reality was seriously upset by a situation of massive unemployment for black matriculants, such as that now existing "ironically as the result of a more generous provision of high schools in urban areas following the events of 1976".

#### Not only in sport (Cape Times, 22/8/79)

The S.A. Teachers' Association, while welcoming sporting contact between schools, has pointed out that "joint participation in cultural and scholastic activities is more likely to promote dialogue and consequently better race relations". Sporting contact (and, presumably, other contact) should, says the Association, be left entirely in the hands of the schools concerned.

#### District Six (Cape Times, 30/8/79)

Those concerned with the future of District Six (now to be re-named Zonnebloem) must be deeply disappointed that the plan for

a "white" group area has reached the pages of the press in a presumably final form. Those who care about it, however, are presenting a petition to the Minister concerned which we hope will be widely supported. It is still possible that the Government might have a miraculous change of heart. The petition will have the support in principle of Cape Town's City Council and its newly elected Mayor, Councillor Kreiner.

The Churches' Judgment on ... prisoners' right to education  
("Reality", September 1979)

We quote with appreciation a vigorous statement by the Diakonia Council (which consists of official representatives of the African Methodist Episcopal, African Presbyterian, Anglican, Congregational, Evangelical Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic Churches) in Durban on May 29 regarding prisoners' right to study:

"The Diakonia Council, believing in the God-given right of all people to read and study, and noting that in terms of the Regulation of Prisons Act of 1959 (as amended) the Commissioner exercises his discretion as to which prisoners may study and at what levels, and recalling Our Lord's words that what is done to those in prison is done to him (Matt. 25), and the instruction of the Letter to the Hebrews that we should "Remember those in prison as though in prison with them" (Hebrews 13.3), urges all members of our member churches:

1. to support the campaign for amendment to the legislation so that all prisoners will have a legally-recognised right to study, and
2. to give whatever practical support they can to prisoners wishing to study - e.g. by making contributions towards the cost of studies by correspondence or for the purchase of texts".

This is a heartening event, being (as far as our memory serves us) the first appeal by churches jointly to their members since the publication of the League's first pamphlet, "The Churches' Judgment on Apartheid", in 1949.

"Black people in white areas" (Cape Times, 10/9/79)

Our cautious optimism regarding change in the Government's attitude towards urban blacks has received a cold douche from pronouncements at the National Party's Free State congress by Dr Koornhof and, even more, by his Deputy Minister, Dr George Morrison (a gentleman not previously noteworthy for "liberal" attitudes). Both speakers discounted the idea of including the urban blacks in the new constitutional plan: Dr Morrison even reject-

ed the idea of their discussing political issues in municipal councils. Dr Koornhof has reasserted the Verwoerdian doctrine that blacks may exercise political rights only through their homelands. No suggestion, of course, that either urban blacks or the authorities in the homelands should be consulted on this point!

### Those Bannings (Cape Times, 24/8/79)

PEN International has entered the field of protest against the almost daily banning of publications, especially those of the university press, but including a number of other works by well-known authors such as Nadine Gordimer.

"In some cases," says PEN, "the publications board has given detailed reasons for the banning, none of which are acceptable to the writers of South Africa, who continue to claim the right to free expression in the literary arts ..."

The Students' Representative Councils of UCT and Maritzburg have claimed that the board has "no case against the student press", as it has never been charged with contravening any legislation relating to the press.

Professor John Dugard has pointed out that "the system of censorship in recent times has been directed particularly at publications judged to be politically undesirable", especially student publications.

Is not this the hub of the matter? People who are accused of breaking a law should be brought to court and charged with a specific offence - not muzzled after a closed inquiry.

### Hope for conscientious objectors (Cape Times, 10/9/79)

The League welcomes wholeheartedly the formation of the Voluntary Service Corps in Cape Town. While membership is not confined to conscientious objectors, indications are that such membership may be recognised as an alternative to military service. This idea of a special service corps, first put forward in 1974, will be considered by the Department of Defence when it has "been in operation long enough to establish a pattern of service".

### New Books

We commend to our readers the following recent issues from the Ravan Press: "South Africa Transit", by Manfred Jurgenson; "Die Vinger van God", by Allen Boezak and "The First South African", a play by Fatima Dike. Prices, respectively, R3.90, R4.50 and R2.75 (no doubt plus postage and possibly sales tax). More information from Ravan Press, 409 Dunwell, 35 Jorissen Street, Braamfontein 2017.