

# CIVIL



# RIGHTS

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~~News Letter~~ District Six - a call for action (Cape Times, 19-20/11/81)

We respectfully commend the New Republic Party for sponsoring a public petition to the Government "to respect the expressed wishes of the people of Cape Town and declare District Six an 'open' area". We must, however, express doubts about the suggested requirement of "minimum standards", which is not attached to residence in any other part of Cape Town. And who would establish or enforce such "social norms"? Surely, in a civilised society, people may live wherever they choose if they can afford to do so? As the Cape Times says, economic considerations should be the only criterion.

Another probe? (Sunday Times, 22/11/81)

It is not surprising that the Union of Teachers' Associations of South Africa should react in disillusionment at the Government's "negative reaction" towards the recommendations of the De Lange Commission for one open education system. As Mr Franklin Sonn, President of UTASA, commented, the rejection of one open education system "in fact, re-establishes apartheid education and puts us back where we started". The government, says Mr Sonn, "has cut the heart out of the De Lange Report."

Mr Van den Heever, assistant secretary of UTASA, said: "UTASA presented its case, with clear documentation, to the De Lange Commission. To now ask UTASA to repeat these demands ... and to submit its documentation to a newly instituted interim council dominated by bureaucrats is tantamount to adding insult to injury." UTASA, he said, has made it patently clear that it rejects equal, but separate education as "a contradiction in terms". UTASA, he said, believes that equal educational opportunity "can only develop in a political system in which all people participate in a just sharing of power". "We want one single non-racial education system for all South Africans," says Mr Van den Heever.

We hope that those who agree with UTASA - as we do - will respond to the Government's invitation to comment in no uncertain terms.

It is deplorable - though not altogether surprising - that the Federal Council of Teachers' Associations should have adopted

what Mr Van den Heever describes as a "over my dead body stance" towards the desegregation of education even before the De Lange Commission had completed its investigations.

"Rapport" and the Rabie Commission (Argus, 9/11/81)

In August, 1979, the Government appointed a six-man commission to inquire into security legislation. So far, there has been no news that the Commission has reported, still less what its findings may have been.

"Rapport" has asked that these should be released as soon as possible and has commented strongly on the undesirability of people being held, often without the knowledge of their families of their whereabouts, and with no reference to the courts.

The paper urged that people should, wherever possible, be brought before a court so that their cases should be fittingly judged. It felt that in evidence to the commission by legal men there would be recommendations on, for example, wider access to detainees, and that such people should be charged or released as soon as possible.

It goes without saying that, if the detention without trial system is to continue, this is the very least that justice requires.

Says the Argus: "Arbitrary arrest and detention without trial are a total affront to common decency, human rights and the essence of democracy. The sooner the laws that allow this are repealed, the better."

The evil of Group Areas in Natal (Sunday Times, 15/11/81)

A hundred-year-old community, St Wendolin's near Durban, are being threatened with eviction because their land has been zoned for Indian occupation.

They are to be moved from an area where they can live off the land, and where their roots are deep, to a "concrete jungle" in two townships, with increased rents and transport costs.

The director of Diakonia has pointed out that this will "dramatically impoverish the people" and that "this predominantly Christian village will be broken up and exposed to all the evils of township life". The present family system at St Wendolin's "ensures supervision of children and care of the aged. Perhaps the saddest aspect of all is the bitterness that is being sown in peace-loving people who just want to be left alone..."

We can only hope the Government will think again. This move is hardly consistent with its reported acceptance of the Viljoen

Committee Report, which, says the Sunday Times, "contains sweeping recommendations to overcome the critical shortage of housing in black urban areas".

What the right hand doeth ... (Sunday Times Extra, 15/11/81)

In this connection, it is pleasing to record that the Department of Co-operation and Development has made available over R200 000 for the first stage of a project to provide sport, recreational and business facilities in Guguletu, in liaison with the Cape Town Community Council which represents Nyanga, Langa and Guguletu. A Small Business Development Corporation is to be formed to finance and advise black enterprise.

Why not? (Cape Times, 21/11/81)

A commentator in the Burger recently reported that "an increasing number of government supporters" wanted the Immorality and Mixed Marriages Acts to be scrapped, and that there was increasing support for the idea of a shared parliament for white, coloured and Indian people. He pointed out that "the creation of three parliaments would probably lead to a repetition of the history of the Coloured Persons Representative Council".

The column noted that both laws, which harmed South Africa internally and internationally, had been repealed in SWA/Namibia "without much repercussion".

Non-racialism in Durban (Sunday Times, 22/11/81)

The Durban City Council has decided by 20 votes to 3 to refuse grants-in-aid to racially exclusive organisations, including the free use of council-owned premises. It has introduced complete parity and service conditions for all races within the municipal services, and has applied to integrate the city's bus service.

The Mayor said that already, after a cultural organisation with a racial constitution had been refused the free use of a committee room, it had changed its constitution.

"Although there are those who do not have the franchise," she said, "the council still represents everyone and we have a duty to all the people of Durban."

Can't have it both ways (Sunday Times, 22/11/81)

Bus apartheid in Durban does not pay. The deficit on white bus services this year is said to be R1½ million, whereas black services are viable.

In 1950, there were said to be 150 cars per 100 head of white population. Now there are 400 cars for the same number of people.

The City Council, quite rightly, feels its concern is for those who do not have independent transport.

The Mayor says that unless the services are integrated (an application to do this has been refused, but has been renewed), the stage will soon be reached where there is no white bus service. "Economics", said the Mayor, "are a great leveler, and the forces of economics can force change."

Pandering to the verkramptes? (Cape Times, 17/11/81)

The Government has appointed yet another Commission (under Mr Justice Jan Strydom, and entitled a technical committee) to investigate the Group Areas Act and related legislation. This follows on a recommendation by the President's Council when its proposals about Pageview and District Six were turned down.

The Minister has said that the Commission's terms of reference were framed "in the acceptance and maintenance of the principle that the South African community can best be ordained and served on a basis of the traditional way of life of residential separation ..."

The Committee's investigation, he said, is to be "with a view to the recommendation of amendments/adaptations/rationalisation and streamlining" of that Act as well as "related acts such as the Slums Act, the Separate Amenities Act, the Community Development Act, the Housing Act, proclamations and regulations issued in terms of the Acts and related ordinances".

The Leader of the Opposition has said that the Act should not be "streamlined" or modernised, but scrapped - a view we share wholeheartedly.

Mr Eglin, moreover, has pointed out that the Commission does not include a single coloured, Indian or black South African, nor is there any sign of a representative of the private sector.

Will the Government never learn?

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\* WE WISH ALL OUR READERS, NONE THE LESS, A \*  
\* HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND - WE HOPE - A BETTER \*  
\* NEW YEAR IN 1982. \*  
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