

CIVIL



RIGHTS



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News Letter

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To whom it may concern

Our very sincere thanks to all who have sent us their 1982 subscription - and a gentle reminder to those who are still intending to do so! Please let us know if the appropriate receipt fails to reach you.

Our thanks also to all who have sent names of possible new members. More of these would be welcome.

A correction (January issue, p.1, item 2)

In our January issue (on page 4) it was stated that the League organised a conference on conscientious objection in October 1980. This should of course have read "October 1970". Our apologies!

Urbanisation by 2000 A.D. (Cape Times, 20/1/82)

The Cape Times quotes figures from a recent report released by the Human Sciences Research Council which need to be faced squarely by government, municipal authorities and public alike. For instance:

53% of the South African population are already urbanised. This includes 81% of whites, 91% of Asians, 74% of coloured people, 38% of Africans.

The HSRC report predicts that 74% of Africans will be living in cities by the year 2000 (about 21 million).

For the sake of both town and country we hope the Government will take the situation seriously and act accordingly. The myth of temporary black "sojourners" in our cities must be abandoned.

Building for peace (Cape Times, 29/1/82; Sunday Times, 31/1/82)

The Sunday Times rightly commends the recommendations of the Viljoen Commission on housing for Soweto, and points out that their implementation would involve the building of 45 houses a day there between now and 1987. The Commission outlines the

necessary action, and says: "These steps need to be taken as a matter of highest priority."

In South Africa as a whole, 168 000 houses are said to be immediately needed.

Says the Sunday Times: "It is only when black urban dwellers have a stake in their own homes that there will be real hope for peace and stability in our society."

And please, Mr Kotze, don't forget the Cape Peninsula!

These Koornhof Bills (Cape Times, 5-6/1/82)

In this connection blacks must await with painful interest the reintroduction of the three Bills which Dr Koornhof introduced and later withdrew last year.

The Minister in a TV interview hinted that the revised Bills would ease influx control and enable blacks to sell their labour on a freer basis without having to put up with "unnecessary worries" about reference books.

It was, said Dr Koornhof, his ideal and that of the Government to create a climate in which the permanent black residents of South Africa and their families could feel that they were being justly treated. But for practical purposes, he said, it would be very difficult to abolish all forms of influx control.

In this connection it is important to remember (and we hope that Dr Koornhof will do so) the reported statement of Chief Gqoqa Buthelezi last year that the idea that only blacks were divided into those who were qualified to be in any part of the land and those who were not qualified to be there "went against the grain and was completely unacceptable".

After "due consideration" (Cape Times, 29/1/82)

Except for ten specified halls, the Minister of Community Development, Mr Pen Kotze, has refused the application of Cape Town City Council to have municipal facilities such as caravan sites, swimming pools, public parks and sports fields and halls opened to all races - and restrictions are still imposed on the use even of those opened. The Minister has moreover said that the "concessions" made could be withdrawn at any time.

What price local autonomy, Mr Kotze?

Wh. detention? (Cape Times, 28/1/82)

The practice of detention without trial is increasingly being brought to the notice of the public in the press as instances of it become known. According to figures given by Mrs

Open universities? (Cape Times, 28/1/82, 5/2/82)

The higher education of urban blacks has been the subject of investigation by the Retief Commission, set up in 1979.

Though the commission's report has not yet been published, the Minister of Education has now released some of its recommendations, including the following:

- * The admission of blacks to white universities be governed by a quota system, particularly in "popular" courses;
- * Individual university councils be allowed to decide admission policy;
- * Universities, as cultural centres, should have the right to determine their own identity and character;
- * "Protection" was no longer necessary for black universities, and students should therefore be granted a greater freedom in the choice of university;
- * Enforced segregation to be replaced by "voluntary differentiation".

The committee also said, however, that "an overwhelming majority" of witnesses before it had pleaded for a black university for urban blacks. (It is not stated whether these witnesses were black or white.)

Our own President, Sir Richard Luyt, former principal and vice-chancellor of U.C.T., told a national conference on education at Grahamstown recently that it would be "an exercise in futility" to expect the committee to remedy fundamental faults in South African society. It was a question, he said, whether the widespread majority public dissatisfaction on education could be overcome within the continuance of enforced racial separateness and "whether, within a system of racial separateness, there is likely to be sufficient drive and sacrifice to achieve full equality". The committee, he pointed out, had not been asked by the government to seek answers on political or other "non-educational" grounds, but to adopt a scientific approach.

To expect the report - "exciting and progressive as I believe it to be", said Sir Richard, "to achieve full equality in education while major inequalities continue in society is, believe, being unrealistic."

We have been warned!