The Black Sash Die Swart Serp

The bare facts of the forced removal of people in South Africa are quite incredible; at least 216,000 people have been moved under Group Areas in the Johannesburg area alone; at least 73,000 from "Black Spots"; at least 9,250 are to be moved in Natal alone before August this year; at least 219,000 people were endorsed out between 1959 and 1965 from only a few of the main urban areas; at least 203,500 people from the urban areas have been resettled in the "homelands"; and 1,000 people were moved last month around Sibasa, because Shangaans and Venda were living together there — "a regrouping rather than a removal', according to the Bantu Commissioner. We know that this figure of half to three quarters of a million people underestimates the total number who have been pushed around, who have had their homes taken away from them and who have simply been dumped somewhere else.

This contempt for human beings, the arrogance of this kind of government action is beyond belief, yet the misery and bitterness is there for all to see. Some of these removals are carried out with no concern whatsoever for the welfare of the people involved. There are many bleak and arid "resettlement villages", many transit camps and emergency camps where conditions are appalling and which are totally unsuited to the establishment of any community. Even if conditions are or could be improved, the principle involved is not affected.

There is no justification for taking people's homes away from them. It is wrong to push people around. It is wrong to force them to move. It is wrong to decree where these people must exist. It is utterly wrong that this violence is perpetrated by Whites in their arrogance towards people of different skin colour.

This does not happen in a Christian country. This does not happen in a civilized country. It does happen in South Africa.

DIE blote feite omtrent die gedwonge verskuiwing van mense in Suid-Afrika is waarlik ongelooflik; minstens 216,000 mense is alreeds in Johannesburg verskuiwe onder die Groepsgebiedewet; minstens 73,000 weg van „swart kolle"; minstens 9,250 sal verskuiwe word, slegs in Natal, voor Augustus van hierdie jaar; minstens 219,000 mense is uitgeëndosseer uit 'n paar van die hoof stadsgebiede tussen 1959 en 1965; minstens 203,500 mense uit stadsgebiede is hervestig in „tuis lande"; 1,000 mense is laas maand verskuiwe in die buurt van Sibasa omdat Venda's en Shangaans daar saam gewoon het — „ 'n hergroepering in plaas van 'n verskuiwing" volgens die Bantoe kommissaries. Ons weet dat hierdie syfers van tussen 'n half en driekwart miljoen die aantal mense onderskat, wat rondgeruk word, wat hul huise ontneem word en wat sommer êrens neergesmyt word.

Hierdie veragting vir menslike wesens, die hooghartigheid van hierdie soort regeringshandelswyse skyn moeilik om te glo, maar die ellende en bittere lyding is daar vir almal om dit te sien. Party van hierdie verskuiwings word uitgevoer sonder die minste inagneming van die welsyn van die mense wat getroffe word. Daar is baie kaal, verlate „hervestigingsdorpe", baie oorplasingskampe, baie noodhulpkampe waar toestande afskuwelik is en wat absoluut ongeskik is vir die stigting van 'n gemeenskap. Maar selfs as toestande kan verbeter of alreeds verbeter is, maak dit geen onderskeid aan die beginsel waaroor dit hier gaan nie.

Daar is geen regverdiging vir die wegneem van 'n mens se tuiste nie. Dit is onregverdig om mense rond te ruk. Dit is onregverdig om mense te dwing om te trek. Dit is onregverdig om te beveel waar hierdie mense moet probeer bestaan. Dit is absoluut onregverdig dat hierdie geweld gepleeg word deur blankes in hul hooghartige houding teenoor mense van ander gelaatskleur!

Soiets gebeur nie in 'n Christelike staat nie. Soiets gebeur nie in 'n beskaafde land nie. Soiets gebeur wel in Suid-Afrika.

"but you must not try to take a man's home away from him"

(B. J. Vorster)