

activity impossible. There are countless local authorities in the country who would be only too glad to concur with the Minister in his prohibition of mixed meetings. They would by no means all be Nationalist-controlled. There are a great many others which would probably not take the trouble to object to a Ministerial suggestion that such meetings should be banned—and without their objection within the specified time the Minister's hand is free. Even if a local authority felt strongly on the matter, events on the Rand in recent years have shown the Government to have scant scruple in bringing pressure to bear on municipalities who do not toe the "party line".

The dangers are very real, make no mistake. Government policy remains unchanged. If it has received a set-back, how long is it for? The remarks thrown across the floor by Nationalist back-benchers show what they think about the matter. They would like to see no mixing between White and non-White on any basis other than the one they approve so heartily—that of a master with his servant. The plans for separate universities go on. The power to interfere with the fundamental right of individuals to associate with whom they please is in the Minister's grasp. The fact that this power is not as extensive as he and his supporters would have liked it to be is a small mercy—but no more than that. If he finds this power inadequate he will look for more. Vigilance, not a feeling of relief, is the only safeguard against his taking it.

A TURN OF THE SCREW

WHEN Dr. Verwoerd first hinted last September at his plans to increase direct taxation on Africans we pointed out in *Contact* the very strong case which could be made out against any such increase. The passage of time has done nothing to modify the strength of this case. If anything, it has produced more data to add to its power.

Those who know best are well aware that the origins of the Alexandra boycott were economic. Time and Mr. Schoeman added a political flavour to it but the fact remains that most Africans in the areas affected by the fare increases felt that they simply could not afford to pay the extra twopence a day for which they were being asked. They preferred to walk, and proceeded to do so for over three months. As time went on the admission was made by the Chamber of Commerce, and other responsible opinion, that vast numbers of Africans on the Rand were not being paid a living wage. It is of interest that this admission was only made when the boycott had been continuing for some time. But the facts of the economic position of urban Africans on the Rand had been available for a long time. As long ago as 1954 the Institute of Race Relations carried out an investigation and published figures which showed only too clearly how far African incomes lagged behind the minimum required for a reasonable standard of living. These findings were fairly widely publicised. As far as we are aware nobody took any notice of them.

But the last few weeks have brought forth an even more damning indictment of the economic position of Africans in Johannesburg than the Race Relations survey. A cost consultant, conducting an investigation on behalf of the Johannesburg City Council, has found that the "absolute barest minimum" for *subsistence* for an African family in Johannesburg is £21 per month. This is what is needed to subsist, no more. The consultant tells us that "a much higher income is necessary to provide a fair and adequate living". The average total family income for an African family in Johannesburg lies between £10 16s. 8d. and £15 3s. 3d. according to statistics compiled by the non-European Affairs Department of the Johannesburg Municipality. These, as near as can be gauged, are the shocking facts of life—if one can use such a word—for Africans in Johannesburg. Many families earn barely *half* of what they would need to subsist at the lowest level. Many more fall hopelessly short of earning enough to maintain themselves in health, let alone to enjoy "a fair and adequate living". And what is true of Johannesburg is true to a lesser or greater extent of the other large urban centres of the Union. The yawning gap is everywhere. Employers have known about it for years but have conveniently looked the other way.

It is into this horrifying state of affairs that Dr. Verwoerd, the benevolent father of the African people, will once more intrude his smiling presence, distributing blessings to his admiring children. At his suggestion the Minister of Finance will raise the "poll tax" on every African over the age of 18 by 50 per cent. People earning £15 to £20 a month—just on the verge of pulling their families out of the slough of malnutrition—will have to pay more.

Women earning over £15 will start to pay tax for the first time. As the income rises so will the tax rise until the African earns enough to come under the provisions of the ordinary income tax. He will then pay that tax on exactly the same basis as any other member of the South African community.

There would be no point in repeating all the arguments against "special" taxation for members of a particular group. Suffice it to say that Africans who, if they belonged to any other group, would be regarded as too poor to pay any taxes at all, will now have to pay more than they used to. The principle that the rich should be taxed to pay for services for the poor will be flouted—the poor will pay for their own services. But these people are not just poor in the ordinary sense of the word. The new taxes will not simply mean a few less cinemas, a little less fun. They will mean that a man who cannot feed his children properly will have to feed them less. They will mean that a man who must watch his children go cold in winter will have to watch them go colder still. They will mean that a man who must take his son from school long before he would really like to, will have to take him away even sooner. These are the blessings which the Government distributes. These are the services of which they boast. This is the way in which they dispense their lofty calling of guardianship. Why should they be surprised if we, and the rest of the world, regard them with a somewhat jaundiced eye?

Ugomboloqwane ka Dr. Verwoerd

UKUSUKELA mdla kuthunyelwa leliphepha kumalungu kulenyanga edlule isingeniso somthetho okuthiwa iNative Laws Amendment Bill sesiphendulwe kanengana. Abantu abanengi kabakwazi loko.

Ekungenisweni kwawo kokuqala sasithi lesingeniso koba icala elinokujeziswa uma kungenziwa umhlangano edolobheni onomAfrika phakathi engavumanga uNgqongqotshe weNdabazabantu. Kayikho inhlangotho engabe imiswe ngokomthetho uma ingenziwa engavumanga uDr. Verwoerd, noma ngabe ingeyenkonzelo yesonto, noma ingeyepolitiki noma kuyimbuthano nje.

Kuthe uma sekwaziswa ngesingeniso esisha abantu abanengi kabhsqaka kakhulu labo abakholwa ukuthi ukuze inhlalakahle kulelizwe ibekhona kufanele izizwe zonke zibungazelane. AmaSonto awukhuza awubabaza, neBandla leNhlalakahle lauhlaba laulaula ukhosi khona ePalamende ngomlomo wabakhulumeli balo nakuwo amaphephandaba. Lokho kwamenza uDr. Verwoerd ukuba acabange kanengi. Wanguqula okokuqala, usebuye futhi wanguqula okwesibili. Uma ke kasenako ukubuye aguquke futhi, kusho ukuthi umthetho usuzoma kanje:

Ngalomthetho awungenisayo uDr. Verwoerd wobe usethole amandla okuqanda umAfrika angayi esontweni elisedolobheni noma elingaphandle kwemdawo ahlala kuyo, uma ebona ukuthi ukuya kwomAfrika khona kosusa uthuli. Kanako noko ukukwenza loko uma uKopeletsheni engavumi. Futhi uDr. Verwoerd wothola amandla okuvumbela umAfrika angayi emhlanganweni osedolobheni uma ebona ukuthi kosusa uthuli. Kanti nalapho kofuneka kuqala ezweni noKopeletsheni wakhona. Uma uKopeletsheni engavumi ngeke enza lutho. Uma evuma woba usethole ilungelo lokumemezela isithintelo somhlangano lowo kwiGazette.

Ngabe kusho ukuthini lokhu malunga neBandla leNhlalakahle? Kusho ukuthi akukho okunokuthintela iBandla leNhlalakahle ukuqhuba umsebenzi walo njengoba liwuqhuba khathilesi kuze kube isikhathi uDr. Verwoerd ayobe esethathe isinyathelo sokuveza isithintelo. Angase angenzi lutho, kanti noma kukhona akwenzayo ngeke kube okuzothatha isikhathi eside. uNgqongqotshe uma ebona kufanele alivimbele leli Bandla leLiberal Party womelwa kuqala ezwane noKopeletsheni. Uma engenako ukuzwana naye, engeke enza lutho.

Noma kambe uNgqongqotshe enikezwe amandhla angaka, awase ngangoba ebewafuna kusingeniso sokuqala, Amalungu eLiberal Party akufanele ethuke ilokhu. Kuhle ayihambe imihlangano kuze kube seliphumile izwi lika Ngqongqotshe elibatintelayo elobe liphume kuGazeti. Loku kusho ukuthi sokwazi kusekude okuzokwehla, bese nathi sizilungisela okufanele sikwenze.

Okwamanje masiqhubenjalo sibambe imihlangano singenise amalungu amasha. Kasi-melwe nje nempela sethuswe ilesingeniso somthetho. Kuzishaya sengathi ubulima ukubonisa ubugwala kathilesi. This sifanele sibonise ukuzimisela kwethu okwangempela. LeliBandla nalokho elikumele lidinga wena ukuba ulixhase. Sethembe wena thina.