

# Bone-Throwing at Umbilo

by Chundra Gesa

**W**HATEVER one may think or say of the policies and actions of the Nationalists, whatever one's fears of the precipitous path they pursue, one can never accuse them of inconsistency. One cannot accuse them of failing to co-ordinate the schemes of the different government departments or to carry out their promises—erroneously described as threats by a handful of misguided Whites and the ignorant non-Europeans caught in the clutches of agitators—to implement Apartheid. Contemptuously ignoring all criticism the Nationalist Government has gone on inexorably with its plans.

Native Affairs Minister Verwoerd (some say he is Prime Minister as well as Minister of all portfolios of Bantustan) has always maintained that the African people of the Union prefer to live and develop in their own traditional ways. They do not really like to become westernised, Verwoerd maintains, and in any case it is bad for them to be permitted to ape the superior Europeans with whom they can never hope to catch up.

That is why chiefs are given a boost under the Bantu Authorities Act. That is why schools under the Bantu Education Act are to be different from other schools. Oh yes, Dr. Verwoerd is a firm believer in tribalism. He wants the Africans to return to their tribal ways of living. In doing so he forgets that all Nationalists, and many other Europeans as well, find inspiration and support for their colour attitudes from purely tribal instincts. Sociologists may give these attitudes a big name like "ethnocentrism" but "tribalism" just about covers it.

The proposed taking over of the Durban Medical School from the University of Natal fits neatly into this pattern. Dr. Malherbe, the Principal, angrily refers to the move as an act of pillage, and the United Party-controlled-English-language-press seizes the opportunity to conduct un-national anti-Government propaganda.

What nonsense! Where's the pillage if its going to bring nothing but good to South Africa and the non-Europeans in particular? And what greater benefit could be conferred on the Medical School than to have a purified correspondence organisation as its examining body? In any case, White supremacy must be preserved and are not the liberals at Natal University gradually breaking down the Apartheid pattern? The Government couldn't possibly depend upon them to carry out its policies.

Those policies, it must be remembered, are to encourage the African people in living according to their traditional ways of life. A part of that life is the inyanga and the witch-doctor. So it is essential for the Government to have direct control over the Medical School. Some courses may have to be scrapped and some professors liquidated. The Medical Association and even the Medical Council may kick. But all that cannot be helped.

Witch-doctors must be given scientific training and the Medical School is the best possible place for that. Courses in the art of bone-throwing can be instituted. Students can be taught the most effective charms to wear round their necks and what roots and herbs make the best medicines. They can learn of spells and "smelling-out". After all the Government has made a grant of £450,000 and what is the use of that if the school is to turn out doctors who cannot possibly be of service to the traditional people whom the Government wants so devoutly to return to their traditional ways?

But seriously, this latest act of the Government should serve to prove to all intelligent people not only that the Government's policies are evil but that everything which provides it with its motive power—adherence to the Colour Bar, belief in segregation, racial intolerance—is evil and must be checked if it is not to bring the whole country to ruin.

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