

Why the Nationalists say there is

NO PLACE FOR MISSION SCHOOLS

By Father TREVOR HUDDLESTON, C.R.

ONE of the ways in which the Government attempts to influence African opinion is the familiar one of appealing to high-sounding principles to mask very shameful and degrading actions. So in the implementation of the Bantu Education Act the approach is: "You have always been dissatisfied with Mission Schools. So have we. Here is your opportunity of making the divorce between Church and State in education. Here is your chance of controlling your own destiny. Here is the place for intelligent Africans — the Bantu Authority."

At least this is the kind of argument that Mr. Prinsloo and other spokesmen for the Native Affairs Department use from time to time. It is not without appeal value.

"Titshala" in his very interesting and provocative article in the eighth number of *Liberation* deals with the basic principles of the Bantu Education Act very fairly.

I would like to suggest, however, that there are certain aspects of the matter which need further attention. And I would like, as a 'missionary' to challenge certain assumptions in the article with which I disagree — though with the general theme of it I have no quarrel at all.

"Tishala's" article in our last issue, *Farewell to Mission Schools*, has stimulated much comment and controversy. The Editor invited that well-known champion of African rights, Father Huddleston, to express his views on the issues raised. This is what he wrote.

It seems to me that, basically, the Bantu Education Act has nothing to do with the old and time-worn question of Church versus State. This is just 'one of those things' being used by the Government to cloud the real issue.

Dr. Verwoerd in his notorious policy-statement to the Senate has given the true reason for his determination to destroy Mission Schools when he says: "They" (Mission Schools and their Superin-

tendents) "were unsympathetic to the country's policy." And again: "The curriculum and education practise, by ignoring the segregation or 'apartheid' policy, was unable to prepare for service within the Bantu community."

And again: ". . . Education has served to create a class of educated and semi-educated persons . . . this is the class which has learnt to believe that it is above its own people and feels that its spiritual, economic and political home is among the civilised community of South Africa, i.e. the Europeans . . ."

In other words, Mission Schools must be destroyed not because in the Government's ~~opinion~~ secular education is better (the Government has explicitly denied this) but because no schools which oppose 'apartheid' in theory or practice can be suffered to exist. These are the schools which have dared to proclaim that it is a Christian principle for all men to have full and free opportunity to use their God-given skills and talents.

These are the schools which have assumed as a sound educational principle the right of every individual to his full share in the cultural heritage of mankind. These are the schools which on the whole, and however inadequately, have tried to equip the African mentally, physically and spiritually to hold his ~~own~~ with the members of the master-race.

What possible place have they in a country whose Government openly declares: "There is no place for the African in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour?"

No. It is not the issue of "church-school versus State-school" with which we should be concerned, and indeed it is foolish to allow that matter to cloud our minds. The real, fundamental principles at stake are absolutely simple. Is education to be *education* or is it to be *Bantu Education*? In so far as the Mission Schools have stood for the former they are regarded as the natural enemy and for this reason alone they must be destroyed. "Titshala" is absolutely right in his diagnosis of the situation and it is much to be hoped that the African people will recognise the truth of what he has said before it is too late.

Nevertheless I would be a poor sort of Christian if I were to let go unchallenged that assumption so easily made (and so truly indefensible) that the missionary is more interested in forcing 'conversion' upon innocent children than in educating them. That this may have been true in the past — the remote past — is open to argument. But, after all, it was the missionary who took the initiative in education everywhere and he had a right to call the tune, for even if he did not pay the piper, he himself was also without pay!

What I'm getting at is this: Every educationist, unless he is a jelly-fish, has some faith behind him. He could not possibly educate unless he was convinced of some standards, some immutables, some ideals. He might be an atheist or a dialectical materialist or a Quaker or an Anglican — his teaching would inevitably be affected by his position. But it would not make him a bad teacher. There is no evidence anywhere that "the devout evangelist and the conscientious schoolmaster" are "always at war within him." There is plenty of evidence to the contrary: plenty of evidence to show that nearly every revolutionary step forward in Western European education systems was in fact taken by the Church. It is not a bad thing to remember that the premier Universities of Europe to this day stand on a Christian foundation — and it is, paradoxically, for that very reason that men like Bertrand Russell are able to teach in them.

However, such matters need a whole article to themselves. As a missionary superintendent I am well content to be criticised so fairly and straightforwardly by "Titshala."

He concludes his article "we little thought the day would come when we should mourn the passing of the mission schools. The day is here." He might have added "And so is the night."

The Meaning of

BANTU EDUCATION

By DUMA NOKWE

BANTU education is the 'education' designed for the 'Bantu' by the Nationalist Government; it is a development of 'Native Education,' the education which was designed for the 'Native' of South Africa.

Like 'Native Education,' 'Bantu education' is a qualified education which is a product of the political and economic structure of the country. Like its predecessors too, 'Bantu education' was not introduced as a means of raising the cultural level of the Africans, nor of developing the abilities of the African child to the full, but as one of the devices which aim at solving the cheap labour problems of the country. The development of education amongst the Africans and the policy of Governments have been closely connected with the labour problems of the country.