



The New African

The Butterfly Game

THE CHILDREN HAVE discovered butterflies. They are looking at the interesting patterns and coloration of the wings, doing careful and clever drawings and tracings of them . . . At least they are looking at something, trying to justify something, making excuses for something. For these people—partitionists, separate development theorists, race federationists, franchise qualification calculators—are the same people who only yesterday, if they thought at all, did so in “keep the kaffir in his place” terms.

This world of fantasy, of drawing lines on maps and playing double acrostics with race groups, is the beginners’ phase.

The reaction of the white electorate will help to bring some of them to their senses. Those schemes that offer the Africans a foot in the door will meet with a sharp rebuff from the whites.

They will all be brought a step nearer reality when they fail to earn the forgiveness of the world by talking about redrawing some lines on the map, and by renaming apartheid.

They will also learn that non-white South Africans are no longer interested in tricky schemes that offer them the foot in the door they once had.

The voters don’t want these drawings of butterflies’ wings. The voteless hate them.

There may or may not be time for the new schemers to pass on to the next phase: that of seeking full equality with their black fellow-countrymen. They will have a very hard job persuading their white fellow-countrymen to do the same. But this, if there is time for it, will be better than waving those drawings at them.

Rhodesian Vote-catching

NOTHING SHOWS MORE CLEARLY the poverty of white Rhodesian politics than the recent attempt of Sir Edgar Whitehead to save the copperbelt for Southern Rhodesia by making it the price of Northern Rhodesian democracy. The naivety of the proposal, and the obvious contempt it displays for the African politicians’ grasp of the realities of power in the Federation, may indicate the mentality of Southern Rhodesia’s government. But neither explains completely why the manoeuvre was so palpable. Such crudity is usually reserved for vote-catching, and Sir Edgar, it seems, is badly in need of votes. The dispute between him and Sir Roy within the UFP has earned him the reputation of being ‘soft.’ So have his attempts at removing some of the irritations of the colour bar. Together they could mean his political end—and that of the UFP. With Nyasaland ready to secede, Northern Rhodesia forcing the case for majority African rule, and the white knights preparing to battle over Southern Rhodesia, the help of the United Nations may be more necessary than Sir Hugh Foot realises.

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