

elected by Transkeian taxpayers, and 9 elected by Transkeians living in towns outside the Transkei. There is to be an executive council of 16 members appointed by a prime minister. The assembly will legislate on all matters except those specified as falling within the competency of the South African Government. These reserved functions include defence, internal security, external affairs, communications and transport, immigration, currency, public loans, customs and excise. Laws passed by the Transkeian Government will be submitted to the President of the Republic for his assent.

It is a hybrid kind of constitution and does not fit into any of the recognised categories. It provides more powers than those usually given to local government bodies, falls far short of responsible or even semi-responsible government, and cannot be described as representative government as long as the position of the prime minister and the chiefs remains obscure. If the chiefs continue to hold office at the will of the South African Government, they cannot be truly representative of the people. If the prime minister is appointed by the State President on the advice of the South African Government, he and his executive will be responsible to it and not to the legislative assembly.

One is tempted to describe the constitution as a continuation of Bantu Authorities under another name. There is certainly little in the proposals that goes further than the original conception of Bantu Authorities as providing for a wide measure of local autonomy. The chiefs will remain the dominant section of the assembly, though the inclusion of directly elected members must make it rather more radical than the existing Territorial Authority.

Experience in Africa does not bear out the government's contention that chiefs are the most suitable instruments of social change. When required by a colonial administration to carry out policies that clash with traditional usage, they either resist the policy and fall foul of the administration, or arouse the resentment of their peoples. Their usual practice is to vacillate between the two pressures, play one side off against the other, and degenerate into futile, fumbling officials. If they identify themselves closely with the alien rulers, they bring their office into disrepute. It is likely that the unrest experienced in the Transkei since the introduction of Bantu Authorities arose out of opposition to soil conservation, Bantu Education, and other unpopular measures; but opposition to policies inevitably turns into a rejection of the chiefs who execute them.

The success of the new constitution will turn on the ability of the chiefs to retain the loyalty of the people. To do this the chiefs will have to come to terms with the leaders of African nationalism, who cannot be expected to welcome a constitution that is designed to keep them out of office. Alternatively, the cleavage between nationalist leaders and traditional leaders will widen. The probability is that the progressive chiefs will link up with a popular movement led by radicals and based on a demand for fully representative government, the repeal of discriminatory laws, and African participation in the central government of the Republic.

A Policeman with a Bunch of Keys

PETER MOTSOANE

*The story of high rents
in a Pretoria location*

TO UNDERSTAND THE STORY of high rents here, it is better to know the big location called Atteridgeville itself. It was established in 1940 as a reserve for African occupation by the apartheid policy of the United Party government of the time. At that time the biggest African "black spot" in the Pretoria area was Marabastad. When it was demolished, residents who did not want to go to Atteridgeville, either went to freehold Lady Selborne or to Riverside and Eersterus where they were allowed to own property. Those who had no property went to Atteridgeville, which was then the pride of the ruling powers.

The rents charged on the houses then were very very low and the houses themselves are very strong, having been built with flat-lying bricks. Electric current was provided and water was not charged for them. The monthly rents in those days were between R1.80 for a two-roomed house and R4.60 for a five-roomed. People living in these houses used to be admired and were called "bo-my-house", a slangy way of saying "housewives".

But new, high rents came into force in 1954. The rents have gone up by over 250% on the average. They now range between R6.60 for two rooms to R10.77 for five.

In addition to these rents water has to be paid for at the rate of 25c per 1,000 gallons. Where the occupants do washing for whites and have gardens and a bathroom, they sometimes get accounts reaching up to R3.25. Electricity charges are up to R1.25 if the occupants have an electric iron, radiogram, electric kettle and perhaps a heater.

Today these houses in the "old location" (*mzi mdala*) are dreaded.

* * *

In 1955, the Group Areas Board decided to enforce its removal of African locations from the city, and the remaining residents of Marabastad were the first to fall under attack. Their belongings were truck-loaded to Atteridgeville and, for those who so desired, to Vlakfontein municipal location, which had just been founded. For the services of the municipal trucks the residents had to pay an extra pound with their first rent.

These people were dumped into incomplete houses, the council having erected only the four walls of the

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house and the sectioned rooms. It was up to the residents to see to the rest at their own expense. These houses are different from those of the "old" location. They do not look strong and are shaped like a match-box. Fences are very low and the latrines are combined, although a separate tap for each house is provided. These are the houses that are the pattern of all municipal locations for Africans created in the Republic and South West Africa.

It was up to the Africans to collect soil from the streets with their sons and daughters and fill the holes that were to be their rooms. It was their responsibility to dig into their pockets and sacrifice those hard-earned, meagre wages to solidify the floors of their rooms. They bought cement, sand and ash to complete the houses they could never own, and without compensation from the authorities.

It has been officially stated that if the council had to present the houses to the people in a complete form, then it would be forced to raise the rents from the R5.38 now charged to a higher figure to recover "the high costs involved".

Being a hygiene-conscious people and being industrious, the Africans bought paint and decorated the walls of these houses. They also created gardens in their yards.

All this they could not do immediately for they are an impoverished community whose earnings are always kept below the bread line.

The section where these houses are built is called the "new location", (*notse notcha*). The "low" rents charged here are still very high for the people and rent prosecutions are very frequent. These often end in jail for the defaulters.

* * *

The Group Areas Board recommended the removal of Bantule and Mociplaas squatters' camp. All were moved to Atteridgeville.

When we from Bantule came here, we found that we shared homes with residents from the "old" location who had fled from the high rents. Life here was very unpleasant then with the result that there was a "great trek" within Atteridgeville itself.

Houses of rent defaulters were being locked daily in Mzi Mdala. There was also hunger and unemployment facing the poverty-stricken people. I have seen municipal policemen enter a house where rent was in arrears. They ordered a family (which had a funeral vigil on the go) out. Furniture was taken outside and the house was locked. The police went in search of the next house on their list.

Some families so ejected slept with neighbours, until the neighbours themselves experienced the same ordeal later. Some families had to use their fowl runs as shelter. There were cries and weeping all over, but life still went on. These people had to trek to the "new" section where the rents were "low".

Their ejected furniture was exposed to the mercy of thieves and rain. However, today the situation has been improved, if one can call it that, for when a house is locked the furniture is truck-loaded to the superintendent's office where it may be auctioned if the rent defaulter does not pay up in time. True enough this

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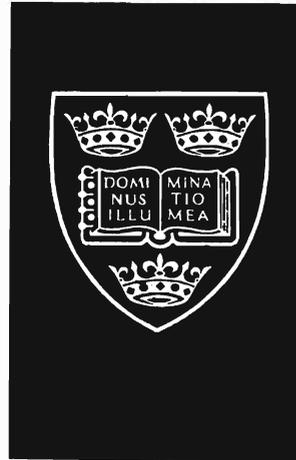
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causes bitterness, and how can the people show their disapproval? Through the "proper channels" their cries fall on rock. But each time a house was vacated, young boys would see to the task of smashing its windows and doors. The blind aim was to let the municipality incur expenses in repairing the house concerned. In the "new" location, houses awaiting occupation underwent the same fate. In revenge, municipal police went about the locations arresting pass offenders.

* * *

Why were rents so high in Mzi Mdala? It was said by the authorities that they would be occupied by the "native middle class" who wanted to show off their status by not mixing with the "low class" illiterates. The so-called "middle class" was to comprise "professionals" such as policemen, traders, teachers, drivers, messengers, clerks etc. But of course some of these were the very people who fled from Mzi Mdala.

Through victimisation, an organisation called the Atteridgeville-Saulsville Vigilance Association failed to champion the fight against the high rents because of lack of support. Its leader, a Mrs. V. Baloyi was threatened with expulsion from the location, after she had enlisted the services of the Johannesburg attorney, Mr. Pitje.

People from the "old" location have to pay double rents when they get to new homes. They have to pay the current rent in the new house *plus* an extra R3 to decrease the previous credit. If not they face prosecution. Some owe as much as R140. They and the people

owing less do not pay normal rents, high as they are. They all pay the monthly R5.38 plus an extra amount to decrease their debt.

It is no easy life for Africans here. Even now, conditions have not changed. The sight of a policeman with a bunch of keys in his hand is common. Even in Notse Notcha there are people who have been jailed because they owe rent.

Yet this place is a tourist attraction. Visitors are shown clinics, police stations, beerhalls and recreation centres. Rarely, if ever, are they told this story of high rents, people who cannot pay, constant punishment of men and women who have no rights, no votes and therefore no "proper channels". ●

South Africa's Knife-Edge

PATRICK DUNCAN

*Violence now may provoke
partition by force*

ON 19 NOVEMBER an article by Michael Scott appeared in *The Observer* (London). The title was "Can Violence be averted in South Africa?" It consisted of a warning that violence is today much closer than it has been in the past and that "large-scale violence in South Africa, whoever starts it, would let loose a holocaust of hatred and destruction the like of which has not been seen anywhere in Africa or Asia." It consisted, too, of a plea that "the Western powers (should) initiate a process of carefully thought-out pressures and sanctions in this situation of the White man's making."

This article is just one of many indications that violence is forming an ever-increasing part in South Africa's thinking. Another sign, of course, is the rash of bomb-explosions up and down our country. And still another sign is the threatening language used more and more by the Government. For instance, Mr. Sauer said at the opening of the present parliamentary session that only military intervention could deflect the Government from its apartheid policy.

What should democrats' attitude be to this growing tendency to violence? Should it be a pacifistic "Never"? Or should it be an expedient "Sometimes"? Or should we welcome the advent of violence, on the grounds that only through violence can apartheid be defeated?

These questions, it seems to me, are about the most important questions ahead of us. And they will have to be answered in the very near future.

My own view is not in favour of total non-violence in all circumstances. I am not a pacifist. I take the view

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that unless mankind had known how to fight we would never have survived the long journey from the cave to the city. And, although wars and killings are now nearly always to be condemned, there are occasions when arms must be taken up. One example was World War II. I defy anyone to go to the recent film of Hitler's life and come out blaming the western democracies for having declared war on the most evil regime in human history. Another, hypothetical, example is that of the armed maniac in a street firing indiscriminately into a crowd. To me an attitude of total pacifism towards the maniac is indefensible. He should be shot down, and the sooner the better.

Having said this I would say that I am *nearly* a pacifist, and that I believe that the occasions when violence is justified are becoming few and far between. Especially is this now true because of nuclear weapons.

In our present South African situation I am for non-violence. But in view of what I have just said I am for non-violence on practical, not on theoretical grounds. I believe that the use of arms by our side, the side of democracy, would at this time be folly. And this goes for terrorism (the political use of violence against human life) and sabotage (the political use of violence against property), because sabotage and terrorism nearly always go from bad to worse.

In the future there may come a moment when the last embers of apartheid have to be quenched by force. I can envisage this happening, and I can foresee circumstances in which I should approve. But that moment has, in my view, most decidedly not yet come.

At this moment, as it seems to me, we in South Africa are perched on a knife-edge: the knife-edge between a democratic victory over the whole of South Africa, and a partition of the country between Black and White. Most intelligent people know that White supremacy is dying, and dying fast. They know that the African people of this country are about to enter into the political kingdom. The unresolved question is whether the African vote will be exercised in a central parliament of a unified country, or whether it will be exercised in a "Bantustan" parliament after the country has been partitioned.

The former solution is the solution which democrats desire. The latter would be a confession of failure, failure by White and Black to live together in the same country. It would also be a colossal economic disaster, for nearly all agree that the Africans would be just as unable to successfully operate a uni-racial Bantustan as the Whites would be unable to operate the existing factories, farms, mines and ports without the Africans.

Democrats tend to underestimate the power of South Africa's Whites and the possibilities of partition. Of course, so long as peace lasts, Dr. Verwoerd will be as powerless as have been all his predecessors, to inflict thoroughgoing partition on our country. But what if peace were not to last?

If the holocaust spoken of by Michael Scott were to happen, can anyone doubt that the hands of the extreme partitionists would be strengthened? And can anyone doubt that the heavily-armed White minority would win the first round? Experience in Eastern Germany after World War II shows that millions of people can be forced to leave their ancestral lands and to walk