

whatever action African Nationalists had chosen. The Party is, I think, essentially a party of protest, not itself possessing the means of overthrowing white domination. Its future activities would be confined to acts of protest (I include here fighting elections). It is probable that the activities of the Party would remain unchanged; its attitudes and declared objectives, alone, would be altered.

It is not the fault of those inside the Liberal Party that it cannot attain its goals, but the madness of the

whites outside. It is not Liberals who are to blame if Africans have to choose illiberal weapons to rid themselves of domination. The fact is that the Liberal Hour must await the passing of many turbulent moments. I am convinced that after Africans have liberated themselves, the economic facts will dictate a social reconciliation. And that will be the time when Liberals will have a crucial part to play, provided they do not jeopardise their role by their present actions. ●

COMMENT

The land is inalienable

LET US LIVE above hypocrisy and let us speak the truth as we see it. In this world of ours, land is the determining factor in all major things of life. Unless one possesses absolute right to the land on which one lives, one is no better than a slave.

When Europeans came to this continent, Africans already accepted certain fundamental principles of law governing land ownership. Amongst these were:—

- (a) that the land in this continent is owned by all Africans as a national unit and by every African as an individual human being;
- (b) that the land owned by Africans is inalienable; and
- (c) that Africans or any other persons may be allowed the exclusive use of the land, properly assigned by representatives of the law.

As far as Africans are concerned they possess a dual ownership: (1) they own the land from the surface to the centre of the earth; (2) each individual African, in addition possesses the right to use the land.

On the other hand, foreigners may only acquire the right to use the land. Therefore, unless one is completely Africanised, it is humanly impossible, by wish or desire alone to confer ownership. Because the law of inalienability excluded foreigners from real ownership an ingenious device was conceived in an attempt to circumvent the practices of the Africans.

THE SYSTEM of slavery is perhaps as old as the white man is. In its "modified" form it is legalised under the Master and Servant Act. The system of owning human beings had already become second nature to many settlers. It was therefore not a great task to regard Africans as hewers of wood and drawers of water. After Africans had been conquered a wrong assumption was arrived at that their land too had miraculously passed into the hands of the settlers.

But much more than this, great damage was done by a ruthless systematic conditioning and impoverishment. Paripassu with this scheme, Africans were taught the settlers' histories of conquest, which were biased. They were taught in schools, churches and everywhere that their land had passed into the hands of the settlers and they were taught to accept, childlike, the guardianship of the settlers.

Expressions of independent opinion are welcomed in this "Comment" feature.

But the seed of nationalism dies very hard indeed, if it dies at all. For, throughout the years of conquest and subjugation there remained a hard core of the Africans that became impervious to conditioning. We honour them for keeping alive and in motion, the wheel of resistance.

In recent years, some whites have not stopped to justify their stay here. They go so far as to allege that they have an equal claim to our sub-continent because "we arrived here at the same time". Apart from absurdity, this claim is nullified by the law of inalienability. After all it is a well-known fact that Africans are the aboriginal inhabitants of Africa and the settlers are not. Pruned of all false reasoning the allegation is silly and ridiculous in the extreme and it must be treated with the contempt it deserves.

WE HAVE SAID elsewhere that some Africans were systematically and ruthlessly conditioned to serve their masters; they were reduced to the status of hewers of wood and drawers of water; they even inadvertently undermined the law of inalienability. They had of course been misled into accepting the interpretation of the settlers.

To show the extent of the coverage of the misconceptions, the A.N.C., otherwise a militant organisation was itself caught in the trap of false interpretations. This organisation was so misled that its leaders coined the slogan "*Mayibuye*" (literally meaning "let it come back"). This misconception was made even more ridiculous by the whites who were members of the Congress Alliance who unwittingly also exclaimed "*Afrika! Mayibuye!*".

If one follows up the logic of inalienability, it is only too correct to say that P.A.C. is the only custodian of that law, which is symbolised by the slogan "*Izwe lethu*" which means it is our land. It is ours because it is inalienable; it is ours whether conquered or not.

Before concluding I would like to say there are two false and outdated concepts of ownership that are being grafted on the minds of Africans:—

1. ethnic-ownership of the land. This is incorporated in the policies of the Nationalist Government.
2. multi-racialising the ownership of African land. This is a child of the multi-racialists.

These hybrid interpretations of ownership are a real challenge and in fact reflect the real struggle and conflict in Africa in general and in South Africa in particular.

The final answer resolves itself that Africa belongs to those from whom it cannot be alienated. ●

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