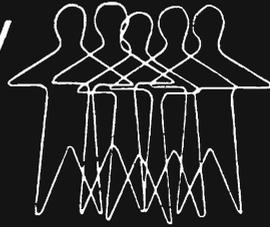


The New African



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Abraham,
Mugerwa, Nkosi,
Reckord
—BLACKNESS

Francis Wilson,
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Politics and Culture

A RECENT NEWSPAPER article about South Africa's "little magazines" praised *The New African* for its fighting radicalism, and its powers of survival. To be radical, to fight, to survive is not enough: these functions connote a grim political doggedness, which narrows the breadth of our aim. Our country and our continent have a cultural richness of immeasurable potential, and part of *The New African's* ideal has always been to print verse, stories, criticism, drawings, that will find a place nowhere else in South Africa, because no other magazine yet sees them as Africa's contribution to universal literature and art. To broaden our function beyond the newspaper article's description, we need contributors: poets, artists, critics, imaginative prose writers, writers in new *genres*. In 1964, we hope to reach the balance between politics and culture, which from the start we have aimed for. We appeal to our readers to help us do so. The politics of radical change, the blueprints for the society to follow, are as important as ever they were, if only because the present white-supremacist phase of South Africa's progress to nationhood is having so stultifying an effect on the mass of our people from whom our culture must grow.

Verwoerd's Fatal Mistake—2

LIKE STALIN, DR. VERWOERD seems to grow more powerful through his greatest blunders. Undoubtedly the "Bantu homelands" scheme is the greatest of these blunders, yet for the purpose for which it was knocked together, it paid Dr. Verwoerd well. The "separate development" policy of which it is part kept South Africa distracted for a dozen years. It was probably meant to keep us distracted for a further fifteen years, which, it is believed, is the period during which Dr. Verwoerd believes he can hold personal power in South Africa. While we argued about whether it was right or wrong, too cheap or too costly, too dangerous or not bold enough, Dr. Verwoerd continued to rule, to preserve a favourable business climate, with only a growing total of political prisoners to upset the more delicately-stomached foreign investors. Dr. Verwoerd kept South Africa hypnotised as he went through a slow-motion process of building up the "Bantu homelands" and his challengers, who could offer no such escapist entertainment, fell further and further behind.

Unfortunately for him he is to suffer a fate that Stalin escaped in his lifetime: his greatest blunder is catching him up. He has had to accelerate into two short years the granting of self-rule to the Transkei, which was probably meant to be a promise for a far-off successor to fulfil or break. Everything that has happened since Dr. Verwoerd's "fatal mistake" was made in January 1962, has confirmed our judgement of it at the time. The 20 November elections there, however rigged, merely bring nearer the retribution for that fatal mistake, the beginning of which we believe 1964 will see.