

## TRANSKEI CASINO

by Vortex

1

'You don't need a document to get there.'  
'But I thought it's a foreign land.'  
'No no, my dear, you must get it clear:  
It's all a sleight of hand.'

2

Dr Hendrik Verwoerd  
sank into a trance,  
a deeply creative  
socio-religious daydream.  
He was meditating, as ever,  
upon the future of South Africa,  
which he alone could foresee,  
which he alone could plan and make.  
Into his field of vision  
there floated dimly an object,  
which he recognized at once as symbolic.  
But at first he couldn't make it out.  
It was multi-coloured,  
which suggested God's variety  
It was circular,  
which showed that it was mystical,  
a revelation of good to come.  
And it moved, dynamically,  
like the horsemen of the Apocalypse.  
Then his vision clarified,  
and he beheld in awe  
the answer to his hopes and prayers:  
a roulette-wheel.

3

So this is the way the homelands work,  
with many a monetary click and quirk.  
In this sick air no truth can stand:  
a one-armed bandit rules the land.

4.

The cars choke up the South Coast road,  
all drawn by the magnet to the south;  
people of every type and mode  
are gobbled by a laughing mouth.

5

Behind the red ropes  
in the new casino,  
the women are wearing  
handsome dresses,  
plum-coloured, formal.  
They do not smile  
as they do their work.  
The men, in dress suits,  
are serious, sober:  
nothing is brisk or brash.  
The whole air  
is silent and solemn,  
religious even,  
as it needs to be  
for this elaborate ceremony  
of the handing over  
of cash.

6

In an odd sort of way it's all half-gay,  
people seem able to relax;  
the thing's not a mess, one has to confess,  
and the whites accept the blacks.  
But it's sad to say that your pinko-grey  
(to be more precise as to hue)  
seems only sane or at all humane  
when some profit is in view.

7

'Let's go to the Casino  
to see if we can win;  
the cards are stacked against us,  
but trying is no sin.'  
Aha, my friend, please do attend:  
that's the Holiday Inns' big sell;  
and behind that dream is the selfsame scheme  
for the 'national states' as well.

8

The concrete palace by the sea  
in a wilderness of poverty:  
it's a perfect balance, of the kind  
that pleases the official mind.  
Inside, there's a wealth of goodly fare;  
outside, the cupboard and the field are bare.  
Here, there's a constant flow of rands;  
there, children beg with skinny hands.  
Visiting whites are fat and free,  
but blacks — 'independent' — bend the knee. □