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SPARK

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CHANGE IS COMING

SINCE the last issue of "Spark" appeared some years ago, sweeping events of great significance have completely and irretrievably altered the course of human history. So great have these changes been that they can only be described as revolutionary in the deepest meaning of that word.

The transformation has not been confined to the realm of politics. Scientific developments have moved at an even more spectacular speed.

The political map of the world is unrecognisable, that portion belonging to our own continent having changed more rapidly than any other. One former colony after the other has gained independence. Names of countries and leaders, virtually unknown formerly, have suddenly burst into prominence.

Space, once explored only by telescope and fiction writer, is now within the compass of men and machines. The words **sputnik** and **cosmonaut** have entered into the everyday language of mankind. Our actual and ideological horizons have expanded at atomic speed.

The impact of these political and scientific developments has been felt in every sphere of human thought and activity, the one interacting with the other on a scale and with an immediacy never before experienced.

The Dangers

As with all development, the positive has carried with it also the negative. Nuclear physics, opening the way to a richer life for all mankind, has also created the hydrogen bomb, capable of dealing almost instantaneous universal death. Every progressive political advance has been met by fierce, and often bloody, resistance on the part of those who refuse to believe that man must move forward as inexorably as the earth moves in its orbit round the sun.

Those reactionary forces are losing, and will continue to lose, at an increasing rate, their

ability to influence the future. For the future belongs to the new, not to the old.

The United Nations Organisation is no longer the almost exclusive preserve and instrument of the imperial powers. Independence has given more and more nations the right to speak and vote for themselves, without prior reference to, or the approval of, Washington, London, Paris, Amsterdam or Brussels. The voice of humanity is being heard as never before in history. And as the balance of world forces swings in favour of progress, so the substance of a truly effective international organisation, based on the highest of man's aspirations, begins to emerge from the shadows.

Moving Backwards

Development, inevitably, has not been even. In our own country, events have moved in a direction directly opposite to the road being taken by the world outside our borders. Instead of progress, we have retrogression; instead of a burgeoning democracy, we have increasing dictatorship, with organisations and newspapers banned, restrictions on individuals, and the curtailment of freedom of speech and assembly. Racial discrimination is the law of the land, holding millions in subjection, poverty and backwardness.

The Nationalist Party, spearhead of reaction, has deliberately turned its back on the rest of humanity. Indeed, the very word 'humanism' sounds like a curse, like something evil, in their ears. They would, if they could, eradicate every thought and every achievement which has helped raise man above the level of the beast.

But despite all their efforts, South Africa will remain part of the world and South Africans part of humanity. The same forces making for progress elsewhere exist in our country too.

THERE ARE NO BARRIERS STRONG ENOUGH TO HOLD THEM BACK.

THEY DON'T WANT GROUP AREAS



People of all races took part in a demonstration against Group Areas in Durban recently.

FARM CONDITIONS ON THE WEST RAND

JOHANNESBURG.

REPORTS have been received of shocking conditions of near slavery on the far West Rand.

Workers on farms in this area are paid 10s. a month. In addition they are given 15 bags of mealies a year, but have to pay the farmers to have them ground.

Other labourers are granted the privilege of farming a small piece of land, on condition that they undertake to work for the farmer for three

months every year. This work is required during the ploughing and harvesting seasons, and no wages are paid.

The water shortage in this area is acute. On some farms in the Libanon area the only water comes from a furrow which carries effluvia from the Libanon Mines' processing plant. A farmer in the area has threatened to shoot anyone who tries to take water from his windmill. On other farms fresh water is sold for 1/- a drum.

There are no hospital facilities in this area. The nearest hospitals are at Krugersdorp or Baragwanath. There is a clinic in Carltonville, but transport to the clinic would cost at least £1. Maternity facilities are non-existent, and babies are delivered by the old women in the community.

On most farms in the area there is absolutely no schooling. One farmer told his employees that the Bantu Education Department will only consider opening a school when there are at least 600 African children in a particular area.

No compensation is paid by the farmers to injured labourers.

No Kenya Elections This Year

THE British Colonial Secretary, Mr. Maudling, has ruled out the possibility of elections in Kenya this year. He said in Nairobi recently "It would not be possible" to make the necessary preparations in time; but they would be held "as soon as possible" next year.

The next step in Kenya's constitutional development would be a new constitution and election, the constitution based on the framework agreed at the Lancaster House conference.

The only variations would be to provide for a period during which control over external affairs, defence and internal security would be reserved to the Governor.

INDIA'S NATIONAL INCOME

NEW DELHI.

The national income of India has risen by about 3.5 per cent in the first year of the Third Plan, namely 1961-62, according to provisional estimates by the Planning Commission.

According to these estimates, national income for 1961-62 was Rs. 146,900 million compared to Rs. 142,000 million which is a rough figure for 1960-61, last year of the Second Plan.

National income increased by 20 per cent during the Second Plan and target for the third plan is 30 per cent, which means an average annual rise of 6 per cent.

BACK PAY FOR TEXTILE WORKERS

DURBAN

Workers at O.T.H. Beier's Textile factory at Pinetown are to receive an additional amount over and above their new wage increases.

After lengthy negotiations the Durban Branch of the Textile Workers' Union announced that they have successfully concluded an agreement with the employers to pay R1,884.30 in back pay to the workers.

"This will no doubt put a stop to the rumours circulating amongst a section of the workers that certain officials had been 'bought off' by Beier's", adds the statement.

Resettlement Scheme in Kirkwood

PORT ELIZABETH.

A SHABBY resettlement scheme is under way in Kirkwood. The Resettlement Location and encampment called Bontrug is more of a rural slum than an attempt at rehabilitation.

Under the scheme all African locations around the Kirkwood farming area are being resettled in this location. Squatters on the farms are being directed into Bontrug where pondokkies and shacks sprawl over a craggy section which is not even good enough for home-gardening.

Almost Complete

The removal of the locations has been going on for the last three years and is now almost complete, with the exception of Rooidraai location.

The people of Rooidraai are determined to hold out and not give up their homes in their snug valley.

At Bontrug, the fence around the resettlement location is about thirty paces from the houses. On the other side of the fence are vast areas of land for pasturage and orange orchards owned by Whites.

Not even a fowl from the location may cross the fence without the risk of losing its life.

Risk Life

Faced with the scarcity of firewood, people now and again have to go beyond the fence to collect firewood, or to gather prickly pears (tolofoya). This also they do at the risk of their lives.

Recently one woman was caught by a farmer while collecting firewood, and he assaulted her with an axe. The farmer reported the matter to the police and took the woman to a doctor to have her wounds stitched. He told the woman that she would have to pay the doctor's bill.

The woman is to lay a charge of assault against the farmer.

To visit the location, permits must be obtained from the location office, which is in town. To enter people pass through a gate where a permit or reference book must be produced. Over the week-ends, when the office in town is closed, visitors have difficulty getting in, even for a funeral.

No Amenities

Residents in the location pay a rent of R1 a month. There are no amenities, and the people drink unpurified water from a dam which has only one tap serving the whole location.

From Kirkwood towards Addo, along the Sundays River, stretch vast orchards of oranges. Lucerne and dairy farming are also carried on. When squatters are evicted from these farms either for a misdemeanour or as redundant labour, they are simply left on the road to fend for themselves until they can find another farmer willing to take them.

Farm workers in the district, living on the farms or in the location, get an average wage of R10 a month, without rations.

Assaulted

Farm factories owned by the Sundays River Citrus Co-Operative at Hermitage and Kirkwood pay wages ranging from R2.30 to R3.70 a week. There is no sick pay. Workers told New Age that it is a common occurrence for white supervisors to assault them with impunity.

Domestic workers at Kirkwood fall mainly into the bracket of R4 to R6 a month. Very few earn R10. They are mainly women.

One man who worked for more than 20 years as a do-

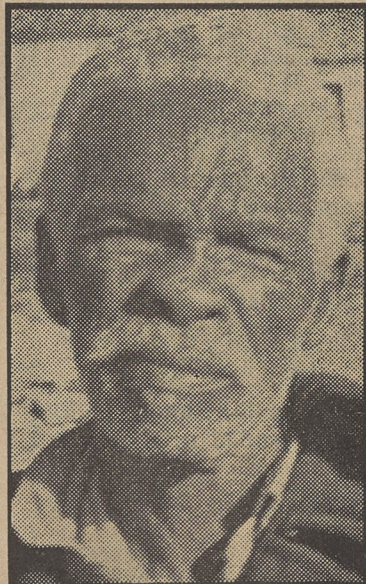
mestic servant says that he earns R3.50 a week with an additional 50c at the end of the month.

Distributive workers, and others in town, earn between R2.50 and R4.50 a week.

Because of these low wages the standard of living is low. There are no schools in the farm areas, and children travel from 6 to 10 miles a day to and from school. The one hospital in the district treats only tuberculosis cases.

However, a beer-hall is to be set up at the Bontrug Location.

VETERAN IN THE TRANSKEI



The old man in the picture is 90-year-old Mr. Isaac Rhuba, who lives in the Transkei.

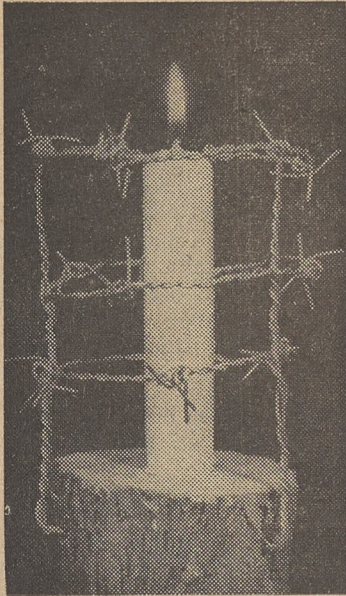
Mr. Rhuba recalls vividly the early struggles of the now-banned ANC, with such men as Makgothi, Vabaza and other stalwarts in the leadership.

He joined the movement before the twenties.

Campaigns waged in those days were to allow Africans to walk on the pavements in places like Johannesburg, and against Africans having to travel in cattle trucks on the Railways.

Mr. Rhuba regards present-day Bantu Authorities as an unrealizable pipe-dream.

FREEDOM FLAME



Symbolising liberty in
South Africa,

Which is like eternal
truth,

Always visible for men of
understanding;

Wilfully and maliciously,
Enchained, encircled by
barbed laws,

Spikes on which the cour-
ageous

Involuntarily impale
themselves.

This forever shining light
Will remind us all of the
banned,

The outspoken who were
gaoled;

The few—the many—who
courageously

Upheld by determination
followed

The dictates of their con-
science:

Stood and fell for their
principles,

Victims of unlawful, co-
ercive, malicious laws.

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BANTU COMMISSIONER CRITICISED BY JUDGE

JOHANNESBURG.

FROM Sekhukhuland, Mabieskraal and the Transkei have come reports that despotic chiefs, under the Bantu Authorities Act, are using Chiefs' Courts to try to stomp out all opposition to them within their tribes.

A recent Supreme Court judgment gives a legal stamp to these charges:

A Bantu Affairs Commissioner of Sekhukhuland was severely reprimanded by Mr. Justice Marais in the Supreme Court for using "political considerations" to decide a criminal case, according to the latest issue of the South African Law Reports.

The judge said: "The Bantu Affairs Commissioner made himself guilty in this instance of the serious, and, in my opinion, unforgivable, observation that points of law in a criminal case can be decided by considerations of a political or semi-political nature."

Disobedient

Jim Phokoane of Sekhukhuland was found guilty by the chief's court of being disobedient towards the chief. When he appealed to the Bantu Affairs Commissioner's Court, the Commissioner gave the following reason for confirming the Chief's fine:

"It is a well-known fact that this is an area where unrest has the tendency to frequently rear its head, and that the acknowledged chiefs, who are willing to accept state policy and to work with the state, are threatened and undermined by Left-inclined people, as in this instance. The status of the well-disposed chief must be upheld, and therefore the court sees no reason not to confirm the chief's decision."

Phokoane appealed to the Supreme Court. The court also found him guilty, but in the course of his judgment Mr. Justice Marais severely reprimanded the Commissioner.

He said: "It appears, if a person accepts his word at face

value, as though the Bantu Affairs Commissioner is pleading here that the chief's judgment must be upheld because this will serve to raise the status and prestige of a chief who is favourably inclined towards the Government.

"This is totally and unconditionally to be rejected by a judicial officer."

ALGERIAN ELECTIONS

The Algerian Provisional Executive has fixed August 12 as the date for the election of the first Algerian National Assembly, according to a report from Rocher Noir.

It also proclaimed an amnesty for all offences committed before July 3—two days after the self-determination referendum which resulted in the independence of Algeria.

The report said that the executive had forbidden the sale in Algeria of several French newspapers, including the Paris dailies 'L'Aurore' and 'Le Parisien Libere', notorious for their reactionary, colonialist views.

Protest Against Jailing

A group of negroes recently demonstrated in front of the City Hall in Albany, Georgia, USA, in protest against the illegal imprisonment of Rev. Martin Luther King, noted negro integration leader, and another negro minister, according to a report from that city.

The two negro clergymen were sentenced to 45 days' imprisonment on charges that they had "paraded without a permit." Last December they led a street prayer demonstration against segregation in Albany.