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# LIBERATION

ONE SHILLING

NEWS

SEPTEMBER, 1953

## THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE

Articles by

THE EDITOR • J. GILLMAN • N. MANDELA



A JOURNAL OF DEMOCRATIC DISCUSSION



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## NOT TOO PROUD

I have just finished reading my issue of "Liberation," and have also seen the appeal for funds. I think what has caused many African papers to close down in the past was lack of funds, and pride on their part to appeal to readers for help. It is the wish — a burning wish — of every African today to see a strong press that will champion their cause and blow the myth of white supremacy sky-high.

"The least that I can do to help towards that is to become an agent of 'Liberation.' I shall want no commission. My payment will be the knowledge that I am lending a hand in the drive to FREEDOM."

Letters like this, from Mr. J. Anthony, an African reader in Woodstock, are all the reward which the "Liberation" staff (volunteers all) ask for! May we say in reply that we are NOT too proud to ask our readers for help. In fact we must emphasise the point that we cannot continue to publish "Liberation" without their financial support.

● We appeal to agents to send in money for copies sold and to return unsold copies without delay.

● We appeal to readers to subscribe for six or twelve months, and to get others to do likewise.

● We hope you will like our new cover and the extra four pages — but if you want further improvements you must assist by sending in a donation today.

### LIBERATION PRINTING FUND

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# LIBERATION

*A Journal of Democratic Discussion*

No. 5

September 1953

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## PROSPECTS FOR PEACE

‘What is the future of the Protectorates under the British Government? . . . South Africa cannot tolerate the creation of free and independent Native states on its borders . . . South Africa’s patience is being exhausted.’

Dr. D. F. Malan. House of Assembly, August 11, 1953.

Congress declares that the policy of race discrimination pursued by the South African Government constitutes a breach of the Union’s obligations under the U.N. Charter, and a threat to world peace.”

—Resolution of the South African Peace Congress,  
August 23, 1953.

**A**S recently as six months ago, the opinion that a third global war was imminent and inevitable was freely being expressed at all levels in South Africa and other countries of the capitalist world. The great powers seemed irreconcilably separated into two armed camps. It appeared that the fighting in Korea would drag on endlessly, with the continual menace of some MacArthurite General using it as a spark to ignite the world. Every Soviet approach towards an overall negotiation of differences among the big powers was derided as another “peace offensive” and summarily rejected. The confidence and persistence of the members of the peace movement in their campaigns for a “Big Five” peace pact rallied and inspired thousands to fight against war, but many, we fear, even among their admirers and supporters, had begun to feel that their task was hopeless, that the cold-war line-up had hardened into a permanent mould.

But the past six months has seen far-reaching changes in international affairs. The renewed, vigorous Soviet peace initiative that began in March has made a decisive impact on public opinion in all countries. It came at a time when the burdens of armaments and war preparations were becoming intolerable. At last, the overwhelming desire of the peoples for peace broke through, compelling their statesmen to take heed, and exposing overnight the unstable character of the aggressive European war alliance America has laboured for the past eight years to build.

In May came Churchill’s dramatic call for big-power discussions “on the highest level,” and “without long delay.” The response of public opinion in all countries, including the United States, was immediate, enthusiastic. To Dulles’ astonishment and anger,

America's tame "allies" began speaking up like men, demanding acceptance of the latest North Korean proposals for agreement on war prisoners and a cease fire. The prophets of doom were confounded; the correctness of the line of the peace movement strikingly confirmed. A mighty wave of hope surged through the world, that this was the end of the nerve-racking, ruinous period of "cold war"; the beginning of a bright era of peace and prosperity.

## Counter Offensive

The same events that filled the people with hope, filled those who had gambled their future on continued war-preparations with fear and dismay. The fascists and arms racketeers who today dictate the policy of the United States know that their power and influence cannot survive the ending of war hysteria. America's gauleiters abroad—Rhee, Chiang, Adenauer—fear talk of a peace settlement as the devil is said to fear holy water. The end of the cold war means the end of them, and they know it. The entire resources of this desperate gang of international pyromaniacs were thrown into an all-out counter offensive, to halt the "threat" of peace and stoke up anew the fires of war.

To some extent, they succeeded.

Churchill's call for talks with Russia was side-tracked by Eisenhower's proposal for a "preparatory" conference at Bermuda, without Russia—indeed, it may be said, against Russia. And when Churchill's illness put even the proposed Bermuda conference into cold storage, the West European Foreign Ministers were summoned to Washington and lined up to issue yet another of the futile, routine ultimatums to the Soviet Union, proposing a meeting of Foreign Ministers about the German question, on terms known in advance to be unacceptable. In Korea, Syngman Rhee, deliberately and with American connivance, set himself to sabotage the agreement on war prisoners and hence, he hoped, on the cease-fire.

In Berlin and Eastern Europe the Americans gave the signal for what they fondly hoped would be a tremendous civil war, involving the Soviet Union itself, and putting an end to all talk of negotiations. Millions of dollars had been spent on building up an elaborate machinery of espionage, sabotage and subversion in Europe. No doubt, in order to justify their receipt of these dollars, America's agents had built up an encouraging picture of crumbling governments, starving masses on the verge of revolt, warring factions and internal chaos—a picture which their employers would be only too eager to accept as the truth. That picture turned out to be utterly false. The "revolution" turned out to be a damp squib. Yet, inflated by propaganda out of all resemblance to the facts, the reports of "trouble behind the iron curtain" played their part in delaying and sabotaging peace negotiations, and keeping America's satellites at heel.



## The Turn of the Tide

But the tide is running against the war party. Their "successes" were temporary and illusory. Ignoring Syngman Rhee's provocation, the North Koreans and Chinese returned to the conference table at Pan Mun Jon, this time to negotiate an agreement and sign a cease-fire. The net practical outcome of the adventures in Germany and Eastern Europe is that the Americans have exposed their principal agents, weaknesses have been discovered in time and set to rights, dangerous elements of the Beria type removed, and the stability and internal prestige of the Governments substantially reinforced.

The tide is running towards peace. The people are turning their backs on war. That is the meaning of the great strikes that have swept France—basically, strikes against the Government's war and colonial policy and the intolerable burden of armaments borne on the backs of the workers. That is the meaning of the fall of Washington's man in Italy, de Gasperi. For the first time since Ernest Bevin sacrificed British independence for "Marshall Aid," we have seen Britain openly challenging American leadership at the U.N. General Assembly on a major issue: not just whether the Soviet Union and India should be seated at the Korea conference, but fundamentally whether Rhee and Dulles should be allowed to get away again with the manoeuvre of June, 1950, and plunge the Far East—perhaps the whole world—into war. The aggressive and infinitely perilous character of American foreign policy has never before been so universally understood and condemned. Indeed, even the columns of the capitalist newspapers, which have hitherto regarded this matter as strictly taboo, have at last, cautiously, begun to reflect what informed opinion has long understood.

On August 27, "The Star" featured, in the most prominent position on the front page, an article by its Special Correspondent in London, criticising the American Government for its "appeasement of Syngman Rhee.

"It is an undisputable and publicly established fact that South Korea wants war . . . Dr. Rhee's aim is the unification of all Korea under his authority, and . . . this aim cannot be realised by a limited war but only by an unlimited war against China which in turn would be likely to lead to a world war.

"All this is clear cut and simple. What is . . . highly mysterious and difficult to understand is the American attitude. Two explanations are possible. **One would be that America herself had decided on war;** the other that America, fearing war, and seeing Dr. Rhee bent on it, sees no other way of controlling him than appeasing him." (Our emphasis.)

What is highly mysterious and difficult to understand is the meaning of the second "explanation" quoted. And what is clear cut and simple is the fact that Syngman Rhee does not and cannot open his mouth without prompting from Washington. Yet, after over seven years of servile adulation of American policy by the "Star" and the rest of the daily press, in which every State Department propaganda handout about the "free world" was reverently presented as



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a latter-day gospel, we are not so much disappointed to find the "Star" presenting only half the truth as we are delighted to find it presenting any truth at all. It is as though a little fresh air were admitted to a stuffy, smoke-filled room.

## **Beware of Illusions**

Two illusions should be avoided.

The first is that the rulers of the British Empire have suddenly been transformed into doves of peace. Far from it. The cruel war on the villages continues in Malaya; new reinforcements have been despatched to participate in the Kenya man-hunt; and as we write fresh news comes of the opening of a new chapter of imperialist violence to force the Federation plan upon the unwilling Africans of Nyasaland. Britain's rulers have not renounced war; but they **have** awakened to the harsh reality that American global war strategy and plans spell ruination to them—and also, that under cover of the loud-mouthed slogans of "containing Communism," American agencies are quietly and steadily sapping British interests in every corner of the world. A vivid illustration is the neat double-cross which the Americans have just put across their "allies" in Iran.

The second illusion is to imagine that the megalomaniacs who plotted the "cold war" will now capitulate to the massive demand for negotiations. On the contrary, faced with the bankruptcy and the impending collapse of the whole "N.A.T.O.," "E.D.C.," "Middle East Alliance" edifice they have so painfully erected, we must expect further desperate and dangerous manoeuvres from them.

When Mr. Malenkov made his dramatic announcement about the Soviet hydrogen bomb, the official American reaction was not, at last, to accept the Russian proposals, reiterated since 1946, for the prohibition of atomic weapons under international supervision and control. Instead we had the same alarmist talk about "stepping up defence expenditure," yet higher taxation, yet further measures to transfer the American economy on to a full war basis.

But to millions in America and throughout the world it is becoming daily clearer and more obvious that this line of policy is a counsel of doom, that braggadocio and competition in developing yet more terrible engines of destruction can have only one ending. For the sake of human survival, another path must be found. The path of peaceful settlement, disarmament, international trade and co-operation.

## **Within Our Grasp**

Never were the opportunities greater for the world peace movement to make a decisive impact on world history. Never was the need more urgent and crucial. In truth, as the convening call for the first South African Peace Congress announced, "Peace is within Our Grasp."



Against this world background, the Congress was a notable landmark in the development of the peace movement in this country, uniting the pioneer groups of the Transvaal, the Cape and Natal, in the new South African Peace Council; bringing together for the first time delegates from the national executives of the African and Indian Congresses, the S.A. Labour Party, and a representative cross-section of progressive trade unions and people's organisations, from different parts and different nationalities of the country, in the sacred cause of peace.

The Congress did more than to lay firm organisational foundations for the rapid expansion of the peace movement which is now so pressingly demanded. It also laid down in its resolutions the broad, main principles of policy which are essential for the growth of the movement in the particular circumstances of South Africa. Prior to the Congress, much time had been expended in controverting the views of a small group of sectarians, who harboured the view that the movement should be restricted to a narrow circle of "active peace workers", in isolation from the main body of organised progressive forces. The Congress decisively rejected such views. The constitution of the new national Peace Council provides for the association of democratic mass organisations standing together with it against war. The Congress recognised, too, that mass support can only be won on the larger issues of world peace when these are shown to be related to the problems uppermost in the people's minds: the problems of Africa and of our Government's policy.

Adopted by an overwhelming majority, the resolutions of the Congress provide a clear statement of policy which will rally the unconditional support of all who honestly seek to work for peace.

## **Malanism a Threat to Peace**

Added point and emphasis is given to these resolutions by a review of the speech on external policy made by the Prime Minister earlier in August. Dr. Malan, it is true, made formal gestures in support of the decision of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers in June, when, according to the communiqué, they "reviewed the state of relations with the Soviet Union and agreed that no opportunity should be lost of composing, or at least easing, the differences which at present divide the world." He acknowledged the right of any people to choose their own form of government—even a Communist government—provided, of course, as he made clear in the same speech, that the term "people" is defined like "employees" in the Industrial Conciliation Act—to exclude Africans, inside or outside the Union.

The essential content of Dr. Malan's speech, however, bears out in detail the charges made by the Peace Congress, and by the African and Indian Congresses in their memorandum to the United Nations Commission on South Africa, that his Government's policy is a threat



to peace. His militant "Africa Charter" is a declaration of war on the aspirations of the millions of people of this continent. His crude and insulting attacks on the Governments of India and the Gold Coast will hardly serve the purpose of "composing and easing differences." And his remarks about the Protectorates, quoted at the head of this article, are irresistibly reminiscent of that notorious speech on the Czech Sudetenland made by another dictatorial leader some fifteen years ago.

This aggressive foreign policy is the reverse side of the autocratic home policy of the Government. It cannot tolerate democratic liberties at home; nor in the Protectorates or up North. It is accustomed to insult non-whites here; we are not surprised at the unbecoming tone it adopts towards the "Kaffir" Nkrumah or the "Coolie" Nehru.

To the Government, the movement for peace seems as "dangerous" as the democratic and trade union movements. Within the same week Mr. Swart causes proscribing letters to be delivered to Abram Fischer, expelling him from the Peace Council, and to Arnold Selby, expelling him from his trade union. Within a fortnight of the first National Peace Congress, five of its most prominent figures are banned: Hilda Watts, Dan Tloome, Cecil Williams, Nelson Mandela and Alan Lipman.

By the same token, all who struggle against this Government for a democratic South Africa are, in their own way, striking a blow against war. A sign of the maturity and development of the national liberation and labour movements in our country is precisely their growing awareness of the importance of the struggle for a negotiated settlement of international differences.

By giving organised and vocal expression to this consciousness, the new South African Peace Council will be able to add fresh reinforcements to the world peace movement at a critical, indeed decisive, period.

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Having invited the Liberal Party to submit a reply to Mr. Mandela's article which appeared in our June issue, we felt under some obligation to publish Professor T. W. Price's article, which appears on another page. Readers will judge for themselves the merits of such arguments as he advances. We must, however, dissociate ourselves from his method of substituting personal innuendo for reasoned debate, and in particular from the imputation contained in his final sentence, for which we wish to state there is no basis either in the article or in the political activity of Mr. Mandela, who is a well-known leader of the African National Congress. A paragraph, irrelevant we consider to the body of the article, has been omitted. This consisted of a series of sweeping and highly contentious assertions about an organisation which is no longer in existence. As any reply or defence by any contributor who disagreed could not legally be printed, we considered it incompatible with our function as a journal of democratic discussion to publish it.



# AFRICA AND WORLD PEACE

By NELSON MANDELA

**E**VENTS now taking place in Africa constitute the most serious threat to peace, and the freedom of the people of this Continent. Here in Africa the world may well face a major eruption of the worst type. For years now, the Capitalist countries have lived on raw materials and cheap labour from Asia and Africa. The rise of the national liberation movements in Asia and the Pacific Regions and the loss of those vast countries as war bases and centres for investment have forced the imperial powers to turn their eyes to Africa. It is here that we have rich deposits of gold, diamonds and uranium. A few figures taken from the United Nations "Review of Economic Conditions in Africa 1949-1950" reveal the following position in regard to Africa's share in world production of the undermentioned minerals:

Columbite	...	...	99%
Diamonds	...	...	98%
Cobalt	...	...	80%
Gold	...	...	59%

Our continent produces sisal, palm oil, cocoa, coffee and other products. It is in Africa that we have vast supplies of land and cheap labour. The population of Africa is roughly 198,000,000, 97 per cent. of which comprises the indigenous people. Being without any strong trade union movement, the people of Africa are exposed to the most vicious and cruel forms of colonial exploitation. **It is this situation that makes the danger of war in Africa very real and close.**

Here the imperial powers of Britain, Belgium, France, Holland, Portugal and Spain have either their chief or their only colonial dependencies. The internal contradictions and conflicts within this imperial camp are broadening daily. In their drive for ever greater profits, these imperial nations vie fiercely with one another for monopoly control of raw materials and markets. The intensification of the armaments drive and war preparations, and more and more interference by the United States of America in the affairs of its satellites, now arouse the dissatisfaction of the ruling circles of those countries. Under the guise of defence against Communism, the United States is in fact eliminating British influence from vast areas of the Pacific. The struggle between the United States and Britain is sharpening daily. The countries of the aggressive Atlantic bloc are in danger of losing their national independence as a result of American interference in their domestic affairs. In their mad lust for markets and profits, these imperial powers will not hesitate to cut one another's throats, to break the peace, to drench millions of innocent people in blood and to bring misery and untold suffering to humanity. In other words,



**the rivalries amongst these colonial powers contain the seeds of an extremely dangerous situation to peace and security in Africa.**

## **Africa as a War Base**

To protect their markets and investments, to crush the national liberation movements and forestall the rise of revolutionary democracy in Africa, America and her satellites have established military bases all over the Continent. America has land, sea and air bases in Morocco, Libya and Saudi Arabia. There are British military bases in Egypt, East Africa, Somaliland and the Sudan. Field Marshal Wilson, the Supreme Allied Commander in the Mediterranean in 1944, writing in "Optima" of June 1953, put the matter very clearly:

the spread of Communism to China and the uncertain political situation in other countries in the Far East are bound to have the effect of contracting the sources of supply of certain raw materials necessary for the manufacture of armaments, which will result in the intensification of prospecting and development in Africa."

According to him the role of the two Rhodesias and Kenya should be to protect and develop sea communications; to be ready to send forces overseas; to develop its industries to maximum capacity for war needs. To do this, he says, it would be necessary for the three colonies to come under one central command. In 1946, the London "Daily Mail" made the position equally clear:

"The British decision to quit Palestine, Burma's secession from the Commonwealth, the weakening of the ties with India and the uncertainty of Britain's tenure in Egypt have hastened the adoption of plans for a new Commonwealth defence system . . . Kenya is the new centre of Commonwealth defence and South Africa its arsenal." Almost simultaneously, the "Daily Express" wrote:

"East Africa is expected to become a main atomic-age training ground of the British Army and a main support base in the Empire defence system."

It is, therefore, clear that Africa has now become a war base for the imperial powers in their war preparations and schemes for war and world domination.

This is the true explanation of the callous determination by, and the indecent haste of the British Government to ram down the Federation Scheme in Central Africa in spite of the united opposition of the African population of those territories. This is the true explanation of the bitter conflict now raging in Kenya between imperial Britain, whose aim is to rob those people of their land and the people of Kenya who are fighting to save their country from being transformed into a military base. Here in Kenya we have a real war waging and, since this sordid affair has provoked the profound indignation of all patriots in Africa, there is a danger of the conflict spreading



to all parts of the continent. This explains why Dr. Malan, the "republican," is forced to visit Britain for the Coronation and to hobnob with the British Queens. This explains why the British Government banishes Seretse from his country at the instance of the South African Government. This is the true explanation of the barbarous and cruel manner in which the liberation movements all over Africa are being suppressed: happenings which have shocked the right-thinking people all over the world and aroused their deepest indignation. **The people of Africa will be the first victim of a future war. Their industries will produce armaments, their raw materials will be used, not to develop their own economies but to destroy those of others.** The war danger in Africa is very close indeed.

The South African Peace Congress which met in Johannesburg recently was convened at a time when people in all countries have realised how urgent it is for them to redouble their efforts to prevent another war and to safeguard peace. People throughout the world are coming to understand how closely the struggle for peace and against the menace of war is linked with the preservation of the right of the nation and the individual to a peaceful existence. This Conference shows that more and more people in South Africa have come to understand the most serious threat to the peace, security and freedom of the people that exists at the present time and the urgent necessity of rallying to remove this threat by joint effort.

This mad lust for profits and markets in Africa, the war preparations of the United States and its satellite countries puts the national independence of the people of the continent, and their very right to live, in serious jeopardy. The threat to the national liberation movements in Africa resulting from the presence of foreign armies arouses the deepest indignation of all patriots. The people of Africa are being forced to realise that peace is their most immediate concern. They demand the withdrawal from the Continent of Africa of all foreign troops and the end of colonial oppression and exploitation.

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## **THE GLORY OF MAN**

By **JOSEPH GILLMAN\***

**I**T is a great privilege for me to be asked to speak to this Peace Congress. Peace turns the back of mankind (and I hope this time for evermore) on brutality, suffering, death, destruction, famine and pestilence, the very negation of all those human aspirations nurtured tenderly through the centuries of suffering as man groped from dark-

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\* Text of a speech delivered by Professor Gillman at the South African Peace Congress, August 23, 1953.



ness, superstition and ignorance to light, human understanding, and full creative expression.

Peace brings with it a need to alleviate human suffering, to uplift and rehabilitate the downtrodden that they too may participate in the enjoyment of the fruits of the earth, and the warm, glad sun.

Peace above all renews our faith in man, for what greater experience is there than the full appreciation of the dignity of man.

As we look backwards through the ages, we cannot but be impressed by the remarkable potential of man; the great cathedrals, the great works of art, the mastery of nature, of the sea, of the earth and of the air. Deserts have been made to flower, unruly forests have been harnessed, and devastating pestilence controlled—all this, my friends, achieved in the face of hostility; can you imagine when all the people of the world are liberated, are allowed to understand each other, are given every opportunity to find full creative expression, what joy, what a spectacle of human achievement will spread over the face of the earth! We shall indeed witness the true glory of man. These are not pipe-dreams, these are the things that can come to be if you desire them.

As I think of Africa today, of that vast territory extending from the Sahara to Cape Town, with its African-Indian population of over 160 million, and of its 4 million whites; as I reflect on the plight of the people—of the one million lepers, of the millions of tuberculotics, parasite-infested human beings, of the millions of babies who are born into filth and degradation, and who never reach the age of 12 months, and when I reflect that there are vast expanses of land stretching from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean which if cultivated can feed easily the entire continent of Africa as well as Europe, then I know that there is a great, urgent task before us.

And that is why I talk of peace now. You have got to feel it, dream it, lest you be distracted by other nefarious desires.

Lest you feel alone here today, lest you feel that you are voices crying in the wilderness, I would assure you that there are at least 700 million people thinking the same way. Grasp the hand of your comrades, raise up your voices, that a great cry resound through the entire universe—for peace, and for the restoration of the dignity of man, and all that it means. For happiness!

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## THE LIBERAL PARTY REPLIES

By T. W. PRICE

**A**N article described editorially as “Mr. Mandela’s searching analysis of the Liberal Party” was published two issues ago in “Liberation.” Much of the article is the usual critical mumbo-jumbo, a sort of intellectual throwing of the ideological bones, used by Leftists everywhere in their “analyses” of Liberalism. It all supports a question, much the same as the famous one rapped out by Pistol.



another furious romantic: "Under which King, Besonian? Speak or die!"

Having asked the question whether the Liberals stand for Dr. Malan's version of the "people" or Mr. Mandela's, he uses his critical rigmarole to arrive at an astonishing answer, as amazing as any rabbit pulled out of the Marxian hat. The Liberals are only a species of subtle Nationalist. In fact they stand for "the acceptance of the Rehabilitation Scheme, Bantu Authorities, Group Areas, Public Safety, Criminal Law Amendment Acts and all the wicked policies of the Government."

The impetus of this fine frenzy carries Mr. Mandela even further. He declares, "In practice they (the Liberals!) acquiesce in the slavery of the people, low wages, mass unemployment, the squalid tenements in locations and shantytowns."

This sort of flat accusation can only be answered by a straightforward denial. The Liberal Party rejects completely the Bantu Authorities, Group Areas, Public Safety, Criminal Law Amendment and many other Acts and wicked policies of the present Government. This has been very clearly demonstrated by the actions, statements and congresses of the Liberals at present responsible for the leadership of the Party.

As for the Liberal Party's interest in maintaining underpayment, unemployment and squalor the following extracts from the summary of the Liberal Party's first congress will be of interest:

#### **"Economic and Labour Policy.**

"The Liberal Party recognises that one of the most urgent social and economic problems facing South Africa is Poverty, due primarily to the retarded development of its human and material resources. The Liberal Party accordingly bases its economic policy on the following fundamental points:

"(a) that the chief way to increase the wealth of the community and thereby raise living standards, is to raise the productivity of our people, whether employed in agriculture, mining, industry or commerce.

"(b) that productivity, and thereby the National Income, should be raised by increasing the skill and efficiency of the whole of the population by encouraging the stabilisation of the labour force in town and country and by permitting resources to move to where they can be most productively used.

"The Liberal Party is opposed to the Industrial Colour Bar, and among other things, recommends the deletion of that part of the definition of 'employee' in the Industrial Conciliation Act No. 36 of 1937, whereby African men are excluded from the terms of that Act.

"The Liberal Party maintains that the right of all persons to join or organise legally protected trade unions should be enjoyed by all."



Also:—

“The Liberal Party pledges itself to implement a housing programme on a national scale.

“It will base its programme on the recognition of the right of all individuals to buy and own property with security of title.”

The suggestion that the Liberal Party stands for the “slavery of the people” has already been partly met by the foregoing extracts. But possibly Mr. Mandela will maintain that because the Liberals do not support him in his demand for an immediate universal adult franchise, they are in fact anxious to preserve “slavery.” His argument is more or less like this. The present system of the Nationalists and their policy of shrinking the franchise is “slavery”. The Liberals are no better than the Nationalists because they only want to expand the franchise.

Incidentally the Liberals put no limit of pigment or class upon the expansion of the vote to South Africa's population. It only places an educational limit (Std. VI) or an economic limit, and then proposes a 20 year plan for universal literacy, plus another plan for raising the productivity and earning capacity of all.

Mr. Mandela relies heavily for his emotional case against the Liberals on the fact, unsubstantiated, that they tried to call off the Defiance Campaign. If certain Liberals did advise against the Campaign it was because they were aware that those in control were only very sketchily “in control”. It was apparent almost from the start of the campaign that it would be side-tracked by some incident or another in which the Africans would be the chief sufferers. And this did in fact happen, playing into the hands of the Nationalists, and giving them the excuse to put the African population more under the political yoke than ever.

The whole tactical conception of the Campaign was ill-advised, and the concentration of the demonstrations into the East Cape area showed no grasp of realities. It was remarkable that the African people showed up so well while acting under the hazy, romantic, and over-ambitious plans of their leaders. A good idea was ruined by poor administrative execution.

That the Liberals are not against the organisations themselves or even their leaders, but only very dubious of their tactics during the Defiance Campaign, must be fully apparent from the resolutions taken by them at their founding congress:

“The Party considers the existing policy of rendering Non-European leadership ineffective to be both unjust and dangerous to us all.

“The Party protests against the restrictions placed on the movements of the president of the African National Congress, ex-Chief Luthuli, and objects to the description of him as an inciter of feelings of racial hostilities.”



And much else besides.

When mob-murder became, however unjustifiably, associated with the Campaign in the public mind, the Campaign became a debacle. The present shaky control which African leaders have over their followers is no guarantee that any Campaign of this sort in the future can be carried out peaceably. No constitutional party, however sympathetic to Africans, can in any way encourage or contemplate a movement which, it seems inevitable, will end in useless tragedy for hundreds of Africans—or, for that matter, for Europeans.

Mr. Mandela still trots out the old, heart-warming clap-trap about "mass struggles" and "people's fights" which please the militant intellectual in his arm-chair but only ends in some bewildered worker being cudgelled in the city square. He dreams not in South African realities, but in terms of the rosy clichés born of the October Revolution. And he demands that we make an immediate choice between two political illusions—the Big Rock Candy Mountains of the Nationalists, and those of his own ideological ilk:

Just in case the Big Rock Candy Mountains allusion escapes Mr. Mandela, we offer him a verse from the famous song:—

"In the big Rock Candy Mountains  
All the cops have wooden legs,  
The bull-dogs all have rubber teeth,  
And the hens lay soft-boiled eggs.  
The farmers' trees are full of fruit,  
And the barns are full of hay—  
And I'm bound to go where there ain't no snow,  
Where the rain don't pour, and the wind don't blow,  
In the big Rock Candy Mountains."

All the tramp believed he had to do to arrive at this delectable spot was to walk down the road into the sunset, and all Mr. Mandela believes that he has to do to arrive in his Utopia is to have one real good mass struggle.

The Liberal Party is not fooled by these fond illusions. It believes that by argument, much organisation, and ceaseless constitutional action it can arrive at the objective of true freedom for all—and that without any storming of bastiles, barricade mounting or waving of tattered banners. And also with no tombstones as milestones.

Even in the editorial in support of Mr. Mandela's article there is a modicum of confused thinking. In an argument which presumably purported to show what a futile Party the Liberal Party is, the editorial states,—"If 43 years since the demise of Cape Liberalism has taught us anything, it is surely that the Non-Europeans will get nothing but kicks, disenfranchisement, and apartheid, until they are organised and determined and united enough to take their rights for themselves." But surely this is an argument for the revival of Cape Liberalism, for a return to the mode of progression which is the only one that leads forward at a good enough pace to a united nation and a whole democracy. It is the great middle way between the two great will-o'-wisps, the complete victory by force over the blacks by the whites that is the "ignus fatuus" of the Nationalists, and the complete victory by force of the blacks over the whites, which is that of Mr. Mandela.

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(Reference is made to the above article in the Editorial of this issue of "Liberation")



# THE LINGUISTIC REVOLUTION

By PETER N. RABOROKO

**“I**N every form of society” writes Mr. M. Lewis, “because language is so closely related to the thoughts, feelings and actions of men, we cannot change the extent, nature, functions of language without setting in motion, further, perhaps unintended, changes.”

As a result of a number of advances of great significance to social growth there have been changes in the extent, nature and functions of language. The advances, which constitute historical landmarks are: the development of language itself, the advent of writing, the invention of printing and the instantaneous transmission of speech and writing. The cumulative effects of these changes have been so great that they have initiated a new era: the era of Linguistic Revolution. Humanity in general, and Africa in particular, is on the threshold of this Revolution.

The spread of literacy, stimulated by, and in turn stimulating, newspapers, cheap books and libraries, the telegraph and the cheap postage rate: all these things have meant that people read and write more. Today the written word, a commonplace commodity, spans the world with the speed of thought.

The invention of the telephone, the radio and other communication machines has led to a renaissance of the spoken word, with tremendous implications for human development.

The significance of these developments lies in the fact that they transform human conduct, which process must affect thought, feelings and impulses, as well as overt behaviour since language is fundamental and pervasive to man as an individual and in his social life.

It is against a background such as the one we have delineated that we shall examine the linguistic problems facing us.

## **Dr. Nhlapo and the Language Question**

In the previous issue of “Liberation,” Dr. J. M. Nhlapo deals with the language question. Dr. Nhlapo’s approach to the question, his formulation and treatment of it show a failure on his part to grasp the essentials of the situation. This failure emanates from his inability to appreciate the fundamental fact that the language problem is, on both the national and international level, a part of the social question which is the central problem of our day, and as such cannot be dealt with in isolation.



In his approach to the problem Dr. Nhlapo quotes Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch as saying: "The want of some common 'world language' is, I assume, being felt by educated Europeans ever since Latin faded out as the common language."

We know that "educated Europeans", in their racial arrogance regard a common European language, like Latin, as a "common world language". As a spokesman of the imperialist nations of Europe Sir Arthur obviously conceives of the 'world' as the part inhabited by the imperialist nations of Europe. Thus in his basic conception of a 'world' language Dr. Nhlapo is clearly in the bonds of Herrenvolk philosophy, according to whom 'international' refers to relations between European or 'civilised' nations—a euphemism for 'exploiting and oppressing nations.'

In his approach Dr. Nhlapo further states that "Linguistic barriers do not only constitute an international but an intertribal problem." Here again the learned doctor fails to distinguish the significant from the trivial, the important from the unimportant, the main current of the stream from its eddies and backwashes. To state

the approach to the problem in tribalistic terms is to fail to grasp the import of the working of social forces in our midst. Tribalism as such is a decaying and disintegrating force, and even among the indigenous peoples of Africa it has in many parts ceased to be a force at all. The tribes and tribalism are still with us but they have ceased to be of social force. Thus whilst inter-tribal problems do exist they are not significant. To speak of linguistic barriers as constituting an "intertribal problem" is to mistake the apparent problem for the real one, to mistake the eddies and backwashes for the main current of the stream.

Thus, in these circumstances, we cannot but reject Dr. Nhlapo's approach to the problem, as well as his formulation of it. Since his treatment was based upon his formulation of the problem we need not here concern ourselves with it. Having dug out the foundation of his case, which was in any case embedded in the bed-rock of shifting sand, we need hardly bother about the walls, which were bound to crumble and tumble to Mother Earth. Our task is to seek a bed-rock of concrete in which to embed the foundations of our problem.

## A National Language for Africa

The idea of a common language for all humanity is an ideal which cannot receive practical application for many years to come. An international language, to be functionally effective, must aim at making the various nations of the world, and not only their leaders, effective members of one world. However, within the foreseeable future, national languages will be used for satisfying the immediate needs of the members of various nations.

The urgent problem which we shall soon have to face practically is that of a common language for Africa.

We have already indicated that tribalism is a dying social force in Africa. African nationalism, an emergent and growing factor, is

the new, significant social force in Africa. The existence of a nationalism presupposes the existence of a nation. A nation is an historically evolved stable community of people, arising on the basis of a community of language, of a compact territory, of economic life, of social institutions and of behaviour patterns.

Before the advent of colonialism Africa, like India and Indonesia, was, despite the fact of its physical compactness, a mere geographical expression. From the seventeenth century the rising commercial capital of Europe set in motion forces that affected the internal economy and the social life of the indigenous people of Africa. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century the new industrial capital of Europe



once again set in motion forces that radically affected the internal economy as well as the social life of the African people. It is worth while noting that this new industrial capital was largely built

through the African people, who, during the rise of European commercial capital in the earlier period, had been forcibly removed from Africa and exploited in the slave trade and as a labour force.

## Evolution of the Nation

Contrary to popular notions on the subject it is not essential that a nation should evolve out of a community of tribal or even racial affiliations. Both the British and the American nations which have evolved out of the combination and amalgamation of different tribes and different races, are a living negation of this popular fallacy. The African nation is thus founded on the broad basis of people deriving their origin from different tribes and different races. Thus the conception, 'birth and growth of a nation' presupposes the disintegration of tribes and races and their neutralization as a social force. The theory of "the blood" as the basis of such a nation is incompatible with the facts. Such a theory falsely implies that this nation is inherently capable of accommodating people of other national or racial origins.

Through factors of imperialism, which have stunted the national growth of this nation, the creation of common social institutions consonant with the being and social development of this nation has been

prevented. Already, however, there is in existence a movement historically destined to create the appropriate social institutions. Thus at a higher stage of development the existence of such institutions is bound to become a reality.

The question of a national language, the outward and visible sign of mature nationhood, is being resolved by forces mightier than ourselves. In this regard we already see in the social forces at work the "first faint stirring of future promise."

The community of behaviour patterns which we have alluded to as one of the ingredients of nationhood is in part the product of historical evolution and in part that of a conscious social philosophy. Through the medium of a common language the process of integrating the feelings, attitudes, thoughts, impulses and actions of a people will be functionally extended and accelerated.

It is in the light of this approach that Africa's linguistic problem must be viewed and examined.

## How Other Languages Grew

Before examining in detail the question of a national language for Africa let us examine the experience of some other nations.

In Great Britain, the Midland dialect of England, mainly on account of its geographical situation, became the accepted standard English and consequently the national language of Great Britain. Here we must not forget that both Ireland and Wales, on account of their previous repression by the English, ultimately rejected English as their mother tongue.

In 1944 the British Government

decided to promote the use of Basic English as an international auxiliary language within the Commonwealth as well as beyond.

In India, where English had acquired a special function of intercommunication during the British occupation, Hindi has by statute been adopted as the national language and is expected within fifteen years to become the first language of India.

In the United States, English was the language of the pioneers. Within the U.S.A. there are large communities speaking, reading and



writing the languages of their original homes in Europe. As a result of this there is a great deal of functional illiteracy in English. In the words of Mr. M. Lewis "it is only in the presence of a common language functionally effective in thought, feeling and action that it is possible for the U.S.A. to be an integrated society in the face of military, economic, political and social needs."

At the Revolution, when the inception of the Soviet Union took place, an attempt was made to establish Russian as the one language for the constituent republics. When the various peoples showed the usual resistance, this policy was changed. Although Russian was rejected as a first language it was readily accepted as a second language and serves the purpose of a common means of intercommunication. All the Republics in which Russian was not already the vernacular decided in 1920 to make it a compulsory second language in their secondary schools.

## A Single Common Language

In all the national polities we studied, the problem has been one of a single common language which every member of the society can speak, read and write.

The immediate approach to the solution of this problem has been the adoption of bilingualism which allows the adult the use of his own mother tongue for the satisfaction of his immediate needs and desires and of a second language for his effective membership of the larger society.

The problem of encouraging literacy has also led to the simplification of both the spoken and the written language. The movement

## An Auxiliary Language

With the problem thus stated it becomes clear that such a language must first be regarded as an auxiliary language to serve the intercommunication needs of the people of Africa who at present speak

The serious linguistic problem facing the Soviet Union is how to achieve adult functional literacy in this one common language. When, in another generation or two, the vast majority of Soviet citizens begin to use Russian for their immediate needs it will automatically become their mother tongue.

There has for centuries been a common written language throughout China but no common spoken language. On this question S. S. Karlgren remarks "an edict issued in Peking can be read and understood everywhere in this vast country, but the Cantonese read it aloud in a way that sounds utter nonsense to the Pekingese." In an attempt to correct this defect the Chinese government officially adopted a common script in 1918 and embodied this in a common national dictionary. As the traditional written language of China was too scholarly, a kind of Basic Chinese has been evolved to encourage the growth of literacy.

in each case is towards the achievement of functional efficacy in speech and writing in the common language and the consequent facilitation of the integration of feelings, thoughts and actions.

Having seen how the problem of a common language presents itself to various national polities we may now ask in what form the problem presents itself to Africa. For Africa, the problem is the adoption of a common language that will make the people of Africa functionally effective members of the African Nation and that will at a later stage satisfy their immediate needs and desires.

languages that are unintelligible to one another. It means also that at a later stage when such a language is used by various people for the satisfaction of their immediate needs and desires it will have



become their Mother tongue. When such a language acquires functional efficacy in speech and literacy for the adult members of the African community it will then be firmly entrenched as a national language.

Which language should be chosen as an auxiliary? It might be tempting to advance the claims of one's own sectional or regional dialect. Or it might sound plausibly "objective" to advance the claims of French or English, Portuguese or even Afrikaans, as being widely understood in different parts. Such approaches, however, are basically invalid, because they ignore the real social forces at work in Africa. It would repay us better to study and analyse the social forces at work in our continent.

Unlike India, which enjoyed the doubtful honour of being under one oppressor power, Africa enjoys the unenviable honour of having five or six oppressor powers. Although the essential nature of the oppression is strikingly the same, the methods and approaches to the achievement of the task of oppression sometimes differ radically and even fundamentally.

Under the Portuguese policy of "assimilation" the educational curricula have no reference to the child's own mother-tongue. In this

way a happy few Africans are "assimilated" into the oppressor class and are, through neglect of their mother-tongue, successfully estranged from the mass of their people.

Under the South African policy of segregation the educational curriculum gives the African a smattering of his mother-tongue, and then burdens him with the task of learning two of his masters' languages on the explicit understanding that he becomes a more efficient tool.

Under the Belgian policy of "integration" the African child is now permitted the luxury of the vernacular for purposes of intercommunication with his "black brethren," and Swahili has been picked for the purpose. Those who became successfully "integrated" into the ruling caste may not only help in exploiting their black brethren but may also get into white hotels and travel in white trains without their less fortunate black mothers, black fathers or black sweethearts.

Under the British policy of "partnership" the problem of intertribal communication has imposed the necessity of using Swahili for Mother-tongue instruction in Zanzibar, Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda.

## The Spread of Swahili

The logic of circumstances has already forced different oppressor powers to foster the teaching of the same vernacular in different zones. The same factor has forced one oppressor, Great Britain, to foster the spread and teaching of this same vernacular.

The spread of Swahili is extending northwards and southwards beyond the confines of the areas mentioned. A number of leading Universities of the world, like the University of Leningrad, have provided a professorial chair for the teaching of Swahili. It has been classed by language scholars as the ninth important language of the world.

In Europe there are no Europeans.

There are only Frenchmen and Germans and Swedes. In Africa there are no Nigerians, Ugandans and South Africans—there are only Africans. This emerging fact is a pointer to the significant difference between the nationalism of Europe and the nationalism of Africa. It is this fact that will facilitate the spread of a "lingua franca" in Africa. On account of its geographical situation Swahili is the most significant language in Africa today.

We have in Swahili the nucleus of a common African language. It is this common language that is destined to provide a basis for a common language for Africa.

Swahili belongs to the Bantu lan-



guage family which includes more than two hundred languages and dialects spoken from the Cape to the Cameroons. Although it has, unlike our local Fanakalo, retained its essentially Africanic grammatical structure, its vocabulary has bor-

rowed much from Arabic, Galla, Somali, Portuguese and other languages. It was set down in writing before the coming of the white missionary and of the white trader. It has many dialects conditioned by local differences.

## The Basis for a National Language

Writing on constructed or semi-constructed languages, F. Bodmer observes: "It is beyond human ingenuity to construct a live skylark but the aeroplane has advantages which no flying animal possesses. Apple trees and gooseberry bushes are also products of growth . . . but geneticists have produced new varieties of fruits by combining inherited merits of different strains or allied species. The work accomplished by pioneers of the science of language shows that it is possible to produce new language varieties by combining the inherent merits of different forms of natural speech."

The foregoing analysis does not imply any obligation to accept Swahili *holus-bolus*, without regard to its structural defects or to the inadequacy of its present vocabulary to the task of expressing the scien-

tific or philosophical concepts of our age. It may be that the solution to the problem lies in the synthesis between its present form and substance and new elements derived from an intelligent approach to the our society. Understood in this context, Swahili offers the necessary question of language-planning in basis for "Basic Africanic," an urgent necessity to enable the people of Africa to become effective members of one society.

The proposal for the use of "Basic Africanic" as the auxiliary language of every child in Africa, irrespective of his colour or creed, assumes that regional languages will be retained. The use of any language as an auxiliary presupposes the use of the child's own mother-tongue for the satisfaction of his own immediate needs.

## An Aspect of Emancipation

It would be an illusion to discuss the language question in Africa in isolation from our major social and political problems. An all-African medium of communication is, from our viewpoint, reasonable, convenient and progressive. From the viewpoint of our various rulers, however, it may seem subversive and dangerous. They would prefer to perpetuate tribal linguistic and other divisions, and instruct us in European languages only to the extent that would enable us to receive our orders and report on their execution. Therefore the language question in Africa can only be seen properly as one aspect of our struggle for emancipation from white imperialism.

At the same time, that national

struggle itself will be the poorer if it overlooks the importance and the dynamic character of the language question. It is a primary requirement for us to grasp the leading principles of the language question. We must free our minds from the assumption that the imperialist powers, and the sheltered position of their languages, have some to stay permanently in Africa. We must study and discuss linguistic problems; popularise the idea of a common language; examine different points of view, the language problems of different countries, the idea of an international language.

The language question must be taken up as part of the national liberation movement.



# THE BATTLE OF THE BOOKS

By A. P. O'DOWD

**H**E thinks too much; such men are dangerous," said Julius Caesar of one of his enemies in Shakespeare's play. Caesar was not the first or the last dictator to deprecate the habit of thinking. To prevent dangerous thoughts has ever been the ambition of the enemies of freedom. It is a difficult ambition to realise; ideas have a way of out-running the nimblest detectives. But if one cannot directly control thought, one can at least try to minimise the stimulation of thought. That is why tyrants ban books.

The idea is not a new one. In the Middle Ages, no book could be printed without the permission of the censors of the church. An Index of Prohibited Books was kept, and anyone who was found in possession of a book which appeared in the Index was in for serious trouble.

Twenty years ago, this sort of thing might have been regarded as an historical curiosity. The twentieth century, so it seemed, had realised that men who think are useful rather than dangerous—that the free exchange and growth of ideas is the very foundation of man's progress.

Then came Hitler and the Middle Ages returned with him. He was not content to control the publication of new books; he wished not only to halt the advance of men's minds, but also to wipe out the achievements of the past. He believed that he could command the ideas of our civilisation to be forgotten, the accumulated wisdom of the ages to disappear. So he ordered the purging of libraries and the banning of books.

Hitler died, but unfortunately not all his policies died with him. In America today, McCarthy's committees are busy "screening" public libraries. The information libraries run by the United States Government overseas are not per-

mitted to have any book in stock which was written by a Communist, an ex-Communist or an author whom the McCarthyites choose to regard as pro-Communist. So rigid is this rule that even the books of Whittaker Chambers, McCarthy's renegade professional witness, have fallen under the ban. In the Middle Ages, a heretic could save himself by confession and repentance. In America today a man who has once blasphemed against the Almighty Dollar is unclean for life.

Where McCarthy leads, Malan is sure to be close behind. Mr. Swart has not yet taken a trip to London to purge the library at South Africa House, but we already have our Index of Prohibited Books.

Our Index is a curious institution. There is a section of the Customs Act which is intended to prevent the importation of pornographic literature. It empowers the Minister to prohibit the importation of printed matter which is "indecent, obscene or on any ground whatsoever objectionable". The sting lies in the last phrase. If the Minister objects to, say, the Bible, why, then, the Bible is objectionable and out it goes.

The Minister's objections cover a wide field. Just how many books and periodicals are on the Index it is difficult to say. Almost every issue of the Government Gazette contains a few additions. A large number of the banned books are banned on the ground of indecency. Another large class consists of American publications devoted to boxing. These are banned because they show pictures of white and black boxers fighting each other. Then there are over a hundred books and periodicals which have been banned on purely political grounds. The list of these publications makes interesting reading.

A few are definitely Communist



in character (e.g. "Pravda," "Daily Worker" and Lenin's "Two Tactics of Social Democracy"). Since the Government has committed itself to the futile task of trying to legislate Communism out of existence, it is not surprising to find such publications on the list.

But the Government does not stop at trying to prevent us from reading the opinions and theories of Communists. It considers that we must also be protected from knowledge of the most everyday aspects of life in Communist countries. Thus we find "China's Railways" on the list and "Labour Insurance Regulations of the People's Republic of China." The Chinese must be a remarkable people indeed if even their railways are capable of exercising a subversive influence at a distance of several thousand miles!

Then the Government is astute to protect the good name and reputation of its gallant American allies. Four books on the use of germ warfare in Korea are banned, as also "Documents on the Cease-Fire Armistice Negotiations in Korea." Does the Government not want us to know that there are such negotiations, or is it shocked by the way in which the Asiatic Rhee answers back when his white baas speaks to him? Then there is James Aldridge's novel, "The Diplomat," a story of American espionage in Eastern Europe. The Government should consider whether loyal Nationalists may not feel a certain degree of despondency if they are led to believe that the entire western world is honeycombed by ruthless and efficient Russian spies,

while the Americans do no spying at all.

Lastly, there are publications on the list which are not Communistic, have nothing to do with any Communist country and do not contain the slightest suggestion that America ever does anything wrong. These are banned purely because they do not conform to Nationalist racial dogma. The most notorious example is the UNESCO pamphlet "Roots of Prejudice", which was prescribed as a set work for students of sociology in the University of the Witwatersrand before it was banned. In the same category is the "Pittsburg Courier," a paper regarded in America as perfectly respectable, but banned in South Africa because it is largely devoted to the affairs of the American Negro community.

We have one thing yet to be thankful for: that the Government has as yet no general power of censorship over publications produced in South Africa. Several Ministers have suggested the introduction of such a power. We can have no illusions about the use which would be made of it. Whatever glib assurances might be given to Parliament, the Nationalists would abuse an internal power of censorship as they have abused the power to censor imported publications. We must not be misled by the smoke-screen of Dutch Reformed Church complaints against "immoral" publications. The Nationalists are reconnoitring for an all-out attack on the remnants of freedom of speech in South Africa. In whatever veiled form this attack comes, it must be resisted to the utmost.

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