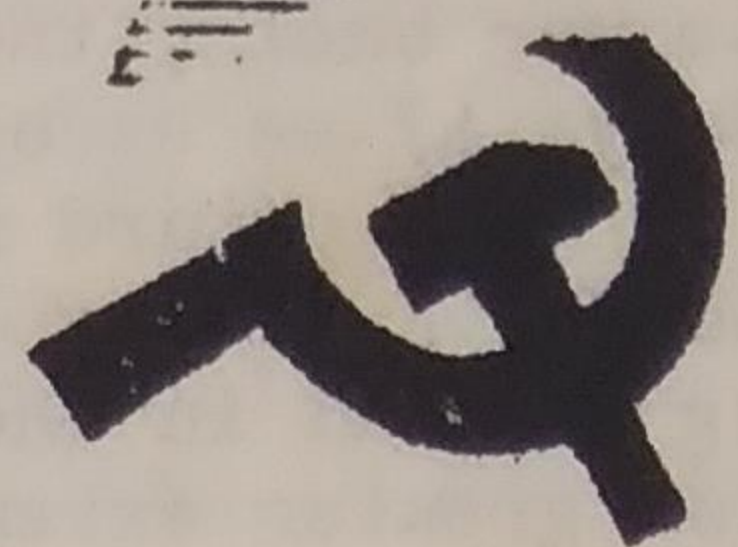


**Workers  
of the  
World,  
UNITE!**

# THE SPARK



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## RETROSPECT : 1938

An ominous atmosphere surrounds the passing of the old year, a suffocating atmosphere which has enveloped the whole world. Everywhere there is despondency, dejection, a heavy gloom. Nowhere is there a ray of light. Not even the paid professional optimists can produce the appearance of cheerfulness. Who can laugh in the face of a gangrene that is eating away his limbs? Who can breathe -- let alone sing or dance or create -- when he is choking amid the stink of his decomposing body? The privilege of possessing more finely developed senses becomes a source of keenest suffering, as time marches on and the decay of our civilisation advances. Today only those who are without any senses at all fail to perceive this decay and its stink.

The year 1938 brought this truth to the notice of millions, more urgently than any previous year had done since 1914. Who can maintain that the world at the end of 1938 is richer than it was a year ago? Who can maintain that we are marching forward along the road of progress, enrichment and welfare of mankind? Who can maintain that we have climbed higher up the ladder of civilisation?

The bitter truth is that the world has become poorer, that we are marching back towards barbarism and slavery, that the falling from off the ladder is proceeding at a quicker rate than the climbing upwards? Owing to the breakneck speed of events, to the innumerable political crises focussing public attention on the question of war or peace, people perforce forgot that the world is again in the grip of an economic crisis of the first magnitude. People have forgotten to enquire, or perhaps they are not very eager to know the number of millions of unemployed throughout the world, during this year 1938. They do not like to be reminded of such unpleasant facts. Except for the huge unemployed army itself, the people are unwilling to think that during the past ten years we have had only two non-crisis years, and that the remaining eight years were years of crisis, or depression, or recession as the ruling classes call it. Eight years of economic crisis out of ten years! Moreover, during these ten years just past, world-production has never again reached the production level of 1929; and this means that even in the short "recovery" period capitalism could no longer make use of all the production machinery at its disposal. Could any better proof be given that at the end of 1938 the world is poorer than it was a year ago? What could be clearer proof than the means of production lying idle, unused, the unused machinery, the unused land, the unused energy, the unused labour power? The people have been deprived of their potential goods, not because they do not need them, for they are, in fact, starving for lack of them. They have had to go without these goods, simply because they cannot pay for them.

The full extent of the economic crisis of 1938 and the impoverishment of the world during this year has also been in part concealed by the frenzied rearmament, which might be more correctly called the feverish preparations for the Second World War. How much more deeply would the crisis be felt, how much bigger would be the unemployment figures, were it not for the fact that millions of people are engaged in producing -- weapons of destruction! Germany, for instance, has less than a million unemployed, and has even a shortage of skilled labour! But when we consider that millions of workers are being mobilised and sent to dig trenches, to erect fortifications on the frontiers, to build military roads, underground aerodromes and air-defence shelters, that millions more are in forced labour service (without actual pay, working limitless hours, under iron military discipline) to replace the former, and that again millions more are in the actual military forces (army, police, storm troops, black guards, Gestapo, spying and propaganda services all over the world), then we can form a true estimate of the economic situation in Germany: viz., a virtual war economy, where production of commodities to satisfy the

needs of the people is reduced to the barest minimum. Guns instead of butter, fortifications and barracks instead of dwelling-houses, etc., etc.

But in the United States and Britain, where the public economy is not on such a definite war basis, the unemployed cannot be absorbed or concealed so readily as in Germany or Italy, if we except such an occasion as arose when the Czechoslovakian crisis provided work of this nature in the digging of trenches in parks or in the Air Raids Precautions service in Britain. It is obvious that in these countries also Capitalism is already trying to find in the war preparations an escape from the ravaging economic crisis. To an ever greater extent their economy is being tuned up for war, and the outcome of all this can only be war.

No great knowledge of economics is required in order to grasp this plain fact. Billiards upon billiards more spent on rearmament means billiards upon billiards less spent on food, clothing, housing, or other necessities or conveniences for the people. The people, the workers and peasants, have to pay the cost of this rearmament. They receive less food, less clothing, less housing, fewer social services, scantier education, in order that the arsenals of the world may be fed with guns, tanks, gases and bombers. And eventually they will consume the contents of these arsenals. The arsenals will feed them with the food of death.

Naturally the ruling classes everywhere are pushing the burden of the economic crisis on to the exploited. The workers and the colonial people have to pay. The slight gains which the organised workers have been able to win in the bitter struggles of previous years are now being lost in the onslaught of the capitalists. The most striking example of this is provided by the industrial struggles and strike wave in France at this time, with the bosses advancing and the workers losing both economically and politically. In 1936 Reformism and Stalinism succeeded in saving Capitalism in France by checking the workers' struggle, promising them through the People's Front to safeguard their social and economic gains, collective contracts, holiday with pay, a 40-hours' week, social legislation, etc. In 1938 the bourgeoisie recovered, took the offensive, brushed aside their helpers such as Blum and Thorez, and proceeded to take away everything which they had been forced to give two or three years before. The People's Front fulfilled its despicable role of paving the way for Fascism. If the French working class will digest these lessons speedily, it will not be too late even at this eleventh hour to save France from Fascism.

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It is not only in South Africa that we feel we have been carried back a hundred years. Some here have been finding consolation in the thought that it is only the Centenary Celebrations which outwardly have turned the clock backwards, and that, as soon as the Celebrations are done with, we shall return to a normal mind. But this is a liberal illusion. For it is not merely in the Voortrekker beards and costumes and vehicles that the thrust backwards is expressed. It is not merely the outer appearance but the spirit of 1838 that is with us; the spirit of reaction of the slave-owners against the liberation of the slaves, the spirit of reaction against reforms, against liberalism. Today, as in the day of the Voortrekkers, there is the same hatred and intolerance towards the Non-Europeans, the rigorous segregation, forever barring them from citizenship, from equality even before the law. After a hundred years of strife the Voortrekkers have won outright. The legislation of today has accomplished the enslaving of the Bantu more fully than the Voortrekkers of 1838 ever hoped for. Their principle of the Masters and Servants relationship has been supplemented by the principle of Trusteeship, which totally rejects all claims of the Bantu to a real place in civilisation. What is still worse is that whereas a hundred years ago reaction was retreating before the march of progress and embarked upon the Trek, today progress has retreated before the march of reaction. Today progress is on the trek.

Decaying Capitalism is prepared to go to any length in a compromise with the feudal forces. It throws off the mantle of democracy; it accepts the "leader" principle, the racial theories, against which it fought a hundred years ago. Not only in the presence of Hitler's envoy, who was wildly cheered and carried shoulder-high at the Celebrations, has this changed attitude found expression. Not only in the shouting down of Mr. Douglas, or in the adoption of "Die Stem" as the National Anthem, or in the re-naming of Roberts' Heights. It has been clearly seen in the Imperialist press and the English liberals, as they crawled on their bellies accommodating themselves to the holiday spirit, to the processions and celebrations where they were not wanted, and swallowed all the insults of the Fascist forces on the march. And of course, together with the English liberals who pretended not to notice the Fascist character of this march and mobilisation, accompanied everywhere by anti-semitic outbursts, there were the Stalinists, who also tried to accommodate themselves to the trekkers. The threat of violence, however,

against Trade Union participation prevented the Stalinists from sharing in this latest People's Front venture!

The truce between Hertzog and Malan, the Government's parleyings through Pirow with the Fascist countries exclusively, and General Smuts' latest speeches on the necessary modification of Democracy in the "new" world order, on the League of Nations (League of Fascist Nations), and on the contemplated prohibition of parties that endanger "law and order", all these are ominous symptoms for the coming 1939. Reaction and Fascism are on the march in South Africa. We should not be surprised if in the coming months the remnants of "free" speech and a "free" press were to be reserved for those only who accept the viewpoints of the Voortrekkers, or of Imperialism, or of both combined in Fascism.

But, as we have said above, it is not only in South Africa that we witness this retrogression. In Germany and Italy, for instance, the retrogression is of more than a mere (!) hundred years. The complete disappearance of the "Habeas Corpus", the arbitrariness of the rulers in disposing of individuals regardless of their own faked law-courts (e.g., the case of Pastor Niemoller) seems to belong rather to the darkest periods of the Middle Ages than to the 20th century. When a man disappears, his relations are afraid to ask for him or his body! People are arrested for listening to Beethoven's music! And the persecution of the Jews along with revolutionaries has no parallel at any time in history. Even the terrible tales of the Inquisition, and the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal, let alone the Tsarist pogroms and the Black Hundreds, pale in comparison with the sadistic war against the Jews in Germany today. Not only are they beaten to death, tortured and murdered in concentration camps. Not only are their houses set on fire, their businesses plundered. Not only are the "Aryan" shopkeepers forbidden to sell them food, are forbidden in some cases even to sell them milk for the children! Not only are their children forbidden to attend schools. Not only are they driven forth from trades, business, and professions. Not only are they to be segregated in ghettos, not only will they soon have to carry a yellow spot. They are deprived of human rights and status, they are deprived of their possessions, robbed of everything. Yet they are not allowed to leave the country, although there is nowhere in it a place for them to go. (Anti-semitism advances side by side with reaction in every country). Nevertheless, they are kept as hostages. Five hundred thousand citizens are kept as hostages in the country of their birth. They are to be a source of income for the Fascist bandits. Not only for the sake of the milliards marks which they must contribute, but for still more release money to be extracted from Jews in the United States, Britain, Holland, by these sadistic criminals in Germany. And the "civilised world" extends to these unfortunates its sympathy!..... and closes its doors!

This policy is already followed by Italy. And as Fascism spreads and replaces bourgeois democracy in country after country, the fate of the Jews in Poland, Roumania, Hungary, the Baltic States hangs in the balance.

This is what Capitalism in decay looks like in 1938. This is how our civilisation is marching rapidly -- BACKWARDS. It is the greatest mistake to assume that this process is only possible in Germany or Italy, that "this can never happen here". This year 1938 has proved conclusively the fallacy of this argument. The example of "democratic" Czechoslovakia, which turned fascist overnight, exhibits the same hounding of communists, socialists, and Jews. The same process would be found in "cultured" France, if France turned Fascist. And France is on the way to Fascism. How much "democracy" is left in France, or even in Britain? The press is muzzled by the advertisers, Parliament is muzzled by the Government, Criticism of the Prime Minister is strictly "verboden", on the plea that to offer such criticism is "to befoul our own nest". The Fuehrer-principle is strongly advocated as compatible with democracy. The totalitarian system is openly praised as preferable to the clumsy, slow democratic system. And the best way to save democracy from Fascism is to adopt Fascism!! The Official Secrets Act, the Libel Act, and the Incitement to Disaffection Act are but a few steps from the totalitarianisation of the Press. Capitalism in decay moves the world backwards and no country is immune from this process.

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The year 1938 will be set down in the imperialist annals as a "year of peace". The politicians and journalists, the paid servants of the ruling class, will in their New Year messages and reviews stress the point that, while it was an uneasy year, while world peace was several times threatened, still "sanity" prevailed and, thanks to the indefatigable services for peace of this or that statesman, saviour, friend of the people, etc., etc., etc., peace was saved. These rascals close their eyes to China, where the lives of four hundred million people are affected by the war that has been going on there for eighteen months. The millions of those who were killed or wounded, who succumbed to dis-

ease, hardships, hunger, the millions of destitute whose homes and livelihood were destroyed by the warfare, by the brutal air bombardments of the civilian population, the disappearance of big cities reduced to ashes and shambles, the raped and maimed women and children, are not taken into account by these scoundrels who prate of a peaceful 1938. They close their eyes to Spain, where war has been going on for thirty months with all the accompanying devastation and horrors. They close their eyes to Palestine, where the "peace-loving" nation indulges in warfare against the Arab people. Still this is called peace, the peaceful year of 1938! And even this is not the whole tale. There is also to be added the war against the Jews, a most bestial, cold-blooded war to which we have referred above. And always there must be remembered the constant class war against the workers and against the colonial peoples.

We see, then, what kind of peace was "saved". Bearing this in mind, we may proceed to consider certain questions. The first question is: Who saved this peace? Or, alternatively: What saved this peace? The imperialist press of the respective big powers readily supply the answer: Roosevelt, Chamberlain, Daladier, Hitler, Mussolini. The petty bourgeoisie just as readily accept the answer. If it were indeed true that these five rulers "saved the peace", then it would be relevant to inquire who threatened this peace, for they must have saved it from somebody or something that threatened it. The only deduction we can arrive at from such a supposition is this: If these five gentlemen, who represent the ruling class in their respective countries, saved peace, it must have been threatened by the oppressed classes, by the workers and peasants, by the respective workers and peasants of Britain, France, Germany, Italy. This is obviously absurd. But, if it is absurd, then it is they, the exploiters, who threatened peace and they must have saved it from themselves. The workers and peasants everywhere want peace. It is Imperialism, with its struggles and constant economic warfare for colonial markets, for raw materials, for investments, for profits, it is Imperialism that breeds wars, that causes wars, that produces wars. How then can peace be saved by these five bandits who represent Imperialism, the ruling class in their respective countries? How can peace be saved if Imperialism remains? Peace was not saved, and cannot be saved, so long as Imperialism remains, so long as Capitalism remains.

An alternative argument is brought forward from the so-called "Left", that is, from the petty bourgeoisie: "It was the people who saved peace at Munich. The abhorrence of the people in Britain, France, Germany, Italy, of a war, and the realisation by their rulers of this abhorrence forced them -- to come to a peaceful solution". Here the wish of the people, that is, of the workers and peasants, is not enough to prevent war. For if this longing of the people for peace were sufficient to preserve it, we should never have had war. The oppressed classes have no say in the affairs of the country. The State is the organ of domination by the ruling classes, who run it in their own interest. The ruling classes make war without asking the people whether they want it or not. Something more than the mere wish of the people for peace is needed in order to achieve peace. It is necessary to wrest the State machinery from the ruling class and smash the power of the exploiters in order that peace may be achieved.

None of these bandits at Munich was concerned with the wish of the people. And so long as they were not faced with a direct threat of revolution from their working class, the talk about the people saving peace at Munich is nothing more than the pious hope of pacifists who are reluctant to recognise this threat and who will certainly not work for its realisation.

The second question to be answered is: For how long was peace, even this dubious sort of peace, "saved"? Our Prime Minister, Gen. Hertzog, supplied the answer: "For fifty years, if not for ever". If that were so, then Munich should become the Mecca of peace. Hitler and Mussolini, along with Chamberlain and Daladier, should receive the Nobel prize for peace, and in every town memorials should be erected in their honour.

Fifty years of peace! If that were really so, we could understand how James Maxton (the Chairman of the Independent Labour Party in Britain) burst forth into impassioned panegyric in Parliament after the Prime Minister's return from Munich. Even his hysterical benediction and glorification of Chamberlain on that occasion might have seemed almost too modest an outburst from such "a red-hot Socialist" as Jimmy Maxton. But who today can be so stupid as to take seriously the silly statement made by our senile Prime Minister? At the same time as Hertzog made this statement concerning fifty years of peace, another Minister of the Crown in Britain, Mr. Hore Belisha, was a little more conservative and wise in his pronouncement that "we might have saved peace perhaps for a year". But now comes the opinion of Mr. Pirow, Hertzog's probable successor, who has been obtaining information at first hand from the Dictators themselves, all of whom he visited, that

even Mr. Hore Belisha's estimate is too liberal. According to Mr. Pirow, the tension is so acute that war is almost inevitable unless a miracle happens, and that the breaking point will be reached by the time of the coming spring. A similar pessimistic statement was made by Mr. Kennedy, the United States ambassador in London. Even more significant is it that the Imperialist press, the pro-Chamberlain press, dares not refute and dispel this pessimism. Hence comes so marked a change, barely three months since peace was "saved"? Though, indeed, the "change" is one for simpletons only. Just after Munich we said that this is only a respite of short duration and that Chamberlain knows it.

These bandits know each other and the game too well to be deceived by this or that declaration or scrap of paper. "My last territorial claim in Europe" is after all not the last. And of just the same value is the signing of the Anglo-Italian Treaty and its ratification by Mussolini, especially the assurance of the maintenance of the status quo in the Mediterranean. There Memel, here Corsica and Nice and Tunis. Today Lithuania, tomorrow Poland, Switzerland, Denmark. Today Suez and Somaliland, tomorrow Tangier, the Balearics, the Canaries, Hong Kong. Where will the Four-Power Pact stop this revision craze? Three months after the "no more war" declaration, the trade war between Britain and Germany has broken out openly -- without gloves. Chamberlain and his clique are squealing because they feel the pinch in the Balkans and all central and eastern Europe. They speedily conclude the Anglo-American Trade Pact, they send along Eden as a political emissary, they proclaim that they are now ready, they boast of their financial power, they threaten with a five-milliard-pounds rearmament programme, and they know that nothing can save them from war.

The squealing is not over Memel, or Dantzig, or the Jibuti railway. These matters cannot lead to war. It is the colonies, the empire, the world domination, that lead inexorably to war. The Roman "Gazetta del Popolo" said with brutal frankness: "Britain and France have got to pay for peace; Britain by yielding a colonial empire to Germany, France by satisfying Italy's natural aspirations." Anyone who thinks that this can be achieved peacefully, that Britain and France will voluntarily give up empires, is a simpleton.

This, then, is the balance sheet for 1938. A war for the redivision of Africa and the rest of the colonial world, and imperialist war for world-hegemony, are the prospects for 1939. What are the workers and the colonial people going to do? Are they going to support Imperialism and rivet new chains on themselves? Or are they going to turn against Imperialism and smash it, and so attain freedom and peace?

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BANTU, BOER AND LIBERAL

The Voortrekker centenary celebrations afforded an excellent opportunity to our "liberals" to demonstrate the true quality of their liberalism. While all around them the reactionary feudalists were gloating over their subjugation of the Natives and thanking their "god" for giving them the victory; while the more astute spokesmen of the reactionaries were trying to make us believe that the trekkers had performed an inestimable service by spreading civilisation and religion throughout South Africa; while fascist bands were beating up non-Europeans, and fanatical Afrikaners were whipping up chauvinist sentiment among the backvelders; while all these things were going on the "liberals" uttered no protests, exposed none of the lies or distortions of history with which we have been deluged during the last few months. On the contrary, they have for the most part fallen into line with the reactionary propagandists, and even added their own quota.

The leaders of the South African Institute of Race Relations no doubt think of themselves as being in the forefront of liberal thought in this country, and it is therefore highly instructive to look at what they have to say about the Voortrekkers. In a Voortrekker centenary number of their journal, "Race Relations", (Vol. 5, No. 4, Nov., 1938) they publish 8 articles dealing with various aspects of the Great Trek. One of the authors is a clergyman of the Dutch Reformed Church; another is Z.K. Matthews, who is described in the introduction as an "outstanding leader of the Bantu peoples"; and the others are professors or lecturers in South African universities.

Before considering the articles, it is worth while quoting the last paragraph of the introduction, which is signed by R.F. Alfred Hoernle and J.D. Rheinallt Jones.

"In the belief that 'the truth shall make you free' and that faith in the past can only be justified through courage for the future, this number of "Race

Relations" is offered to the public of South Africa of all races, creeds and colours in respectful remembrance of the best elements in the Great Trek -- in which Bantu and Briton, as well as Boer, had some honourable share -- and with an earnest plea for a better appreciation of the human possibilities, active and latent, in all sections of our varied population, so that all may contribute in increasing measure to the well-being of the State. Whatever the past may teach, the future rests with us to fashion".

There is not a single phrase in this paragraph that rings true. "The truth shall make you free". This is one of the most pernicious of liberal ideas. Certainly freedom cannot be achieved without a knowledge of the truth, but neither can it be achieved without a firm determination on the part of the enslaved to know the truth and to use it as a guide in their struggle for liberation. No oppressed class, however clearly it has understood the truth, has ever freed itself without an active struggle against its oppressors. But this is not all. In general human beings pursue truth not for its own sake but as a means to a practical end, and what is presented as "truth" will therefore depend on the purpose for which it is sought. Thus our aim, as revolutionaries, is to liberate all the oppressed and exploited, and therefore we are not interested in the truth that certain capitalists are fine fellows who treat their workers with a good deal of consideration. We are interested in the truth that the capitalist system involves poverty and misery for the working masses, and that their freedom can be attained only by the total abolition of capitalism. But for the liberals, who aim at nothing more than a few tinkering reforms that will ease their own conscience without lifting the burden from the shoulders of the masses, what is accepted as true is precisely the kind of truth that is irrelevant to the purpose of liberating the oppressed. Thus it may be quite true that some of the Voortrekkers were religious men with a stern moral code, as one of the contributors to "Race Relations" (A.H.Murray) is at pains to demonstrate, but can anyone in his senses claim that this is the kind of "truth" that will make the Bantu free? Only one of the 8 articles -- by J.A.I. Agar-Hamilton -- makes any pretence at presenting truth that is relevant to the aim of liberation, for it shows how the Voortrekkers cheated the Natives out of the land that was rightfully theirs.

If the "liberals" confined themselves to the uttering of irrelevant truths, there would be no need for us to waste powder and shot on them. But since they profess to believe in the liberating influence of truth, while at the same time aiming not at the freeing of the masses but at the removal of certain rotten abuses that are continually being thrust under their sensitive noses, they soon become involved in internal contradictions, and in order to escape these contradictions they find it convenient to forget the ordinary standards of verification. This enables them to present not only irrelevant truths but also relevant falsehoods. Thus the cause of freedom is not affected by the knowledge that the Voortrekkers wore beards and rode in ox wagons, but it is positively hindered by the kind of propaganda that seeks to prove that the Voortrekkers carried civilisation to the north, or that they were fine fellows who had nothing but honourable intentions towards the Native tribes they encountered. These are falsehoods which, if widely accepted by the natives, would only serve to cripple them in their struggle for liberation.

The paragraph quoted above is full of such falsehoods. "Faith in the past can only be justified by courage for the future." What meaning can this fine-sounding phrase have for the oppressed? "Faith in the past," in this case the past of the Voortrekkers, can only mean a belief that the social and economic institutions of the past are worth maintaining in the present, and therefore that no attempt must be made to abolish the principle of "no equality in Church and State." Since the journal is offered to "all races, creeds and colours," we can only conclude that the oppressed races are invited to justify their faith in the institutions of the past that still enslave them by deciding to grin and bear them. A fine example of "liberating truth"! The real truth is that faith in the past can never be justified. The cause of liberation can be served only by a severely critical estimate of the past, and a ruthless determination to smash every institution that has outgrown its usefulness. And that means revolution.

"In respectful remembrance of the best elements in the Great Trek". Here again we have a "truth" which, because of its irrelevance to the purpose of attaining freedom, constitutes a falsehood. If some elements in the Great Trek were better than others, that does not alter the plain fact that the final effect of the Trek was to dispossess the Natives and then to enslave them. By emphasising those "best elements" and neglecting the rest, the "liberals" seek to sidetrack the oppressed peoples in their struggle for liberation. A man who has a claim against a bankrupt estate would be justly indignant if the executors were to publish the assets of the estate while concealing the adverse balance. But that is precisely what the Institute of Race Relations is trying to do with respect to the claims of the Natives against the Voortrekkers and their descendants. The claims of the Natives are so enormous that they cannot begin to be satisfied

before the Trek and its traditions are completely liquidated.

"Bantu and Briton, as well as Boer, had some honourable share" in the Great Trek. But what was the "honourable share" of the Bantu? It can hardly be the fact that they were defeated, or that some misguided Natives were tricked into fighting on the side of the Boers. It can therefore only be the fact that they fought to the best of their ability against the invaders. But if that is their honourable share, the only way to show respect for it is to revive the Bantu struggle against the robbers. Is that the intention of the Institute of Race Relations? Certainly not, for if it were, it would be impossible to mention in the same sentence the "honourable shares" of both Bantu and Boer. To mention them together is to create confusion by suggesting that there is no real incompatibility between the interests of Bantu and Boer, whereas the genuine struggle for the liberation of the oppressed demands that the incompatibility between these interests be repeatedly exposed and explained. Once more the "truth that liberates" turns out to be a falsehood that enslaves.

"An earnest plea for a better appreciation of the human possibilities, active and latent, in all sections of our varied population". To whom are these words addressed? They can hardly be addressed to the Boers, for the writers must be fully aware of the futility of such appeals. No matter how willing some of the oppressors may be to appreciate the merits of those whom they oppress, the economic structure of our society makes it impossible for them to reward those merits. The only way to satisfy the demands of the oppressed is to smash the economic basis of existing society and to put socialist economy in its place. The above appeal must therefore be exposed as another enslaving falsehood, designed to conceal from the oppressed the essential cause of their misery.

The very next phrase fully confirms our analysis. The "plea for a better appreciation" is issued "so that all may contribute in increasing measure to the well-being of the State". But what is the State? It is the apparatus by which the ruling class maintains its strangle-hold over the exploited classes. Of course the writers do not intend their readers to understand the term "state" in this sense. They would no doubt like "the well-being of the State" to be understood as "the well-being of all the inhabitants of the country". But we Marxists have no time for sentimental definitions, and in particular for definitions of the State that neglect the essential fact that the population is made up of classes whose interests are mutually incompatible. If the authors intend such a sentimental definition, we must record it as yet another enslaving falsehood. But if they understand the true meaning of the State, we can only say that this is one of the most cynical utterances we have ever encountered. For in that case it means that a "better appreciation of the human possibilities" of the exploited will make it all the easier for the ruling class to exploit them. If this statement came from an open reactionary it would be intelligible, but since it comes from "liberals," there is no expression of contempt that is strong enough to describe it.

Since a single paragraph in the introduction has demanded such a lengthy analysis, it is obvious that at least an entire issue of "The Spark" would be required to deal adequately with the articles in the Voortrekker centenary number of "Race Relation." We shall therefore confine ourselves to an examination of three of the enslaving falsehoods that are embodied in those articles.

The first of these falsehoods is the claim that the Voortrekkers should be judged by their intentions towards the Natives, as revealed in various historical documents that have come down to us. This claim is elaborated in an article on "The Trek and its Legacy", by A. H. Murray. "An economic interpretation of an event", he writes, "goes so far and no further, while in the Trek the men themselves, their outlook on life and the expression of this outlook in their institutions, social, political and religious, are what matter. For, it is in these things that the Great Trek lives on in the South Africa of today". The subtle suggestion here is that if only the Trekkers can be shown to have been men of high principle and noble intentions, then, since that is the part of the Trek that lives on today in South Africa, it follows that their present descendents are motivated by equally high principles and noble intentions. But if that is so, the Natives have nothing to worry about. Their "trustees" are men who look on their "trust" as a "sacred" obligation which their "high principles" make it utterly impossible for them to betray.

Murray has no difficulty in finding the premises for this highly fallacious train of reasoning. He does it by the simple expedient of confining his enquiry to documents and completely neglecting facts. Thus he tells us that before leaving the Cape Piet Re-tief had written: "Wherever we may go the principles of true liberty will be respected...we will draw up proper laws for our future guidance". And again he quotes from Re-tief's instructions to commandants a passage that forbids the maltreatment of servants, the seizure of Native children and the violation of "any tribe or race which is encoun-

tered on the journey". And then he adds: "It is a pity that the Great Trek and its people are not better known by direct acquaintance with the original documents which have been made available". In other words, it is a pity that historians have dug up so many uncomfortable facts that are at variance with these high-sounding sentiments.

If someone were to borrow money from Professor Murray and give him a written promise to repay after a certain period, but left the country without having paid his debt, would the noble professor consider the good intentions of the debtor sufficient compensation for his loss? Yet he expects the Natives to believe that the innumerable wrongs that are done to them are wiped out by the expressed good intentions of Piet Retief and his fellow robbers, and their no less rapacious descendents!

The article is reactionary from beginning to end, and if the editors were as liberal as they pretend to be, they could not possibly have published it. The fact that they have published it is yet another proof that their "faith" in the "truth that liberates" is nothing but a hollow sham.

But Murray apparently feels that it is not sufficient to quote good intentions. He must present evidence to show that those intentions were loyally fulfilled. And this brings us to the second of our enslaving falsehoods. He naturally cannot find any evidence to show that the Natives suffered no material loss from the Trek, so he calmly ignores that aspect of the problem, and laboriously digs up little bits of documentary evidence to show that the Trekkers offered "spiritual" compensation for their material losses. They brought Christianity to the Natives! And apparently we are expected to believe that this was at least as valuable as the land that was filched from them. Listen to the bitter complaint of a Native on this point: "The white man came to our land with the Bible in his hand. Now we have the Bible, and he has the land."

The truth is that when Christianity is taught to a subject race, or one that is about to become subject, it is not for the benefit of their "souls", but for the financial benefit of their oppressors. And Murray is just not quite clever enough in his selection of quotations to conceal this fact. For example, he quotes from a letter that Retief wrote to Dingaan in November, 1837.

"You may believe what your missionaries tell you about God and his government over the world. And I must advise you, in connection with these things, to speak often with these reverend men who wish to teach you God's word; for they can tell you with how great a power God has ever ruled earthly kings, and still rules them. I can assure you that it is a good thing that you have allowed teachers to stay in your land. And I can assure you that they have come to you, because God gave it in their breasts; and they will prove to you out of the Bible that what I say is true. As friend I must tell you the solemn truth, that all -- be they black or white -- who do not wish to listen to God's word, will not be happy...."

This letter, and particularly the last sentence quoted, is a clear threat to Dingaan. He must immediately adopt the religion of Retief and his friends, and if he does not, he will suffer. And what will be the nature of his suffering? Parsons tell their dupes that the consequence of unbelief is "spiritual" suffering, or the torments of hell fire, but they do not as a rule threaten material loss. However, it is obvious from Retief's letter that he is not in the least concerned with Dingaan's "soul". What he is really interested in is Dingaan's power, which of course stands in his way. The problem that faces him is how to undermine that power, and his first step is to try to shake Dingaan's confidence in his own authority. This he does by emphasising one particular aspect of the missionaries' teaching -- "for they can tell you with how great a power God has ever ruled earthly kings, and still rules them."

Now Dingaan has no knowledge of any supernatural powers other than those which he believes to be under his control, so what is he likely to think of this talk about a power that is superior to his own? He will naturally identify that power with the guns of the Voortrekkers. But Retief does not want him to come to that conclusion, so he adds an assurance that the missionaries "have come to you, because God gave it in their breasts; and they will prove to you out of the Bible that what I say is true." That is to say, Dingaan must not think that the missionaries have been sent by Retief to prepare the way for an attack on his authority. They have been sent by God, and their teachings are derived from the Bible, which was not written by Retief.

Having given his "assurance", Retief repeats his threat in even more unmistakable terms, and with an additional touch of hypocrisy that has apparently escaped the notice of the worthy professor, who likes to take his Voortrekker documents at their "face value". "As friend," says Retief, "I must tell you the solemn truth, that all -- be they black



or white -- who do not wish to listen to God's word, will not be happy...." So it is a friendly act to threaten one's "friend" with unhappiness! But what should make Dingaan unhappy? Surely not the simple refusal to accept Christianity! For no man can be unhappy merely because he refuses to believe that he will be unhappy if he refuses to believe. The unhappiness with which Dingaan is threatened must therefore have a material source, such as the loss of land and cattle, or the loss of the power which enables him to secure his possessions. And what menaces that power? He could scarcely have failed to realise that the only force that offered a serious threat to him was that of the white men. In short, no matter how noble his declared intentions may have been, Retief stands self-condemned of having used religion as a weapon to bludgeon the Natives into acting to his advantage rather than their own.

Having proved, to his own satisfaction, though naturally not to ours, that the Voortrekkers did not betray the promises they made, Murray goes on to show that the descendants of the Voortrekkers are still faithful to those promises. He calculates that the annual sum spent by the D. R. Church of the Cape on missionary work among Natives and Coloured people amounts to an average contribution of  $6/2\frac{1}{2}$  per member of the church. But he "forgets" to set against this "generous" gift the hundreds of pounds of surplus value that those same members of the church extract from their Native and Coloured workers. They spend  $6/2\frac{1}{2}$  on the "souls" of the Natives, and they would like us to believe that this is an adequate compensation for the ruthless exploitation of their bodies! Of all the lies invented by the exploiters to justify their exploitation, the lie about religion is one of the most damnable. And one of the most liberating of all truths is the truth that exposes that lie.

The lie about religion does not stand alone. It is part and parcel of a whole system of lies whose object is to confuse and befuddle the oppressed. We are therefore not surprised to find in this same issue of "Race Relations" more than one expression of our third enslaving falsehood, that is, the lie that the Voortrekkers were the torch-bearers of civilisation in South Africa. But what we do find surprising, and even painful, is that the clearest statement and fullest elaboration of this lie should come from the pen of a Native who is described as an "outstanding leader of the Bantu peoples". Here is a passage from Matthews' article.

"When the Voortrekkers set out ready to make the supreme sacrifice in order to break Dingaan's power, they fought for the triumph of the highest and best traditions of the civilisation of which they were the pioneers in the interior of Southern Africa. Their victory has often been described as one of civilisation over barbarism, and therefore when we say that they made South Africa safe for western civilisation, unless words have no meaning, we imply that they intended that the permanently valuable aspects of their civilisation should become part of the heritage of every group represented in South Africa. To say this is not inconsistent with another great wish of the Voortrekkers, namely, that no other group should be denied the opportunity of contributing the permanent values of its own way of life to our national heritage. I take it that this is what is meant by each group developing on its own lines. To my mind, the Voortrekker creed can be said to rest on two pillars, namely, the extension of the essential values of western civilisation to all groups and the freedom of each distinct ethnic group to retain what it considers valuable in its own cultural heritage".

It is the plain duty of every Bantu leader to expose the sham and hypocrisy of this claim about civilisation. But instead of exposing it Matthews espouses it. It is true that he goes on to say that "we have not always worked for the fulfilment of this ideal whether in theory or in practice". But it is not enough to say that; he should have shown that the ideal itself is a fraud, that it does not exist except in the imagination of a few "liberal" lackeys of the ruling class. Since he has failed to perform this obvious duty, we must do it instead.

First of all, let us have a clear idea as to what is meant by civilisation. In the propaganda of the ruling class it is customary to identify it with Christianity and the moral code that is associated with it, that is, with an elaborate system of superstitious beliefs and practices, and a moral code that is designed to protect the property of the ruling class. But history shows that the church has been one of the bitterest opponents of civilisation. Thus the church persecuted and imprisoned Galileo for publishing astronomical researches that were of the greatest practical importance for navigation, and without which there might have been no Voortrekkers to carry the torch of "civilisation" into the heart of Africa. Civilisation means first of all enlightenment -- the very opposite of superstition. But it is much more than that. It means the conquest of nature for the benefit of man, the harnessing of power so that man's needs may be satisfied with a minimum of labour, the application of science to agriculture so that the risks of

hunger and famine may be avoided, the provision of sanitation and other health services so that the dangers and discomforts of disease may be minimised. It means the organisation of human activities on an ever widening basis, leading eventually to the World Union of Socialist Republics. And, as a consequence of all these things, it means an ever increasing measure of freedom for all the members of society. From this it will be seen that civilisation is not something fixed and static, but is a moving and growing phenomenon whose ultimate possibilities we cannot as yet imagine.

But although civilisation is a dynamic process, it is by no means uniform in the manner in which it spreads. There are regions of the world where its advance is rapid and others where it slows down, or even stops. The Great Trek represented a retreat from civilisation, a protest against the abolition of slavery and against social organisation. The Trekkers refused to be members of a community that was exposed to the influences of European civilisation, and sought to establish a narrow, closed community of their own, retaining their ancient superstitions and the institutions that were appropriate to an earlier stage in the development of civilisation. It is therefore a plain lie to say that they carried civilisation into the interior of Southern Africa. Their victory was not a triumph of civilisation over barbarism, but of one barbarism over another. For relative to the civilisation of Europe at the time of the Trek, what their descendents now choose to call their "civilisation" was in reality barbarism.

Whatever civilisation was carried into the interior of Africa, it was carried not by the Boers but by the bourgeoisie. For the capitalists require a relatively free and not entirely illiterate labour force for the conduct of their industrial enterprises. But even their civilising influence has been seriously hampered by the relative barbarism of the feudal Boers, whose numerical superiority has enabled them to veto any social or political innovations that might tend to spread the benefits of civilisation to the Native population.

The claim that the Voortrekkers were the pioneers of civilisation in South Africa is a lie, but it is by no means the whole of the lie, nor even the most important part of it. Matthews writes that "when we say that they (the Trekkers) made South Africa safe for western civilisation, unless words have no meaning, we imply that they intended that the permanently valuable aspects of their civilisation should become part of the heritage of every group represented in South Africa". Let us put this "intention" to the test of asking how far it has been put into practice. Just how much of this "heritage" has actually come into the hands of the Natives? A very small proportion of the urban Natives who have had the benefit of education are able to enjoy a few of the fruits of civilisation, but the overwhelming majority of them are, by reason of the starvation wages they receive, permanently debarred from such enjoyment. It is nothing short of fraudulent to say that the urban Natives are given the opportunity to become civilised. Even the industrial bourgeoisie, whose civilising influence is very much greater than that of the Boers, have no intention, as measured by their actions, of admitting the Natives to the benefits which they themselves enjoy.

But the town Natives form only a small proportion of the total Native population. The mine workers cannot be considered as urban Natives, because they are rigidly excluded from the towns. They are herded together in compounds which they are not allowed to leave except to go to work. Although technically they live within municipal areas, they are in practice denied all the advantages of town life. As for the millions of rural Natives, they are living not in the age of industrial civilisation but in the age of feudalism. Consider education, for example. Only a very small proportion of the Natives are taught to read and write, and even then it is not for the purpose of civilising them. The strong religious bias of Native "education" indicates that its object is not to enlighten but to confuse, by substituting new superstitions in place of old ones that are breaking down. As for the material advantages of civilisation, how much of that can be enjoyed by a Native who earns 10/- per month?

The lie about civilisation is so gross that even the ruling class is unable to stick to it consistently. When the decay of capitalism resulted in the creation of a large and growing class of "poor whites", the government tried to meet the situation by what it called a "civilised labour" policy, that is, a policy of replacing unskilled Native workers by equally unskilled white workers. In other words, the government's policy towards the poor whites is a flat denial of the claim that the Voortrekkers or anyone else gave civilisation to the Natives.

It is instructive to note in passing that the term "civilised labour" is no less a lie than the claim that civilisation has been given to the Natives, but this time a lie that is intended to deceive the poor whites. For those people are not more civilised than the Natives. They are just as ignorant and superstitious, just as effectively

denied any enjoyment of the products of modern industry. The lie in this case is intended to prevent them from realising that their interests are identical with those of their fellow workers whose skins are black.

In conclusion, let us examine Matthews' belief that the policy of the Voortrekkers did not deny to any other group "the opportunity of contributing the permanent values of its own way of life to our national heritage". The very reverse is true. For example, the Natives, before they were dispossessed, did not recognise individual ownership of land. That is to say, no man was compelled to starve merely because he did not happen to possess a bit of land, or because the land he was working was worthless. Here was a Native institution of permanent value, but have the Natives been allowed to contribute it to "our national heritage"? Theoretically they are allowed to retain it for themselves, but since nearly all their land has been stolen from them, that permission can scarcely be described as a generous gesture.

On the other hand, they have been allowed, and even encouraged to retain for themselves all the old institutions that are incompatible with the march of modern civilisation. They are encouraged to retain their ancient tribal organisation and even to revive their old tribal feuds, whereas modern industry requires the abolition of all barriers between tribes, and even the frontiers between nations. They are encouraged to retain their ancient superstitions, especially where the exploiters cannot afford to pay missionaries to teach their own favourite brand of superstition, whereas the march of civilisation is towards enlightenment and the abolition of all superstition.

In short, not only is it a lie to say that the whites have given civilisation to the blacks, it is also a lie to say that they have permitted or encouraged an independent African civilisation. The liberating truth that must be set against these enslaving falsehoods is that the Voortrekkers and the white ruling class have never at any time intended to civilise the Natives. On the contrary, their entire policy has been designed to prevent them from being civilised. If Africans are ever to enjoy the fruits of modern civilisation, they must begin by smashing this reactionary power.

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WATCH THE LANDSLIDE

The general dry-rot that has set in in all the larger labour organisations throughout the world has not been without effect on the smaller struggling movements which have attempted to base their practice on the theory of revolutionary Marxism. As the tension inside each capitalist and imperialist country develops, and as the contradictions between the competing imperialisms grow more and more acute, so does it become more urgent for the parties of revolutionary marxism to stiffen their ranks and guard more closely against opportunism and reformism. The inevitable development of capitalism, its degeneration into a cannibalistic and openly reactionary form has the effect of debasing and degrading even further all those organisations of working men and women, whether political parties or trade unions, which depart even by a hairs-breadth from the theory and practice of the class struggle. And we see at the same time the reciprocal effect that these so called labour organisations exercise in turn on the frenzied progressive decadence of imperialism. The process of decay is accelerated for the reason that the only effective potential check on the gangrene is rendered impotent by the spreading disease itself.

It would not be correct to state that the only reason for the open betrayal of the working class by the British or French Labour and Stalinist parties is due to its faulty leadership. This class-collaborationist practice is a direct result of the tortuous influences of the capitalist system. One of its major safe-guards is the perpetuation by bribery and "education" of the idea of "national" unity, of a "common" cause. And, in turn, greater opportunity is given to the system by its faithful servants in the ranks of the working class, to go its course of destruction and death. For the removal of the check of a militant and unified working class gives capitalism full scope for its free development; a development marked by war, fascism, unemployment, mal-nutrition and the other countless scourges of our age of pre-history.

The speed of current contempt that the robber countries have for so called "public opinion", the bestial clarity of their jungle ethics -- all these are without doubt beginning to crack the illusions hitherto enjoyed by those warm hearted sympathisers of the Popular Front and the other numerous appendages of the Stalinist organisations. The soft hearts and softer heads among the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois supporters of Stalinism are beginning to feel a trifle uneasy. They are beginning to see that the Popular

Front's important business is to veer with the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy; to support war and howl for their masters to fly at each others possessions; to praise the relief that German workers felt and showed at the temporary inter-capitalist peace after Munich and at the same time to condemn the same relief of workers in "democratic" countries as "hysteria"; to act generally as faithful watchdogs of the ruling class so long as the apparent temporary enmity of their ruling class coincides with that of the Soviet Union.

The disillusion after Munich has not yet been fully expressed. There we had the "disappointing" spectacle (disappointing from the point of view of those who had placed trust and confidence in the democracies) of Chamberlain, the Prime Minister of the greatest and staunchest "democracy" of them all, "betray" the poor and inoffensive Czech "people". And Daladier, leader of the country where the Popular Front has "achieved" such "startling" victories -- he too was principal to the "betrayal". Small doubts began to seep into the skulls of a few Stalinists. And it is necessary to remember that the majority of the Stalinists are either ignoramuses or crooks and self-seekers. Those office limpets whose personal interests it is to maintain Stalinism for the comfort and respectability it gives them, of course are, and will remain, unaffected. So long as they can continue to hold office and reap the benefits by way of direct and indirect payments they will slavishly follow the lead of Stalin and his gang. Theirs is not to reason. Honesty and integrity are in their cases phrases for platform use only. Nothing can affect their standpoint. They are Stalinists by economics, not by conviction.

But the majority of Stalinists and Stalinist supporters outside the Soviet Union are ignorant, unread people whose knowledge of the scientific socialist movement is nil. They follow the radical, "left" stream. And up to this point they have been comparatively contented. But now they are disturbed. For their very souls, so straight with righteousness, have been blown upon by the cold wind of reality. They must think or be parties to the betrayal of the foundations of their "morality" and "ethical outlook". What are they now to do? That is the question which they are faced with. And that is the question they are impelled to answer.

Of course some of these disturbed creatures will pass over the line to their always reserved ivory towers; some of them will take to distractions and their class amusements; many, will be prevailed upon to remain where they are pending the arrival of a new line from Moscow. To such types Stalinism is welcome. They provide Stalinism with an arid support -- all roughage and no nourishment; those are the traditional "democrats", the well known sympathisers. Their value lies in the weight of their purses. And money is the least important consideration in a genuine revolutionary movement.

But there will be another group who will move forward and develop. In this group there are today discernible two types. On the one hand there is the old revolutionary who joined the Stalinist movement prior to its reformist Popular Front turn. The course events have taken may finally convince him of the real role of the Comintern in the international working class movement. And if this is the case he will turn to revolutionary Marxism. To this type of person, misled in the past, ignorant and influenced by the prestige of the Communist Party, we extend a hand of welcome and ask him to participate in the revolutionary struggle of the Marxist party. But we make our reservations. For his association with Stalinism during the period when its betrayal of the working class should have been obvious to the most elementary student of Marxism must ne not only explained but lived down. The strength and sincerity with which he throws himself into the struggle for the emancipation of the working class, the willingness he shows to undertake work of a nature not carried out or even attempted by the Communist Parties, work among the working class and not in the drawing rooms of an artificially bright petit bourgeois -- these will be his tests.

The other type of disillusioned Stalinist who will move away from class collaboration is the young sincere person whose previous study has led him to doubt the correctness of the line of the Kremlin but whose character was too weak to allow him to leave the warmth and conviviality of the Stalinist salon. To him too we say: Come and join us. You now realise that the only hope for the working class, for the whole of mankind is by the direct and simple way of the class struggle. You see now that the way of reformism and opportunism is one of bitterness and failure. It is not too late. The historical role of the workers of the world is yet to be played in the final scene. Help overthrow oppression and exploitation. That is the road. There is and can be no other. Too long have you dissipated your time and energies on "democracy". You must prove yourself in the class struggle. You shall receive all the assistance we are in a position to offer you. But we demand sincerity and real effort from you. You too have to balance your past support of the Stalinist scourge by greater and more intense work today. You have to undo your past compromises and vacillations.

Revolutionary honesty and integrity, willingness to study and learn from one's mistakes are still the tests of a genuine worker in the revolutionary movement. For it is only with qualities of this nature that we can hope to achieve our object. Such qualities are rare. To cultivate them until they stand out as an example to the large masses of the working class, to hold up the banner of the Fourth International with clean hands, to continue along the pathway of the class struggle in spite of and against all the clamorous vilifications and abuse of the real enemies of the working class -- those are the objects we set ourselves. He who wishes to help should do so. He has a duty not only to his own self. He has a duty to humanity.

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MISSIONARIES - "THE CHAMPIONS OF THE NATIVE CAUSE"

In South Africa there is a traditional belief that the missionaries have always been, and still are, the true friends of the oppressed Bantu people, and that some day they will succeed in liberating them. The Bantu themselves believe that the missionary is their White Father, their protector, their leader and adviser who will protect them from the vultures of the ruling class. What has been the effect of this belief? The missionaries have enjoyed the unreserved trust and confidence of the Bantu people, so that when any oppressive legislation has been projected, they have made the way easy for its acceptance. For what is the usual nature of this advice? To protest with eloquent and humble words, which of course fall on deaf ears, but in the end to accept the oppression and make the best of it. It has been all the more easy for the Bantu people to trust this advice, because they are grateful to the missionaries for supplying them with the education for which they hunger so much.

In the eyes of a large section of the ruling class also, particularly the farming community, the missionaries are the champions of the Bantu, and their liberal views excite strong criticism and hostility. They have been made to appear as the martyrs of the Bantu cause. Indeed it is believed that they act against the interests of the ruling class to which they belong. Actually the opposite is true; they make the way easy for the oppressors to exploit their victims. It is time to clear up this myth about our "benefactors" and expose their real function. Let the Bantu people cast aside once and for all these wolves masquerading in sheep's clothing.

It is necessary to go back to the time of the early missionaries, for they played an important part in the history of South Africa. The most prominent of them were sent out by the London Missionary Society at the beginning of the 19th century, (1799) -- and soon earned the hatred of the colonists, who were too shortsighted to realise that the "christian" method of subduing the native tribes was wiser than their provocative brutality. When the missionaries arrived at the Cape they found a feudal order of society. The Boers were encroaching upon the land of the neighbouring Hottentots and other aboriginal tribes, and fast reducing them into the position of slaves. Those tribes who refused to be disbanded were driven further inland beyond the boundaries of the ever-increasing colony; they in turn had to drive out the occupants of the territory they invaded, or be driven back into the colony. It was a life and death struggle amongst themselves on the one hand and against the colonists on the other.

The missionaries watched this policy with disapproval. They saw in it disaster not only for the aboriginal tribes but for the colonists as well. They were aware that any attempt to drive the tribes north only created unceasing warfare in the interior, and added to the insecurity of the colonists. We must here stress that the missionaries disagreed only with the methods of the colonists, not with their final aim. Both wanted to bring under the White man's domination as much of Africa as possible. But the missionaries chose a more subtle way than the colonists, and as has been already remarked, it was not appreciated. It was this disagreement as to method that lay at the root of the hatred and disputes between the two. It is this also that created the wrong impression that the missionaries were the friends of the oppressed. They resisted the open, brutal enslavement of the aboriginal tribes, it is true. But why? They realised that the colonists' method of subjugation would lead to perpetual enmity and warfare. In order to ensure a lasting White domination they believed in adopting peaceful means of conquest.

It is worth looking into the background of ideas which prompted the actions of the two apparently conflicting parties. The missionaries had brought with them ideas prevalent in Europe at the time. Not long since (1789) the bourgeoisie had made a successful revolution and the ideals of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity were in the air, so to speak.

For the bourgeoisie in general these words applied only to the fortunate members of their own class. The ending of the slave trade and the abolition of slavery were in the air too, and were quite honestly supported by missionaries and other liberals, but supported by politicians for very different reasons, namely economic reasons, as part of the growing struggle between European powers for colonial supremacy. It was in the interest of capitalism in the new industrial era to have a new kind of slave, the wage-slave who was "free" to sell his only possession, his labour-power. Moreover, a young and vigorous capitalism was now increasingly concerned with colonisation, with finding new markets abroad and sources of raw material. Emigrants had their private reasons for settling in unknown countries, poverty, the need for making a new start in life, and so on. The missionaries also had their reasons, regarding themselves as torch-bearers to bring the light of Christianity into the dark places of the earth. But however unconscious some of them might be of their real function, they were all part of a well-organised capitalist system intent on establishing White domination in the colonies. For this purpose a Governor and a military force carried out the policy of the Home Government, and controlled colonist and missionary alike.

When the British Government took control of the Cape in 1806 their attitude towards the Natives (the Hottentots and Bushmen, who were mostly slaves, and the Bantu tribes) was substantially the same as that of the Boers, namely, possession of the land, and where resistance was offered, subjugation. It must not be supposed that they were more humane. As several documents testify, from the beginning of the century onwards, first in connection with the few remaining free Hottentots and later with the Bantu tribes, there is the same shameful story of land-grabbing, cattle-stealing (called confiscation), treachery and brutality towards native chiefs, as had existed before. It is a story that makes the name of civilisation stink in the nostrils of the most barbarous.

In the following year, 1807, came the end of the British slave trade and therefore the stopping of the import of slaves into the Cape. This angered the Boers by shortening the labour supply, but at the same time it served only to intensify the serfdom of the landless Hottentot against whom laws were passed to prevent them moving from place to place. This is where the missionaries come in. Their chief representative was Dr. Philip, who was sent out by the London Missionary Society in 1819, and very soon came into conflict with the colonial government. It happened that the London Missionary Society was short of funds, because it depended upon voluntary subscriptions and donations. It therefore instructed its missionaries to form amongst the tribes as many self-supporting institutions as possible. These could not be formed amongst wandering landless people with no certain means of livelihood. It rested with Dr. Philip to expose the brutal treatment of Hottentots and to agitate for a piece of land to be given them where they might be placed under the control of officials and missionaries and turned into docile subjects of the Crown. The antagonism here between missionary and Government is only superficial. For Dr. Philip, an intelligent man, argued that a degraded class of discontented serfs was a drag on society and a source of insecurity to the colonists. (In the early years of the century Hottentot slaves had united with the Bantu in a revolt against their masters). Note the function of the humane treatment of the oppressed as advocated by the most outspoken liberal of his time -- to subdue by kindness because brutality creates insecurity for the exploiters.

Dr. Philip's agitations bore fruit at last, after a great deal of controversy and ill-feeling between missionary and colonist. In 1829 the Kat River settlement of Hottentots was established by Stockenstrom, a landdrost who shared Dr. Philip's liberal views. And Stockenstrom's letter to Pringle, an 1820 settler, in praise of the settlement, is illuminating from our point of view. In the first place it constituted a buffer state between the hostile Bantu and the colonists. It cost little money, he said, beyond the minister's stipend, the price of some guns for their protection and some seed. And they dutifully contributed to the colonial revenue. They were docile, hard-working and god-fearing. "They travel great distances for divine service and their spiritual guides speak with delight of the fruits of their labours". The missionaries had done their work well indeed. What an object lesson on the benefits of subjugation by kindness!

It seemed as if the colonial Government took that lesson to heart. The conflict between the colonists and the frontier tribes had been growing in bitterness and brutality, and the Governor did his best to form a treaty with one of the chiefs, Gaika, against the others. It proved no easy matter till Mr. Read, a missionary was instructed to establish himself beside Gaika's village and the following year was present at the signing of the treaty between the Chief and the government. The outcome of that treaty was that gradually Gaika lost most of his territory and his son was deprived of all of it. It is a painful story. Thomas Pringle, the liberal friend of Stockenstrom and Philip, was moved to write about it some years after and to outline a policy towards the Bantu whereby the Government might procure their friendly co-operation instead of bitter

hostility and the determination to be free. What is the nature of this liberal policy? This is what Pringle writes:

"Several chiefs have already embraced Christianity and are ready to establish missionary institutions in the midst of their people. The native tribes in short are ready to throw themselves into our arms. Let us open our arms cordially to embrace them as men and brothers. Let us enter on a new and nobler career of CONQUEST. Let us subdue savage Africa by justice and kindness..... Let us go forth in the name and under the blessing of God gradually to extend the moral influence, and, if it be thought desirable, the territorial boundary also of the colony, until it shall become an empire to which, peradventure in after days even the Equator shall prove no ultimate limit".

From this statement the function of the missionary is clear; British Imperialism has every reason to be grateful to the men of God for making the path of conquest easier for them.

And today they continue the tradition and fulfil their shameful role. For do they not make exploitation easy by preaching patience, humility and endurance of the heaviest burdens that the ruling class can put upon the backs of their victims? If you protest at all, they say, protest humbly and with dignity.

The part that the ministers played in persuading the people to accept the shameful Native Bills of 1936, 1937, is well known. We might mention their attitude towards some of the older acts. Concerning the Native Affairs Act of 1920, which established the Native Council System in Native areas and set up the Native Affairs Commission - this is what they said: " In our opinion this Bill will put the Natives in a more advantageous position to voice their claim for the franchise .....Besides this the Bill opens the way for real progress in various directions." (Christian Express, July, 1920.) Time has abundantly proved the lie of these statements. We know that the Councils were never intended to serve any purpose except to keep the Native mind occupied with trivial things, as one throws a dog a bone.

Of the notorious Urban Areas Act of 1923, which thrust the Bantu into locations like a flock of sheep in a kraal, the Rev. Mr. Shepherd of Lovedale boasted that " We doubted only some of its provisions regarding the manufacture and sale of Kaffir beer... ..We declared that the Native people generally approved of the measure." (Analysis and criticism of the Report of the Native Affairs Commission 1936.) Is it the function of the leaders and advisers of an oppressed people to voice their approval of still further oppression?

Of the Native Taxation and Development Act, (Poll-Tax Act) they wrote : " This Act should, in our judgement, prove a new starting point in Native advancement. Hitherto progress has been held up in large measure owing to lack of funds. "What a shameless justification of the Poll Tax? If the Union Government wanted to provide funds for Native development, they could easily raise the amount without imposing the iniquitous Poll-Tax. It is well known that the Poll-Tax was intended to drive the Natives out of the Reserves and supply a continual source of cheap labour for the mines and the farms. It is clear that such false leaders as the liberal-ministers prove to be, are nothing more than Government apologists in its policy of exploitation. One more quotation will suffice: "Provided the money is wisely spent", they continue, "on well-thought-out schemes, and provided the Natives themselves take full advantage of the opportunities offered, the next ten years may witness great headway". (South African Outlook, Sept. 1925). Great headway indeed, on the downward path of complete deprivation of any right or liberty! Do these vague words and false hopes not prove that those who profess to be the advisers and friends of the Bantu people are really their enemies? They are not fighting their cause and never will they liberate them, for they are on the side of the ruling class. Do not listen to false leaders any longer. Our friends are ourselves and all class-conscious workers of all nationalities.

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