

What I'm getting at is this: Every educationist, unless he is a jelly-fish, has some faith behind him. He could not possibly educate unless he was convinced of some standards, some immutables, some ideals. He might be an atheist or a dialectical materialist or a Quaker or an Anglican — his teaching would inevitably be affected by his position. But it would not make him a bad teacher. There is no evidence anywhere that "the devout evangelist and the conscientious schoolmaster" are "always at war within him." There is plenty of evidence to the contrary: plenty of evidence to show that nearly every revolutionary step forward in Western European education systems was in fact taken by the Church. It is not a bad thing to remember that the premier Universities of Europe to this day stand on a Christian foundation — and it is, paradoxically, for that very reason that men like Bertrand Russell are able to teach in them.

However, such matters need a whole article to themselves. As a missionary superintendent, I am well content to be criticised so fairly and straightforwardly by "Titshala."

He concludes his article "we little thought the day would come when we should mourn the passing of the mission schools. The day is here." He might have added "And so is the night."

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The Meaning of

## **BANTU EDUCATION**

By DUMA NOKWE

**B**ANTU education is the 'education' designed for the 'Bantu' by the Nationalist Government; it is a development of 'Native Education,' the education which was designed for the 'Native' of South Africa.

Like 'Native Education,' 'Bantu education' is a qualified education which is a product of the political and economic structure of the country. Like its predecessors too, 'Bantu education' was not introduced as a means of raising the cultural level of the Africans, nor of developing the abilities of the African child to the full, but as one of the devices which aim at solving the cheap labour problems of the country. The development of education amongst the Africans and the policy of Governments have been closely connected with the labour problems of the country.

Dr. Verwoerd's statement that "(Native) education in each of the four provinces, therefore, took into account neither the community interests of the Bantu, nor the general policy of the country," is incorrect in so far as it refers to the general policy of the country. It is, of course, correct that 'Native Education' did not take into account the interests of the Africans, it was never intended to fulfil that task. The Director of Education of the Transvaal made it very clear that "teach the Native to work" was the "true principle by which the education of the Native is to be regulated and controlled" and that a plan for "Native education" must "contemplate the ultimate social place of the native as an efficient worker." The report continues to propose a scheme through which the aims of Native education could be realised, and the scheme which had to be for the continuation of **MANUAL TRAINING** with **ELEMENTARY INSTRUCTION**, and in the second place for the shaping of the elementary instruction to equip the Native for more intelligent comprehension of any industrial work before him." The scheme was implemented; and it determined the salient features of Native education, which were:—

- 1) The complete application of segregation in the purpose, administration and organisation of education.
- 2) The vesting of control of education of the Africans in hands which were not responsible to the Africans, despite the fact that Africans were made to pay for their education.
- 3) The careful regulation of the number of children who had access to education to keep it as low as possible, so as not to upset the reservoir of cheap, unskilled labour. Among of the 'controls' used were the denial of free, compulsory education to Africans and the insistence that parents who wanted their children "educated" should pay for them, and the inadequate and poor schooling provided for Africans.
- 4) The careful regulation of the curriculum of African schools so that African education remained basically elementary with an emphasis on **MANUAL** labour. This is illustrated by the following extract from the report of the Native Education Commission of 1930-1932 (P. 75) "The students were taught gardening other manual work, every student at Lovedale had to work two hours in the garden or on the road, this excellent practice continues to this day."
- 5) The denial of technical education to Africans, and the restriction of their training to teaching, nursing and interpreters and priests.

This scheme of 'education' consistent with the general policy of

The government attempted to check the flow to towns by imposing restrictions on the movements of Africans, in the form of permits under the Native Urban Areas Act of 1935. But as industry developed, the contradictions sharpened proportionately.

Successive governments of the country have tried various devices to resolve the contradiction between country and town. The Amendment to the Urban Areas Act was calculated to tighten restrictions on the entry of Africans into towns; elaborate influx control departments were established, the police force was increased, and pass raids were intensified; and arrested Africans found themselves working on the farms. Farmers were allowed to build farm goals and secure their cheap labour behind bars. The Nationalist Government, which represents the interests of the capitalist farmers and the mine magnates, has intensified the efforts to drive Africans from the towns to the country in a more ruthless manner. 'BANTU EDUCATION' is one of these numerous efforts of the Nationalists, aimed at resolving the conflict between the farms and mines on the one hand, and industry and commerce on the other, by compelling the African to accept the miserable oppressive conditions of work on the farms and mines.

'Native education' was the education imposed upon the African during the period of the development of capitalism in the towns; the period when there was a shortage of cheap labour in towns and consequently a great demand for it. 'Bantu education' is imposed on the Africans in the period of the development of capitalism in the country, a period of intensified exploitation by farmers and the shortage of cheap labour on farms and mines.

Through it, the Nationalists are attempting to harness the African to the most ruthless exploitation and oppression.

### BENEFICIAL — TO WHOM?

Dr. Verwoerd's exposition of Bantu education contains the outworn fallacy that it is intended to benefit the African. In his pamphlet on Bantu Education, he says:—

"The Bantu pupil must obtain knowledge, skills and attitudes in the school which will be useful and advantageous to him, at the same time *beneficial* to his community. The subject matter must be presented to him in such a way that he can understand and master it, easily making it his own, to the benefit and services of his community."

In the very next paragraph, however, Dr. Verwoerd proceeds to expose this fallacy by stating that:

"A school must equip him to meet the demands which the economic life of South Africa impose upon him." He admits that

the country maintained the difference in standards between European and African to perpetuate the illusion of white supremacy and black inferiority, the fallacy upon which the exploiters rely to justify their ruthless exploitation of the people. Native education fulfilled the function of supplying the growing commercial enterprises and mines with 'efficient' workers without disturbing the cheap labour reservoir.

Native education was the educational scheme for Africans during the period of the shortage of labour in the mines and the growing commercial enterprises of the country; together with other measures like the Land Act of 1913 and the Taxation laws, it maintained a steady flow of cheap labour from the country to the towns.

Before World War I, when South Africa had mainly an agricultural-mineral economy, most of the energies of the government were spent in squeezing Africans out of the Reserves and driving them to the towns. With the development of industry in the towns after the first World War, the process which the Governments had begun assumed inconvenient proportions as the flow from country to town increased.

This created two 'problems' for the economy of the country:—

a. The participation of the African in industry and his low wage constituted a threat to the privileged position of the European worker, according to the Report of the Economic Commission (P. 76):

"Industry in the Union in areas where the Native predominates used to be based almost entirely on European supervision and skilled work, and Native manual labour. This was the natural division of labour in the earlier period of the contact between races ... when however, the land began to fill up and the struggle for a share in the material goods became keener, this division of labour began to change. On the one hand, there arose a small but increasing number of natives who aspired to the more lucrative occupations of the Europeans."

To remedy this position, and to restore the 'natural division of labour' which protected the European, Colour Bar laws were passed which denied Africans access to skilled labour, the 'natural' preserve of the European.

b. Africans were naturally attracted by the more favourable conditions of work offered by the growing industries, as opposed to the feudal conditions on the farms and the exploitation of the mines. This created a condition of surplus cheap labour in the towns and a 'shortage' of labour in the country and on the mines, thus sharpening the contradiction between the town and the country.

"the economic structure of our country of course results in large numbers of natives having to earn their living in the service of Europeans."

These last two quotations represent a more honest declaration of the purpose of Native education. Dr. Verwoerd's exposition of 'Bantu Education' is full of glaring contradictions, but in characteristic Nationalist style he staggers blindly over the contradictions and imposes upon the majority of the people of South Africa a complete racialist and fascist system of 'education.' It is a negation of every single principle of education, which has been accepted by democratic people of the world.

The content of 'Bantu education' is a gross lowering of the already low education facilities of the Africans. Dr. Verwoerd shamelessly sets Standard II as 'fundamental' education, at which pupils will be carefully selected for what is called high primary education. Dr. Verwoerd keeps a judicious silence about the fate of those who are not selected for the higher primary course. The curriculum is distorted. Fundamental education consists of reading, writing and arithmetic, Afrikaans and English, religious education and singing. History and geography have been excluded. The intention is obvious: the African child who is being prepared as an instrument of cheap labour in a society which relies on fallacies must not know either the conditions of his country nor the truth about the world which are apparent even in the distorted South African history books, and are likely to expose the fallacies.

Dr. Verwoerd blames the African child for the low percentage of African children who have access to education, and not to completely inadequate schooling facilities. To increase the percentage, he proposes, first, to reduce school hours of the sub-standard to three a day . . . "it is wrong to utilise expensive teaching staff to supervise large classes of bored pupils while thousands of children who are entitled to the same measure of primary education are kept out of school."

Secondly, to remove children who keep in sub-standards for years, "keeping other children out of the available school accommodation and wasting public funds without themselves deriving any benefit worth mentioning."

Thirdly, to dismiss children who fail to attend school regularly.

Fourthly, to refuse admission to children who cannot afford school requisites, such as pens and exercise books.

These proposals are made under the heading of "Extension of School Facilities for Bantu Children." He does not mention a word about building new schools. On this point, however, he proposes later on:—

a. "Bantu mothers can, in accordance with local methods, erect walls where farmers allow it, and the Department will provide the windows, doors and roofs."

b. "The present arrangement in Native Areas by which the Department provides the necessary labour is sound and can continue. The urban Bantu community will have to meet its obligations just as the rural community has to do."

The net result of these proposals is a reduction in the educational facilities for Africans.

The intensification of oppression and exploitation is extended to the teachers. ~~Women~~ teachers who are less expensive than men will be preferred. Instead of an increase in wages which teachers have been clamouring and hoping for, Dr. Verwoerd proposes a reduction in the present scales, despite the fact that European teachers have had increases and cost of living continues to rise. Dr. Verwoerd argues that the European teacher has a higher salary because "he is in the service of the European community and his salary must be fixed accordingly." He ingeniously explains that the European teacher in the service of Africans gets a European wage because he can be regarded as on loan to the African. Dr. Verwoerd does not explain why he does not apply his principles to the messengers and the "large numbers of natives who earn their living in the service of the Europeans."

Dr. Verwoerd says of African teachers that they are entrusted with "a role in which they will be in the service of and responsible to the Bantu community." At the beginning of his pamphlet, however, he says "the control of the educational system has been taken out of the hands of the Provinces and placed in the hands of the Department of Native Affairs," and later he says "no new school may, however, be established without the prior approval of the Department." The only responsibility the African community has in Bantu education is that of providing the children and the schools.

The introduction of 'mother-tongue' education as a medium for teaching is justifiable on two grounds: first, as an expression of respect for a people and its national culture; secondly as a step towards the democratisation of education amongst a people.

The facts about Bantu education and numerous oppressive laws of the Nationalists indicate clearly that Dr. Verwoerd has no respect for the Africans and in fact despises them, nor has he any intention of democratising education so that it is available to all Africans to develop their abilities to the full, and so that they can contribute freely and fully to raising of the material and cultural standards of all people of this country. The reasons why Dr. Verwoerd introduces mother-tongue instruction is to enable the African

child to master his distorted schemes easily, and to fan the spirit of tribalism to divide the African people.

"Bantu education" is a reactionary scheme which very nearly destroys education for the African in South Africa. It is reactionary because it is designed to satisfy the needs of a reactionary and heartless class of exploiters. Whilst the Nationalists disregard the needs and interests of the masses of the people, and subject the people to a more ruthless oppression and exploitation in the interests of solving the contradictions of their society they do not take into account the sharpening conflict they are creating between themselves and the people, which will ultimately break their artificial political and economic structure.

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DAN TILCOTE, writes on

## RENT INCREASES

**A**N enthusiastic campaign is being conducted by the Non-Europeans throughout the country in opposition to rent increases recently introduced by the Government for African Townships, locations, and hostels, falling within the jurisdiction of the local authorities. Of all the outstanding issues which have provoked intense protest and resentment among the African people, the question of increase in rentals stands out as the most callous and a direct assault upon the ever-worsening economic position of the lowest income group of the community — the Africans.

The circular letter circulated to tenants of various Townships by the Johannesburg local authority states: inter alia:

"In terms of the Government Notice No. 1516 of the 23rd July, 1954, the Minister of Native Affairs has ruled that as from the 1st October of this year tenants in the African houses shall pay an economic rental if their family income exceeds £15 per month, and a sub-economic rental if their family income falls below £15 per month. The Minister has further ruled that all tenants will be regarded as belonging to the economic group and be required to pay an economic rental unless and until they are able to prove to the satisfaction of their respective Superintendents that their income was less than £15 per month on an average over the period 1st July, 1953 to 30th June, 1954."

The Chief information officer of the Department of Native Affairs, Mr. C. W. Prinsloo, explaining the specified directive issued to Urban Local authorities on this question stated, inter alia, "that the Government has issued this directive after receiving continued and justified representations from local authorities about the excessive