

U.S. TWISTING TO AVOID DISARMAMENT

THE United States is playing a dangerous game in international diplomacy. Though the relaxation of tension which was brought about by the Geneva conference has been welcomed throughout the world, the U.S. is trying to revive something of the atmosphere which prevailed at the height of the cold war.

The chief Washington correspondent of the New York Times, Mr. James Reston, wrote recently that "the Eisenhower Administration has reached a policy decision to put a brake on the optimism created by the Big Four Conference." Reston said this was the explanation of Eisenhower's speech in Philadelphia two weeks ago in which he emphasised that the "spirit of Geneva," if it is to be "genuine and not spurious," must not be used "to justify the division of Germany, the enslavement of the satellites or the activities of subversive Communism."

In other words, the United States authorities are not prepared to make any concessions with a view to bringing about a further relaxation of international tension.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union has announced a huge cut of 640,000 men in her armed forces, and the People's Democracies have made similar reductions. The Soviet Government stressed it was doing this as a further contribution to the consolidation of world peace and as an earnest of its peaceful intentions. It expected the Western powers to follow suit.

BRITAIN IS PLEASED

The British Government openly welcomed the reduction. The London Observer wrote:

"The Moscow announcement that Soviet armed forces are to be reduced by 640,000 men is the most important Russian contribution to a detente since the signing of the Austrian Treaty, and a good augury for the disarmament talks to be resumed by the United Nations sub-committee on August 29. This reduction . . . must be viewed as an earnest of willingness to implement, on a reciprocal basis, the much more far-reaching proposals for disarmament to agreed levels first suggested by France and Britain and accepted by the Soviet Government last May."

BUT DULLES IS SOUR

Dulles, however, struck a discordant note. He complained sourly that "the military significance (of the Soviet reduction) is not easy to judge."

No wonder 'Time' magazine was compelled to report last week that the line taken by Eisenhower and Dulles had not gone down too well in America, where the bulk of the people were hoping that Geneva had at last opened up the prospect of closer and more friendly relations with the Soviet Union. Commenting on Eisenhower's speech, 'Time' said: "Judging from the visible reactions, his point did not get over to the U.S. public—or at least to the press."

DISARMAMENT PROPOSALS

The sphere in which American double-talk is likely to have the most serious reactions is that of disarmament. As the 'Observer' reported, the disarmament proposals put forward by the Soviet Union last May, besides being the most detailed yet presented for consideration by either side, were also in large measure an acceptance of the Western point of view about inspection.

The West had for years complained that the Soviet refusal to allow inspection inside her territory had "prevented international agreement on disarmament." The fact was that Russia had never rejected the idea of inspection; she had only rejected the American proposal that there should be international ownership of atomic resources. Her argument was that this would allow a combination of foreign powers to interfere with the direction of the internal Soviet economy.

WESTERN PLAN ACCEPTED

At any rate, on May 10 the Soviet Union accepted the Western proposals on inspection almost word for word. But what happened? From that moment the Americans proceeded to place new obstacles in the way of agreement. The well-known American columnist Joseph Alsop wrote on July 18:

"The Pentagon (U.S. military headquarters) is undyingly opposed to a serious disarmament effort. The disarmament talks that have taken place have aroused no Pentagon opposition because they were thought to be meaningless. But the Pentagon is up in arms now because serious disarmament talks seem to be a possibility."

At the Geneva talks the Soviet Premier Bulganin reiterated the plan which his government had previously put forward on May 10. This envisaged a phased reduction of the armed forces of the powers.

OBJECTION ELIMINATED

The Soviet Union abandoned her previous call for the immediate destruction of all atomic weapons. She agreed that this could only happen when there had been a substantial reduction in the armed forces of all parties—thus eliminating an important objection, advanced by the Americans over many years, that the Russians wanted them to throw away their strongest weapon while the Russians still retained their tremendous superiority in conventional weapons. Finally, the Soviet Union outlined a most

detailed plan of inspection on a permanent basis to ensure that the conditions of a disarmament agreement were properly carried out.

Just as, ever since May 10, there had been no American reply to this proposal, so at Geneva Eisenhower again side-stepped the issue and came forward with his plan for an exchange of military blueprints and aerial reconnaissance. All observers are agreed that the Eisenhower plan was phoney.

"BULL'S EYE"

"a gimmick . . . a tricky plan with little chance of working out. Hearst quoted a veteran political correspondent as saying: "It was just a little too slick. It wasn't meant to be acceptable to the Russians and when we make a proposal which is essentially phoney, I think it is bound to hurt us in the long run."

As a propaganda stunt, said Joseph C. Harsch in the Christian Science Monitor, it "hit the bull's eye."

The Christian Science Monitor thought the President's proposal would hinder rather than help "the slow but noticeable advance in world relations which the conference had so far produced." One of the members of the American delegation told the publisher William Randolph Hearst that the plan was

WORLD STAGE BY SPECTATOR

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FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE

Yet this "trick" has astonishingly now become the basis of the American disarmament plan. The New York correspondent of the 'Cape Times' reported last week:

"A fundamental change in the United States approach to disarmament unfolded itself yesterday as the United Nations sub-committee on disarmament resumed its sessions behind closed doors here.

"The United States, it is now clear, has temporarily shelved its long-range plans for disarmament and an international control organisation, and is concentrating instead on a limited 'early warning system.' This would enable it to engage in 'massive retaliation' in the event of nuclear attack."

BACK TO COLD WAR?

Thus the Americans want to drag the world right back to the positions and language of the cold war. The correspondent quoted "one United States source here (who) yesterday described the change in United States policy as the 'end of the rainbow approach.' He added that the United States was now more interested in the immediate expediency of its proposals rather than a possibly unfruitful quest for final results."

If this report is true, the United States is revealed as a monster of international duplicity. Having maintained for years that it was the Russians who were holding up agreement, now, when agreement is in sight, she calmly announces that she is no longer interested in "final results" but only in "immediate expediency."

BEHIND IT

What is behind this treacherous diplomacy? The answer is that the United States cannot afford to disarm.

If there has been one factor which has enabled the United States capitalist economy to survive the post-war period without a collapse, it has been the massive amount of military expenditure.

A total of 310 billion dollars has been spent on armaments by the United States during the last 10 years. Compare this with the total of only 32 billion dollars which was spent on the New Deal from 1932 to 1940—the last time the U.S. capitalists tried to make their system work by peaceful means.

This military expenditure has produced a huge expansion in the U.S. economy, with a 66 per cent increase in manufacturing capacity. But this capacity cannot be used to the full because the purchasing power of the American people has not kept pace with the rise in output and the rise in profits. U.S. News reported earlier this year:

"WORKERS ARE SURPLUS"

"Large unused capacities are indicated in almost all lines of industry and agriculture. Workers, too, are in surplus . . . American industry in fact is able to turn out a much greater volume of goods than is now being produced."

The Illinois Business Review wrote last March: "As we move into 1955 the broad picture is that of an economy facing increasing saturation with durable goods of all kinds . . . High current rates of investment in durables of all kinds imply a degree of overproduction that has to be corrected after a while."

AN OLD STORY

It's the old, old story. How is overproduction under capitalism cured? By means of a slump. Or by means of a war. For Eisenhower's America the continuation of military spending on a war-time basis is an economic necessity. And for that reason it is clear the U.S. monopolists and their government have decreed the cold war must continue.

But to the American people it is being made clear—if the U.S. system can only be kept from disaster by wasteful military expenditure, that system must be fundamentally at fault.



'DON'T MOVE US FROM OUR HOMES!'

JOHANNESBURG.

THE residents of Germiston Location are conducting a struggle against the removal of the location to Natalspruit and last week the women of the location again took the lead in showing their opposition to the removal plans.

In a procession, 113 women of the Women's League of Justice No. 2 marched to see the Manager of the Native Affairs Department. This was the second procession of women to see the Manager.

To him they presented a letter which said: "We are not prepared to go to Natalspruit." The letter recalled that in 1909 a pledge was made to the people that if they took up occupation in the Germiston location they would never be removed to a new place. Now the authorities are overlooking this earnest agreement. In answer to the statement of the manager that the removal question should be discussed with his deputy in the location in charge of the removals to Natalspruit, the letter from the women said the assistant manager had never been introduced to the residents and was therefore an unknown intruder to whom the people could not go. The assistant manager and his officials, said the women, are working overtime to

destroy homes in the location and try to "rake everyone to Natalspruit." Yet the Advisory Board had not notified the people about the removal.

When the women's spokesman had presented their case, the manager said that the removal of the location to Natalspruit was being carried out on orders from the Government.

The women challenged the manager to address a meeting of all residents on this removal issue.

TRIAL OF TWO WORKERS SHOWS THAT

"IT IS DANGEROUS TO MAKE STATEMENTS TO POLICE!"

CAPE TOWN.

"ANYONE who makes a statement to the police places himself in a dangerous position. The Crown should not be surprised if the present prosecution serves to convince people that they are safest if they refuse to make any statement when asked to do so by the police," said the defence advocate during the trial of two members of the Food and Canning Workers' Union in the Tulbagh Magistrates' Court last week.

"If any mistake is made in a sworn statement, the onus is then on the accused to show that he believed it to be true, otherwise he commits an offence."

The two accused, Mr. John Grainger and Miss Janet Appolis, branch committee members of the Union, were charged with having made conflicting statements under oath.

Found guilty, Mr. Grainger was fined thirty pounds (or two months) and Miss Appolis was cautioned and discharged. Mr. Grainger has noted an appeal.

The evidence showed that last December, Becky Lan, secretary for the Food and Canning Workers' Union had paid a visit to the factory at which the two accused were working.

"Three months afterwards," said Grainger in his evidence to the court, "a detective (Sergeant Salmon Sauerman of the Special Branch of the C.I.D.) came to my room. I was away from work, sick, and when he came I was awakened from my sleep. My head was dizzy and I thought at first that he was a doctor.

"He told me he was there to enquire about Miss Lan's visit to the factory, and that made me think he was from the trade union. He said that several people had told him that Miss Lan was at a meeting there and I should not be afraid to make a statement that she was there because there would be no trouble. I thought that if other people had said so it must be true, so I agreed to make a statement. I was sick and I wanted him to go so that I could go back to sleep."

Afterwards, said Grainger, when he had thought back he had clearly recollected that Miss Lan had not been at the meeting. To his surprise, in spite of the fact that the detective had said that there would be no trouble, Miss Lan had been charged with attending a gathering. Mr. Grainger who was called as a Crown witness, had told the court that his statement to the police was wrong and that she had not been at the gathering. "HAD TO TELL TRUTH"

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

A NUMBER of young Johannesburg readers have shown their solidarity with New Age in a practical fashion.

A group of them held a party in honour of Dr. Dadoo's birthday and decided that the best way to celebrate the occasion was to send £10 2s. 0d. to New Age.

Two other young readers sent in £4 15s. 0d. and £17 15s. 0d. respectively, all collected from friends whom they had approached. What's more, they have promised to do the same regularly each month.

And from far away Liverpool, England, comes news that a group of readers there have set up a committee to help us in our struggle. An effective way of demonstrating solidarity with the people of South Africa!

These examples of activity on behalf of your paper once again raises the question: What are YOU doing to help?

Perhaps you are a member of one or other of the Congresses. Consider for a moment what your paper means to you and your organisation. Without New Age your activities would receive little or no publicity. You yourselves would be work-

MILITANT ACTION AT THREE MORE FACTORIES

JOHANNESBURG.—LAST WEEK JOHANNESBURG SAW THREE MORE FACTORY DISPUTES IN WHICH THE WORKERS TOOK MILITANT PROTEST ACTION.

STEEL WORKERS:

At Phoenix Foundry 130 African workers formulated demands which their union organiser from the Iron and Steel Workers' Union presented to the management. When they were rejected outright the workers organised a protest in the workshops of the foundry.

Native Labour Officers were called in but the workers refused to give them a hearing. The management ordered all 130 workers out of the factory and threatened them with dismissal. Later he took the workers back, under the old conditions.

A day or two later the workers again formulated their demands. These are for a general wage increase, the details to be discussed with the management; the improvement of the treatment of the Non-European workers and recognition by the management of the Iron and Steel Workers' Union; recognition also of a committee of the workers to negotiate with the employer, this committee to be clearly understood not to be a works committee in terms of the Native Labour Settlement of Disputes Act; the workers' pay envelopes to show clearly details of their basic wage, cost of living allowances, overtime pay and holiday fund amounts; the

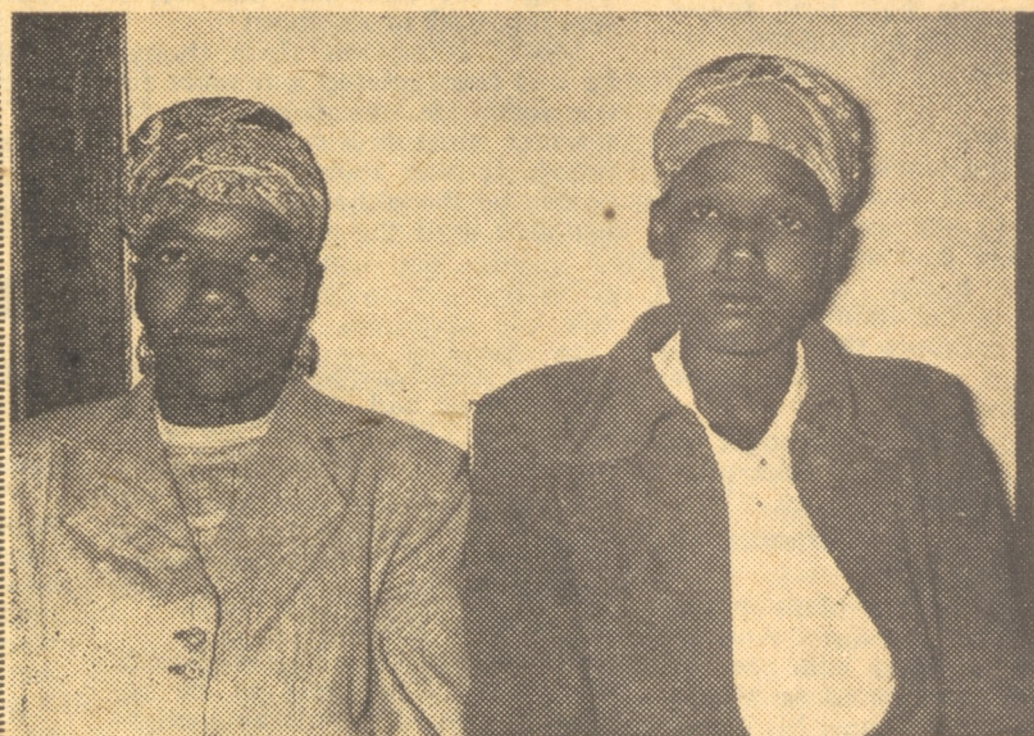
LAUNDRY WORKERS

At Rand Steam Laundries the workers demanded a change in the shift hours and all signed a petition asking for this. A deputation was elected to present the petition to the management and, demonstrating their support for it, the workers remained outside the factory when the lunch hour went. They then returned to work while their committee approached the management again. The workers' demands were agreed to.

LECOL

At Lecol Products the workers demanded their inclusion in the industry's sick fund but the employer tried to postpone this until the end of the season. The workers presented a petition of their demands

which the employer threw on the floor when it was taken to him by a workers' deputation. The workers then took part in a protest action in the factory and before long the management had contacted the Food and Canning Workers' Union and an agreement that the sick fund be started immediately was arrived at. Wage increases are also now under discussion.



TWO MORE VICTIMS OF PASS LAWS

By Naomi Shapiro

SECTION 10 of the Urban Areas Act, without doubt the most hated pass law in South Africa, claimed yet two more victims in Cape Town last week. They are Mrs. Elsie Mtsi, pictured on the left, and Miss Sofie Qala, who were deported to their "homes" in the Transkei, because they were living in Cape Town without permits.

With their deportation, an endless chain of suffering was set in motion, for not only are these women personally affected, but their whole family life is ruined. Torn from comparative security, both were sent off, quite literally into the wilderness, where no homes, no jobs, no means of livelihood, await them.

WEEK IN JAIL

Before their deportation, Mrs. Mtsi and Miss Qala spent a week in jail. (They had been sentenced to a fine of £5 or 25 days in jail for contravening Section 10.) Then they were released on £10 bail, on condition that they reported to District Native Commissioners in the Reserves by September 12.

Mrs. Mtsi lived in Cape Town where her husband works. He has lived in the urban area for more than 10 years. Her parents and her parents-in-law are all dead. She and her husband have no kraal of their own, no livestock, no land to till.

She has three children, who are with her aunt in the country. Out of his earnings of £3 odd a week, her husband has now to support not only himself and the children, but the separate home which his wife will have to set up in Ngcobo.

"I have nowhere to go to," she told New Age. "I will just have to beg a corner somewhere."

Sofie Qala has already suffered bitterly because of the

miseries of apartheid—her two children died in infancy because of malnutrition and starvation. She came to work in Cape Town from Maclear because her widowed mother and five brothers and sisters did not have enough to eat. All the family have to depend on, is a ration from the farmer on whose land they live.

In Cape Town Sofie lived with her married brother and his wife, and worked as a domestic servant. But she lost her job when the family for whom she was working moved out of Cape Town. It was while she was looking for another job, that she was arrested under Section 10.

"Maclear is a small village," said Sofie, "and there are hundreds of Africans looking for work there. I have no idea what I will do when I go back."

Representations to various officials to stay the order and allow the women to remain in Cape Town have proved in vain. Led by Mr. Greenwood Ngotyana, who was deputising for Mr. Len Lee-Warden, M.P., a deputation interviewed the Additional Native Commissioner, but to no purpose.

"He merely told us that there was no reason why Sofie could not get work at Maclear and Elsie, he stated, had her husband working here, and there was no reason for her to be here as well."

The deputation next stated their case to the Urban Areas Commissioner, but the matter was outside his jurisdiction, they were told.

So one day last week, with money scraped together somehow (and still to be repaid), Elsie Mtsi and Sofie Qala boarded the train to the places to which a cruel and heartless administration has ordered them.

DURBAN.

NATAL COLOUREDS MOVE TO CONGRESS UNITY

THE Coloured leaders of Natal are beginning to see clearly that the only hope of saving their political rights is by unity with the democratic forces of this country.

Last week 22 representatives from various Coloured organisations met to resuscitate the defunct Coloured Action Council of Natal to prepare the people for opposition to the methods being used for re-classification of the Coloured people.

Although actual policy of the Council will only be discussed at a future meeting, speeches made by members present clearly showed that the leaders have been shocked into realisation that the Coloured people cannot fight

alone. A new attitude is developing.

UNITY WITH ALL ANTI-NATS

It was indeed startling to hear representatives who, until recent events in Johannesburg, were opposed to S.A.C.P.O. and unity with the African and Indian people because they believed that such unity would make the Government hostile to the Coloured people, stand up at the meeting and stress the necessity of uniting with all who were opposed to the Nationalist Government.

Even the representative of the Natal Coloured Welfare League, a body whose policy was not much different from that of any white reactionary body, said that he had come with mandates from seven Coloured organisations to support "any opposition" to the recent administration of the Population Registration Act in Johannesburg. While others emphasised that the Coloured leaders must no longer fight to protect the Coloured people only, but for the benefit of all who suffered regardless of colour, race or creed.

"LEADERS" ISOLATED

The position in Durban is that the Coloured "leaders" are virtually isolated from the people, especially the workers and have in the past refused to co-operate with the national organisations leading the liberatory movement.

Despite the attacks by the Government on the political rights of the Coloured people, however, there is still the danger that some leaders will continue to sabotage attempts at unity of the Coloureds with the democratic forces of this country.

Provided that the progressive forces here extend their activities to the Coloured people, there is to-day the best opportunity that Durban has hitherto enjoyed to attain unity between Coloured, African and Indian workers.

Remember our addresses:

Cape Town: Room 20, Chames Buildings, Barrack Street.

Johannesburg: No. 5 Progress Buildings, 154 Commissioner Street.

Durban: 6 Pembroke Chambers, 472 West Street.

Port Elizabeth: 9 Court Chambers, 129 Adderley Street.

THE NEW PIPE

OLD Makwanasi rose to his feet. In his excitement at winning the game he tossed the pack of cards into the fire.

The group of Africans gathered round the brazier looked on in silence.

The wintry wind sweeping through the building material and debris in the yard carried swirls of dust into the half built house in which they sat, playing cards or just watching, in the warmth of the fire.

The burning cards hypnotised Moses Mokhale. He watched as they flared and crumbled in the consuming flames which flickered blue and then died in the residual ashes. His hopes of winning vanished with the flames. He had lost thirty shillings that evening. Half a week's salary had gone with the cards.

He jerked his head in anger as old Makwanasi laughed cheerfully and spoke to the company.

"I am going to Alexandra to drink beer," he said.

"I am tired of this place in the trees. It is cold and dirty. And . . . there are people here who are not very honest." He stared at Moses who was unable to meet his direct gaze.

"With this money," he jingled his winnings happily, "I can visit an old woman whose beer is good. Very good."

He smacked his lips in mock enjoyment as he spoke. No one said a word as he went into the next room where his blankets lay, a disorderly bed, on the concrete floor. His clothes hung from large nails in the unplastered walls. He took down his ragged jacket, foraged in a wooden box for other clothing and went outside to wash.

Stripped to the waist, he bathed himself in leisurely fashion under the tap in the yard, seemingly oblivious of the icy wind and the cold water. Then, with his brown skin gleaming and his little beard neatly brushed and curled into a jaunty roll, he pulled on a collarless shirt and sat down to lace up his shoes.

These shoes were new. They were his special pride. Their cost, at least a week's wages, had been foregone by his family to whom he sent money at the kraal.

They were brown shoes with soles so smooth and shining that he wore them with reluctance. He tried not to damage the soles as he walked and rubbed on the inevitable scratches to preserve the gloss. He was fascinated by the clean perfection of these shoes and sat for long periods examining the shining eyelets and fingering the neat laces, watching the reflections of light on the shining leather, or polishing up its dulled lustre.

He had never had new shoes before. Like many of his friends he worked barefoot or wore sandals made from old tyres. For best wear he made do with cast-offs from white folk.

He polished his shoes every Sunday morning to a glossy brown, like the white man who polishes his motor car. As he sat in the sun, smoking his pipe and gossiping to his friends, he spat on the leather and rubbed until he achieved perfection. Finally he held up the finished work, secretly delighted at the suspicion of envy in the admiring comments from his friends.

He only wore his shoes on important occasions. This was one, a visit to the township.

* * *

Old Makwanasi set out through the building debris and over the dusty winter veld. He walked gin-

gerly on the stubble grass to protect his shoes and dusted them carefully before he set off down the tarmac road.

Meanwhile, Moses was sitting moodily by the fire warming his hands. His companions had rolled themselves into their blankets on the floor and were deep in that silence which comes before sleep. Though the sun had not set, it was too cold to sit about.

Moses could not sleep though he had been offered a blanket for the night. He was disgruntled, for his first effort as a card-sharp had failed. It was humiliating to be beaten by the old man and he had brooded until the matter lost per-

spective and became as serious to him as if he had lost a large sum of money. He had to get even with Makwanasi in some way.

He watched the old man's silhouette move across the dark veld with the feeling that his money and with it his dignity, were both disappearing for good.

He jumped up and raced after Makwanasi. So long as he remained with him something might turn up.

"I too feel like a drink of good beer," he said in a friendly tone as he fell into step beside the old man. "And a woman too," he added slyly with a leer at his companion.

Old Makwanasi's grunt might have meant anything.

They walked slowly up the long hill. The old man was still unaccustomed to wearing shoes and they cramped his gnarled toes so that he hobbled along in considerable pain.

Moses, who was a slightly built, undersized man, typical of the town bred African, slouched along easily in his well worn patent leather shoes. His ungainly almost dwarf figure contrasted strangely with the tall powerful build of the old man. His slovenly appearance was accentuated by his baggy, almost purple flannel trousers and his oversize sports jacket with padded shoulders. The loud checked cloth, and a green felt hat cocked over his left eye somehow made him look effeminate. He puffed casually at a cigarette drooping from his lower lip as he listened with but scant attention to the old man's animated conversation. He was brooding over his own troubles.

Readers are invited to send in their own opinions on these short stories, and to say whether or not they agree with the judges' comments.

Makwanasi was elated at his luck at the card game. Although he had only recently left his work as a farm labourer to get the higher wages to be found in the city, he had an intuitive understanding of men. Though he had never heard of the confidence-men and card-sharps who work among the African people, he had realised Moses' part in the game at an early stage and had destroyed the cards before his luck was due to end. Nevertheless he would have been angry to learn that Moses was trying desperately to turn the tables on him now.

Moses answered the old man's chatter with an occasional grunt until he realised that Makwanasi was talking about money.

"It will cost me ten shillings and a ticky," he said.

"What's that?" asked Moses, thoroughly alarmed.

"That pipe," answered the old man.

"What pipe?" Moses was irritated that he had to admit that he had not been listening.

"The one in the shop at the top of this hill," replied the old man patiently. He was only too pleased to repeat the story for a second time.

"There is a pipe in that shop which I have wanted for many months. The money was too much . . . until today," he added.

Moses winced. He had to think quickly.

"There are other shops with other, perhaps better pipes," he suggested cautiously. "They may be cheaper than this pipe you have chosen."

By D. A. LEONARD

He paused. The old man said nothing. He was clearly intent on getting to the shop Moses tried again.

"You must not hurry with so important a purchase. A pipe must last many months, years . . . how long have you had that one?" pointing to the worn stub of blackened wood clenched between the old man's teeth.

If only he could stop the old fool, delay him from spending the money until they reached the township . . . then he would get his own back. Something was bound to turn up, sooner or later. Moses was an optimist.

"I have chosen," the old man replied grandly.

He quickened his pace in happy anticipation but the pain in his cramped feet became so intense that he sat down on the kerb and removed his shoes. He tied the laces together and after slinging the shoes across his shoulders, set off again down the road.

Moses was hard put to keep pace and followed him, slouching along more quickly than usual.

They reached the busy Louis Botha Avenue thronged at this hour with African cyclists racing home from the city to Alexandra Township which lies several miles to the north, beyond the municipal limits.

Makwanasi had the road sense of a puppy and blundered into the maelstrom of traffic without heed. He was narrowly missed by a noisy diesel bus crowded with Africans who screamed in agitated harmony with the vehicle's tyres as the brakes were applied and the bus slid past him in a violent swerve. As it accelerated,

moving away, a cloud of oily smoke was blown into his bewildered face.

The small shop at the crest of the hill was crowded with customers, and Makwanasi, as befitted an African, waited modestly in the background until an assistant deigned to notice him.

"Yes John, what do you want?" "I want pipe, baas. How much . . .?" in quavering respect though he knew the price full well.

"No pipe, boy," with an air of finality. The assistant turned away.

"But baas . . . last week baas had pipe in window . . . ten shilling and one ticky."

"Oh, that one. Wait. I'll look just now, John." The man was amused at the old man's despair, surprised at the request. The boy was in rags almost, looked good for the half-crown line. It just showed how well off the kaffirs really were.

The white customers in the shop showed signs of annoyance, so he kept the old man waiting until the shop was empty.

At long last the pipe was produced. Makwanasi examined it carefully with trembling hands. He controlled an impulse to pocket it immediately and pay, in the face of the shopkeeper's obvious impatience. He was not to be intimidated. He would make sure he had bought a good pipe. No one was going to rush him into a shoddy buy. His peasant caution was stronger than his fear of the white man, or his desire for the pipe.

"Come on, Jim. Do you want it? . . . I'm busy."

"I buy him, baas." He fumbled in his pocket with his thick fingers and produced a ten shilling note, carefully folded, and a sixpence. He slowly unfolded the note and handed the money to the assistant.

The pipe was his.

* * *

The old man resisted the temptation to buy a new sack of tobacco to go with the pipe. He emerged from the shop with his purchase clenched proudly between his grinning teeth.

Moses, who had waited outside the shop rather than witness the painful extravagance, groaned inwardly, but forced a smile of congratulation and joined the old man as he set off down the long hill on the Pretoria road, towards the township.

They merged with the throng of Africans making their leisurely way homewards. Washerwomen, after a long day at some private house, carried additional bundles of dirty washing collected from other European houses en route, to be washed in the nearby river which a population of many thousands uses for every purpose.

Children, carrying bundles of firewood and parcels of provisions, walked with their mothers who bore heavier packages on their heads.

The two men had not walked far when a seven seater taxi rattled to a halt beside them. It was packed. Passengers appeared to be seated in rows on the knees of those behind them. The driver put his head out and shouted above the din of the engine and of his fares' happy chatter.

"Want to ride to the township? Only two shillings each from here. Right into the township, too. No walking. We guarantee to drive you to your own door, my friends. No funny business in this firm." He cocked his head enquiringly.

"No." Moses turned away abruptly. He spoke quickly, before Makwanasi had time to grasp the situation. The old man might be tempted to spend more money to get his first ride in a motor car.

"Oh, come on. Three shillings for the two of you. A special reduction for cash, gentlemen . . . what? . . . no? . . . You'll be sorry, walking on this cold unhealthy day."

The engine roared and belched blue smoke which obscured the battered car as it jerked and spluttered off down the road.

An old man slept on the seat of a cart which creaked past them. It was misshapen with age and moved crabwise down the road. It was piled high with crates of vegetables and bags of oranges, golden in the dusk. The thin horse moved slowly, blocking the traffic as it sought impatiently to pass.

Moses hailed the driver lustily. He awakened with a start, mumbled something inaudible as he

gestured towards the empty seat beside him and tumbled once more into oblivion.

They clambered onto the cart. Makwanasi inspected his shoes, and after brushing off a few imaginary specks of dust, wriggled his great gnarled feet back into their unwilling confinement. He sat silent throughout the journey, absorbed in the shining beauty of the new pipe. He blew on it until the warmth of his breath created a mist. He rubbed the dulled surface until the colour returned, shining. He stroked the side of his sweating nose with the bowl and worked the oily deposit into the wood. He did this several times, until the briar seemed to have absorbed its fill. Then he stared quietly about him as he sucked at the empty pipe.

Moses shifted restlessly on the hard seat. His brain was working at full pressure once more. He was always one to see a chance of making a dishonest penny, and the piled up provisions on the cart had fired a new and explosive train of thought . . . if he could get rid of Makwanasi, the sleeping driver would present no obstacle . . . the goods would be his to sell . . . someone might even buy the cart and the horse. For a moment he seriously considered pushing the old man off into the road and whipping up the horse, but he thought better of the scheme, realising its great risks.

In this thoughtful silence they creaked slowly along the dusty road through the outskirts of Alexandra. They passed the old taxi parked at the side of the road. The driver was thumbing through a sheaf of sticky tickets which a departing policeman on a motor cycle had just completed. The fares were already some distance up the road, completing their journey on foot.

As the wintry sun set red behind the black lines of the pine trees which flanked the road, the harsh lines of the tumbledown buildings, in which the multitude of people were herded together, softened in the gathering darkness.

The township had no lighting system. The only lights came from the cooking fires which burnt in every yard, and from the occasional glimmer of a candle through uncurtained windows. A vast pall of smoke from the fires drifted across the valley in which Alexandra lay. It melted into the gloom which soon engulfed the whole area in total darkness.

Against the background of a myriad of voices an atmosphere of peace permeated through the community despite the whine of the stormy east wind as it freshened with the night. The innumerable little groups of people huddling around the cooking braziers were cosy and content and they sang and chattered in the darkness.

* * *

Makwanasi found the old woman who brewed beer. She had survived the repeated police raids for liquor. Her beer bore no resemblance to the traditional drink. Its popularity lay in its vicious kick.

The pair joined the Africans and Coloured folk gathered in the lean-to shack in which the shebeen was conducted.

It was like any public bar of an evening. There was a steady flow of people who came in for a quick drink and then left. There were groups of men and women who sat about the whole evening ordering one round after another. Regular customers sat in their usual corners, were on exceedingly familiar terms with old Anna and loudly critical of the strangers who invaded their pub. The air was turgid with the smoke of

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