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By C. M. Tatz*

Apartheid: Battle For The Mind

I

South Africa's Nationalist government is rapidly carrying out its self-appointed task of indoctrinating the children of all races in its racial ideologies. The method is an education blueprint designed to train and fit people for a particular station in life, a programme which will maintain and perpetuate *baasskap* (literally, white boss-ship) for 'white' children and which at the same time will inculcate in both white and non-white children the doctrine of the inferior culture, status and intellectual capacity of the non-white races.

In 1939 the Federation of Afrikaans Cultural Societies held a Christian-National Educational conference; it resolved to form a permanent body which would formulate the ideals of Christian-National Education (C.N.E.) in precise terms. This body, the Institute for Christian-National Education, spent the next decade preparing a formula and in February 1948 published its *Beleid* (policy). It claimed that it was not an official body but a private one with a policy for Afrikaans schools only: "We mean our policy for those who agree with us." It is curious therefore to find that its three immediate sponsors were Dr. T. E. Donges, now Minister for Finance, the late Dr. E. G. Jansen, formerly Minister of Native Affairs and Governor-General, and Professor J. G. Meiring, Superintendent-General of Education in the Cape. It is strange too that the Nationalist Party's election programme, published in March 1948 but prepared at the end of 1947, should state that African education should be "essentially Christian-National in character", adapted to the needs and development level of the African people; that it should be State-controlled, should have "a strong moral purpose and should inculcate a national consciousness".

Article 1 of the *Beleid* states the purpose of C.N.E.: "Afrikaans-speaking children must be educated according to the Christian-Nationalist view of life." 'Christian' is defined as "the creeds of the three Afrikaner churches"; 'National' is defined as

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"imbued with the love of one's own, especially one's own language, history and culture". 'Education' was said to mean the creation of standard, right-thinking citizens, for the "spirit of all teaching must be Christian-National (and) in no subject may anti-Christian or non-Christian or anti-Nationalist or non-Nationalist propaganda be made" (Article 6.i). Hence any teacher "who is not a convinced Christian-Nationalist is a deadly danger to us" (Article 9). The narrow, unbending Calvinism of the three Afrikaner churches, with its perpetual seeking out of obscure Biblical references in justification of racial discrimination, is what is meant by 'Christian'—a definition which the World Council of Churches has rejected as incompatible with and repugnant to Christ's teachings. The perpetuation of the white pigmentocracy at all costs, at the expense and to the detriment of all other groups, is meant by 'Nationalism'.

The teacher cannot remain neutral or impartial: "the parents *in community, not as individuals*, must establish, maintain and control schools which will foster their own view of life, they must appoint the teachers and keep a watch on the teaching" (Article 8.iii). Further, "the Church must exercise the necessary discipline over the doctrine and lives of the teachers; the vigilance must be exercised through the parents" (Article 8.iv). The *Beleid* gives the specific injunction that no subject which is anti- or non-Christian-National shall be taught. In discussing the Christian-National teaching of school subjects, it states:

"History should be seen as the fulfilment of God's plan for humanity . . . God has enjoined on each nation its individual task in the fulfilment of His purpose. Young people can only undertake the national task fruitfully if they acquire a true vision of the origin of the nation and the direction of the national heritage. Next to the mother tongue the history of the Fatherland is the best channel for cultivating the love of one's own which is nationalism."

Civics would rear Christian and National citizens; geography would develop a love of the pupils' own country.

"Science should be expounded in a positively Christian light and contrasted with non-Christian science. . . . There should be no attempt to reconcile or abolish the fundamental oppositions; for Creator and created, man and beast, individual and community, authority and freedom remain in principle insoluble in each other. . . . It is all-important therefore that the teaching staff should be convinced Christian-National scientists." (Article 11.)

The Preface states that Afrikaans schools must not merely be mother tongue schools—"they must be places where our children will be *saturated* with the Christian and National spiritual cultural stuff of our nation".

This then was the programme for Afrikaans schools. By definition, however, God willed "separate nations and peoples, and has given to each separate nation and people its special calling and task and talents". Thus one of Afrikanerdom's special callings and tasks is to be the 'guardian' of the non-white races. It was therefore necessary to lay down a programme for the 'education' of these people. Article 15 declares:

"Native education should be based on the principles of trusteeship, non-equality and segregation; its aim should be to inculcate the white man's view of life, especially that of the Boer nation, which is the senior trustee."

Another of Afrikanerdom's tasks and talents is to make Christian-Nationalists of the coloured people:

"It is the Afrikaners' sacred duty to see that the Coloureds are brought up Christian-National. Only when he is christianized can the Coloured be truly happy; he will then be proof against foreign ideologies which give him an illusion of happiness but leave him in the long run unsatisfied and unhappy. He must also be nationalist. The welfare and happiness of the Coloureds lies in his understanding that he belongs to a separate racial group (hence *apartheid* is necessary in education) and in his being proud of it." (Article 14.)

The doctrine that Afrikaner children be instructed that they have a divine mission in life to rule the Fatherland, while all non-white children are to remain uncomplainingly—and in perpetuity—the hewers of wood and drawers of water, was soon implemented in the Transvaal and Orange Free State provinces. The respective provincial governments passed education and language ordinances to accord with the C.N.E. ideal. The Orange Free State Language Ordinance, No. 16 of 1954, clearly defines the Afrikaner view of life:

"It shall be the general policy of the Administrator to recognize, reveal and cultivate the Christian principle in education, and to maintain the national outlook in order to develop in pupils a Christian philosophy of the world and life, to inculcate a healthy sentiment of undivided love for and loyalty to the common Fatherland and to cultivate an esteem for the traditions, language and culture of all sections of the people."

Christian-National teaching began in earnest in these two provinces, openly in Afrikaans schools and with a greater subtlety in English-speaking schools. Afrikaans-prescribed books were chosen with studious care, the most suitable being those which revealed the Afrikaner in his best Christian light and which contained material illustrating the stock racial myths on African savagery, treachery, primitiveness and barbarism. English prescribed books were not selected for any positive content of this type, but those which gave offence were omitted. *Othello*, for example, is considered an unsuitable matriculation text, for in the South African order of things miscegenation and mixed marriages are

the evils of all evils. Political satires on government such as *Gulliver's Travels* are taboo. Many of Roy Campbell's finest poems are omitted from prescribed anthologies, notably *The Zulu Girl* and *The Serf*. In some instances 'racial' literature has been found suitable: *The Merchant of Venice* and *Oliver Twist* have been done to death in the Transvaal syllabus over the years (there are few teachers capable of interpreting these two sympathetic studies as they should be interpreted). Geography syllabuses have come progressively to emphasize purely South African aspects, with a major emphasis on the human and economic geography of 'white' South Africa. No reference is made to African agriculture, for example—except to stimulate the old legend that the African farmer was and is the cause of soil erosion. Primary school children have a new subject in their curriculum—'Race Studies'—the texts of which evoke awe and amazement in anthropologists and ethnologists.

History is the most fertile field for the propagation of C.N.E. principles. In Transvaal primary schools, until the age of eleven, the pupils' history syllabus relates only to South Africa—then their concept of the world is astonishingly expanded to include the Central African Federation. In the first three years of secondary school the child garners his 'world' history from one of the better prescribed texts in the following manner: Greece, eight pages; Rome, five and a half; the Cape from 1657 to 1700, thirteen pages. At the matriculation level, where a student answers five questions in all, three of them must be selected from the section on South Africa and the remaining two from the 'world' history section. The 'world' history is confined to topics which have a direct bearing on South African history. Asian and eastern history is excluded and there is a marked tendency for teachers—they have the right to omit one-third of the prescribed syllabus—to omit social reforms in England, the American Declaration of Independence and the French Bill of Rights. The main criticism by history teachers opposed to the C.N.E. system concerns the subject matter chosen for the South African section of the syllabus. The Slachter's Nek Rebellion, in which four Boer farmers were rather gorily hanged for offences against Hot-tentots—an incident trivial in the perspective of history—is treated with the elaborateness and attention to detail one expects for the treatment of the Napoleonic Wars. Slachter's Nek is examined in at least two of every three examinations in history. The Great Trek assumes the status of a religious epic: the £3 million Voortrekker

Monument, built as a national shrine to mark this event, houses murals depicting savage blacks being killed by Boer defenders armed with muskets in one hand and Bibles in the other. In explaining the Boer War the syllabus goes to great lengths to show students the savagery, barbarism and treachery of the British, with lurid accounts of tormented Afrikaners in concentration camps. It is noteworthy that last year the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs, Dr. Albert Hertzog, stated publicly that the Boer War was still being fought to this very day. Finally, in biology the theory of evolution has been excised from the syllabus: God created Adam and he begat, God created the serpent and he begat, is the manner of instruction.

Not content with the implementation of this system in all Afrikaans and English schools in the two provinces, Dr. H. F. Verwoerd announced last year that in the 1961 session of the Union Parliament he would introduce a Bill to remove education from the control of the provinces and place it directly under the central Government. In South Africa at present there are six bodies empowered to grant matriculation exemption: one in each province and two national bodies—the Joint Matriculation Board of the University of South Africa and the Department of Education, Arts and Science. Dr. Verwoerd declared that six different bodies, with different values, was intolerable “for there cannot be one ideal in one part of the country and another in another part”. The Union Education Advisory Bill empowers a Government-controlled council to “advise on all matters affecting education”. The policy and educational values of this council will be guided by the Department of Education, Arts and Science whose syllabuses have for some time propagated C.N.E. ideals. At one stage the Joint Matriculation Board stated that it should have the right to control education standards—as it consisted of university professors it felt it was in the best position to set the standards for advanced academic training. The Department of Education soon made it clear that it was the only suitable body to control ‘white’ education. As soon as the Bill is passed—and it will be passed in spite of the hue and cry among the English-speaking population at present—the way will be clear for a uniform ‘white’ education policy founded on Christian-National principles.

II.

Prior to the passing of the Bantu Education Act in 1953, the Africans had a system of education, controlled by each province, known as 'Native' education. The main distinguishing feature of 'Native' education was the niggardliness with which successive Union governments financed it: on an average the State spent £6 per child per annum and twenty times that amount on 'white' scholars. However, the 'Native' education system did not attempt to inculcate in African children a different set of values and outlook in life *vis-à-vis* 'white' children. While facilities for African children were extremely poor by 'white' standards, the education system did not attempt to instil in African children ideas of separateness or of their being an independent 'race' with special qualities, abilities and aptitudes.

In 1949 the Government, in terms of its election manifesto that African education should be essentially "Christian-National in character", took active steps towards changing the existing system. In that year a *Commission on Native Education in South Africa* was appointed. The Commission, which included the present Minister of Bantu Administration and Development as a member, sat under the chairmanship of Dr. W. W. M. Eiselen, one of the chief architects of the present 'Bantustan' policy. The Commission issued its report in 1951. Its task was to consider the formulation of the principles and aims of education for Africans as an independent race, "in which their past and present, their inherent racial qualities, their distinctive characteristics and aptitude are taken into consideration". The Commission, reporting in April 1951, announced the following premises for African education: first, education must be organized to provide both adequate schools "with a definite Christian character" and social institutions to "harmonize" with these Christian-orientated schools; secondly, to achieve this, the central Government should take over control of African education from the provinces; thirdly, there must be more emphasis on the education of the mass of Africans "to enable them to co-operate in the evolution of new social patterns and institutions"; fourthly, the mother tongue should be the medium of instruction; fifthly, African parents should "share in the control and life of the schools", for in this way children would realise that parents and schools "are not competitors but they are complementary"—similarly, the schools will educate the parents "in certain social values"; sixthly, the

Africans themselves should increasingly bear the responsibility for financing this education; finally, "the schools should provide for the maximum development of the Bantu individual, mentally, morally and spiritually".

Dr. Verwoerd put the case for African education more explicitly during the debate on the Bantu Education Act in September 1953:

"Racial relations cannot improve if the wrong type of education is given to the Natives. They cannot improve if the result of Native education is the creation of frustrated people who, as a result of the education they received, have expectations in life which circumstances in South Africa do not allow to be fulfilled immediately, when it creates people who are trained for professions not open to them, when there are people who have received a form of cultural training which strengthens their desire for the white-collar occupations to such an extent that there are more such people than openings available. . . . Above all, good racial relations cannot exist when the education is given under the control of people who create wrong expectations on the part of the Native himself, if such people believe in a policy of equality, for example. . . . It is therefore necessary that Native education should be controlled in such a way that it should be in accord with the policy of the State."

Education, he concluded, must train and teach people "in accordance with their opportunities in life, according to the sphere in which they live"; by blindly producing students on the 'white' model "the idle hope was created that the Natives could occupy positions in the European community in spite of the country's policy"; the 'white' model misled the African by opening his eyes "to the green pastures of European society in which he is not allowed to graze". These sentiments recall some lines in Stephen Spender's *An Elementary School Classroom in a Slum*, lines which the Premier may have had in mind:

"Surely Shakespeare is wicked, the map a bad example,
With ships and sun and love tempting them to steal—
For lives that slyly turn in their cramped holes
From fog to endless night? On their slag heap, these children
Wear skins peeped through by bones and spectacles of steel
With mended glass, like bottle bits on stones.
All of their time and space are foggy slum
So blot their maps with slums as big as doom."

The Act was implemented in August 1954 when circulars were sent to African schools stating the rules and regulations under which African schools could be registered. Many mission schools for Africans were forced to close as they refused to accept the 'station-in-life' principles in the Act. Draft syllabuses were published in November 1954 and in January 1955 the rules of conduct for African teachers were published. One example will suffice: any teacher who, *inter alia*, "treats with gross discourtesy a member of

the public or an official of the Department of Native Affairs, or encourages through his acts or behaviour disobedience or resistance to the laws of the State, or identifies himself actively with a political party or actively participates in political affairs or contributes to the press or publishes an article criticizing his superior officers or the policy of the Department of Native Affairs, is guilty of misconduct and action shall be taken against him". These regulations virtually deprive the African teacher of his professional status: he can no longer claim his annual increments as of right as these depend upon the 'willingness' of the Minister to make funds available. He is subject to the authority and discipline of *any* official of the (then) Department of Native Affairs—and by definition, "official" includes road and agricultural overseers.

African teachers' associations protested strongly against the new system. The Cape African Teachers' Association, for example, rejected the new 'Bantu' education on the grounds that the African has no 'special' qualities and aptitudes peculiar to himself and different from other human beings; further, that the economic forces in South Africa have completely broken down the whole basis of the tribal system and it was fraudulent, reactionary, unrealistic and futile to attempt to revive tribalism through the agency of the schools. The Government considered this and other associations 'subversive' and in many instances armed police raided schools and the homes of teachers. When parents protested against police action and kept their children away from school for a few days, the Department closed schools permanently. In spite of regular Government accusations that African teachers were 'subversives' and 'anarchists'—Dr. Eiselen in a radio broadcast declared that teachers' protests were "against all order"—there has been no instance of a prosecution brought against any individual teacher or association. With monotonous regularity the Department dismisses batches of African teachers each term. There is no semblance of a trial and no reasons are given for dismissal save a memorandum stating that the teacher is 'unsuitable'.

The syllabuses prescribed by the Bantu Education Act reflect the cardinal principle of "love of one's own" or rather, the restriction of knowledge to the pupils' particular language and group. The African child who leaves school after four years—most of them are forced to do so through economic circumstances—finds that his world consists of his home district. By the end of the primary school course he knows nothing about the outside world but a great deal

about tribalism. African Junior Certificate pupils are instructed, for example, in "the present policy of decentralization of industries to places adjacent to the Bantu areas to provide work for the Bantu near their homes". The fact that this is taught to third-generation urban African children who know home as a township and not as a tribal reserve, the fact that the Government plan to decentralize industry by establishing industries in African reserves has to date shown no sign of becoming a reality, nor is likely to become one, does not deter the education authorities. African children are taught in history of the "wars of extermination" they waged against the Boers and of the "ravages" committed by their people: nowhere is there any reference to 'white' aggression. Of Egyptians, the textbooks teach that "it is a generally accepted fact that these tawny people are the descendants of Canaan, the son of Ham, who was cursed by his father Noah". A great deal of the curriculum is taken up with the teaching of domestic science, manual training, animal husbandry and allied subjects. English and Afrikaans are taught to African children to enable them to "discuss their work", to "obey commands" and to "understand instructions".

The Government then turned its attention to African higher education. In 1955 it appointed a three-man commission—Drs. J. E. Holloway, R. W. Wilcocks and E. G. Malherbe—to inquire into separate training for non-whites in universities. It reported that full *apartheid* should not be implemented as the closing of university doors to students of certain races was a gross interference in academic freedom. Following on this report, the Minister of Education announced that university *apartheid* would not be introduced until such time as non-white university institutions were established. In May 1957 a Separate University Education Bill was introduced; after passing the second reading stage it was referred to a select committee which became a commission of inquiry. The commission's report—published as a majority report of eight members and a minority report of five members—embodied the text of a new Bill, the Extension of University Education Bill. The majority report indicated its guiding principles:

"It is the considered opinion of the Commission that the existing 'open' or mixed universities will never be able to meet the real requirements of the non-Europeans. At best they will only be able to provide university education for a limited number. . . . Moreover, they will give the students a background which does not fit in with their national character and will give them an alien and contemptuous attitude towards their own culture. . . . Each college should serve an ethnic group, enriching it both spiritually and materially. . . . The product of the university should seek and

find its highest fulfilment in its own special group. . . . The university colleges will eventually be financed and controlled by the non-Europeans themselves as full-fledged universities that will take their place among the best in the world."

The Act lays down that a Council and an Advisory Council be created for each ethnic university, or to use the more correct term, tribal college. The former body consists of eight 'white' Government nominees and the latter body solely of Africans. The Minister has the power to delegate to the Council the responsibility for the maintenance and conduct of the college, the limitation of the number of students in any course and the authority to refuse admission to a student if this, in its judgment, is in the best interests of the college. White students are prohibited, on penalty of a fine of £100 or six months' imprisonment. Perhaps the worst feature of the Act was the omission from college constitutions of the Conscience Clause—that no religious test shall be imposed on a student or a staff member as a condition of admission or employment and that no preference should be given or advantage withheld from any person on the ground of his religious belief. Such a clause is common to all South African universities with the exception of Potchefstroom University for Christian National Education. The explanation of this omission was that if the colleges were to be a success "and render the highest service to non-Europeans, they should be built up on a religious foundation".

The next step was to reduce the status of the University College of Fort Hare to that of a tribal college. This College had a proud record of achievement. Its first graduate was capped in 1923. By 1955, five students had obtained Master of Arts degrees, three the Master of Science, four the B.A. Honours, six the B.Sc. Honours; 544 had obtained the Bachelor of Arts, 311 the Bachelor of Science and 69 the B.Sc. (Hygiene)—a degree for those entering the Public Health Service. Of these graduates, 83 went on to qualify as medical practitioners in the previously 'open' universities of the Witwatersrand and Cape Town and at overseas universities. The College trained 582 teachers. The University College of Fort Hare Transfer Act of 1959 empowered the Governor-General to assign control of that meritorious institution to the Minister of Bantu Education (it had been found necessary meanwhile to create this new portfolio in view of the rapid 'progress' in African education). On January 1 1960 the control, maintenance and management of the College passed to the Minister and a new 'all-white' Council of thirteen was established. When the transfer took effect it was announced that the

Principal, Professor H. R. Burrows, would not be re-appointed. The Vice-Principal, Professor Z. K. Matthews, was given an option of re-appointment as a State employee provided he resigned from the African National Congress—an option he declined to accept. At the end of 1959 seven departmental heads and fourteen other staff members were informed that their appointments had been terminated. The Minister explained:

"I disposed of their services because I will not permit a penny of any funds of which I have control to be paid to any persons who are known to be destroying the Government's policy of *apartheid*."

Some half-dozen of these tribal colleges have been built and have begun to function. The Minister's contention that they will take their place among the best in the world can be gauged by a short description of these institutions. Each is built at a remote and 'safe' distance from any urban area where students might become contaminated by the political and social evils that lurk there. Each has an open sun courtyard, a *lapa*, intended as an open-air council or discussion chamber for students. The idea of these architectural extravagances is to create the 'tribal' atmosphere in 'tribal' colleges where the medium of instruction is 'tribal'—and where the students are third- and fourth-generation urban dwellers who are unaware of their tribal heritage and customs. Visitors are not admitted except with the special permission of the Registrar. The press is forbidden to enter these sanctums; students are barred from giving interviews, from belonging to political parties and from indulging in any political activities. Each college has its own 'patrol' for the better enforcement of student discipline. Many of the staff are Government-appointed public servants with no academic reputation in the accepted sense of the word. A number of liberal academics in 'white' universities felt obliged to apply for posts in these colleges so that the students should get some satisfactory tuition—only to find themselves rejected as 'unsuitable'. The subjects taught are limited, consisting mainly of 'safe' arts subjects and those which lend themselves to the C.N.E. viewpoint. Instruction is in the vernacular; a Swazi student, for whom there is no tribal college, has therefore to study through a foreign medium, say Sotho. The colleges are and will be isolated from other seats of learning in South Africa and they are clearly isolated from foreign material and knowledge. Many of the tribal languages are still, relatively speaking, in an early phase of literary and scientific development: how then are Zulus, Xhosas, Vendas and Tswanas

given an understanding of the machinery of modern civilization and entry into the heritage of world civilizations? The answer is that even if it was possible to give them that understanding and entry, the authorities would not give it because by definition a member of the non-white races can only be truly happy when he is 'christianized' and 'nationalized'—he will then "be proof against foreign ideologies which give him an illusion of happiness". (A clear inconsistency on the part of the promoters of this system is that the 'christianizing' of Africans is clearly inconsistent with the re-establishment of tribalism among Africans.)

Will the Nationalist Government succeed in its battle for the minds of the people? One is heartened by the attitude of the Africans, especially when one sees urban African parents doing all in their power to undo the teaching of the Bantu Education schools. Such parents, though often formally unschooled, conscientiously try to sift the true from the false, the palatable from the unpalatable and the worthwhile from the worthless for their children. In spite of the black curtain that is drawn round these people in the townships, one sees children playing no longer 'cowboys and crooks' but 'Lumumbas and Mobotus'. African university students indicated their standpoint publicly when Fort Hare was transferred:

"The Government, in its dictatorial action in dismissing our staff members without stating any reasons, has added to the atmosphere of insecurity and uncertainty that has engulfed Fort Hare during the past few years. This atmosphere makes the normal pursuit of academic activities almost impossible. But let it be noted, once and for all, that our stand as students of Fort Hare and as the future leaders of our country, upholding the principles of education as universally accepted, remains unchanged and uncompromising. Our outright condemnation of the university apartheid legislation remains steadfast. We wish to warn the architects of White domination, the whole country and the world at large that we will not be held responsible for the disastrous repercussions of the *apartheid* policy, which in the foreseeable future will destroy the entire social, political and economic structure of our country."

It seems that the Government's greatest success will be among the 'white' section of the population. Notwithstanding the efforts of some parents to mitigate the C.N.E. teachings in the schools, perhaps 98% of all 'white' South Africans tacitly, if not explicitly, believe in the doctrine of 'white' supremacy and wish to see the present social order perpetuated. Their children are relatively fertile material for indoctrination for, unlike the Africans, they have no fixed obsession such as the attainment of freedom with which to ward off the brainwashing objective in Government propaganda.