

interviewer... (1) ... what is your business at the moment?

(A) (2) s... Well, it has steadily increased, at the moment we are dealing with a caseload that is usually normal for Jan & Feb at the beginning of the year, when we have always accepted that we have twice the amount or twice the number of people coming and at the moment in November when we ought to be quiet we have got what we had in Jan to cope with, which is a real indication of how things are worsening.

i... Now this is in the middle of a govt which claims to be reforming (yes). Why is this caseload so bad, why are so many people coming to you for help?

s... Because the reform consists of trying to confer<sup>on</sup> a certain limited group of black people the benefits of an expanding and booming economy, but at the same time excluding the majority of people from rural areas from sharing in those benefits, so that we have seen an increase in the penalties imposed on illegal employment, an increase in the structures which are designed to keep people out of urban areas, so that at least 20% of the people who come to us every day at the moment are people who have jobs but are not allowed to take them, and where their employers would HAVE TAKEN THEM anyway two years ago because they weren't worried about the penalty the employer is now faced with a R500 fine.

So he can no longer afford to take somebody who cannot be registered, so that one is sitting there with a crowd of men and women who are in desperate need of employment because they have dependants in rural areas and are not allowed to work in the jobs that they have found.

i... The govt claims that it is committed to reform and as part of that pledge it is introducing new legislation, some of which has already been published, particularly to do with the rights of individuals to be in certain areas at certain times. What to you are the key features in that legislation?

What effect is that going to have on the people coming to you for help?

d... The first thing to understand is that it is a very sophisticated and extremely clever design.

The legislation is so technical and so confused and on the face of it so much more simple. Like the black Community Dev Bill has nothing whatever to do with development but a whole lot to do with control.

That Bill is very much shorter than the legislation it replaces, and that shortness, that curtailment of the length of the legislation actually means that legal rights are removed.

i... The govt is selling it as a reduction of...

d... Yes, as a simplification, as getting rid of the bureaucracy, getting rid of the red tape, a streamlining of the legislation to do away with unnecessary, hurtful discrimination, that is what the minister said.

1... In practice, what's he going to do?

d... It removes legal rights almost entirely. When it becomes law for the next few years there will be people who will still be able to establish rights that they had at the time the legislation came in, but as the length of time passes it will become increasingly <sup>difficult</sup> to prove those, and that legal rights are replaced by privileges conferred by regulation, which is uncontrolled by parliament,

Privileges conferred by the minister as it may seem expedient to the needs of white power. Privileges can be withdrawn at any time, they cannot be enforced in the courts.

It's an effort to buy, co-opt a group of middle class black people into support of the system by demonstrating to them, they think, that the capitalist system can in fact distribute the benefits of economic growth to the whole population, but the price of the privileges for the few is the exclusion of

the majority who live in rural areas from participation in the economy at all.

This has always been the policy as far as political rights go, and that exclusion from political rights is also the exclusion from the economic development.

The new bills, even for that group of privileged people, ~~do~~ do not confer any political rights at all, it's very carefully framed to make sure that those people can never claim that they are accepted as citizens of SA, and therefore entitled to political rights as well.

There's nothing to indicate that govt thinking on that has changed at all.

i... And this goes hand in hand, this attempt to persuade a small number of blacks that there is something in the system for them, this goes hand in hand for instance with attempts to upgrade the quality of life in Soweto, there is actually a physical improvement... What does that involve?

d... Well, it's supposed to involve the provision of housing on a large scale because the waiting list~~x~~ is over 30 000 families, not people, but families who've been waiting for houses... The waiting list goes back to 1969, there is no visible sign in Jhb that the West Rand Board is actually coping with this at all, I mean there isn't - the official figure given this morning is that 5 000 <sup>houses</sup> have been built in Soweto over the last ten years.

Probably two thirds of those may have been built in the last two years. The real problem is the shortage of land, which would mean the expropriation of whites to provide more land where that housing could be provided and govt is not prepared to do that.

In other urban areas there has been a greater improvement.

Soweto is really a very special place where half the population is probably not listed on the official statistics.

But in other areas they seem to be making a greater effort to provide housing, more successfully.

There's also the whole electrification programme which of course is a great benefit to the white producer because once people in Soweto have electricity they're gonna want televisions, steam irons, electric stoves, washing machines etc etc.

I think it is very important to recognise that none of this is being given as a handout from whites to blacks, none of this is being given as a recognition of an unjust deprivation in the past.

The huge loan, 35 million I think, raised for the electrification of Soweto has to be paid back. And govt policy remains that black people must pay for their own amenities, so at the moment they're in a spiral of increasing rents, in all black townships, increasing charges instead of having a flat rate for water and electricity you have a meter installed if you buy your house, and you pay per unit.

And the electricity charges are actually turning out to be more than white people pay in a suburb like the one that I live in.

i... Is this to pay for the provision of the new...

d.... Yes, the people have to repay these enormous loans that are hailed as being a sign of progress, but in fact it's really nothing to do with white SAns recognizing the rights of black people to share in the economy. There is no proper planning, there can't be because the whole system is designed in Europe and the West - the poorest workers live nearest the city centre, nearest the industrial areas.

In this country the poorest workers are moved right

onto the periphery ~~ies in this country~~, which puts up the cost of providing the services.

And then they are told that they have got to pay for them and there is no recognition of the whole wrongness of the system.

In fact as long as apartheid lasts you cannot in fact make any reparation for the past, you cannot in fact put the system right, you can't ever establish any kind of system that will remotely resemble free enterprise.

i... And you see the present reforms, what the govt claims are reforms, not as an attempt to get rid of apartheid but as an attempt to refine it so that its benefits can be shared to a certain extent with a small group of blacks.

d... Yes, but only benefits in terms of privileges as I've said. It's not anything to do with sharing power or sharing political rights, or sharing rights to economic participation.

It is a question of trying to put the lid on the revolution by building up a middle class group that you hope will be that lid, which in fact is bound to fail.

I think that it might succeed in delaying political developments, delaying the escalation of conflict, and therefore actually because ~~xxxx~~ it's delayed making it very much worse and very much more bitter.

i... But in the end no solution?

d... None at all, none at all. One of the sad things is sitting and looking at this society and realising the inevitable tragedy of war, that we're already in the middle of a revolution which most whites don't recognize at all, but as a historical process, historians in the future, where are they actually going to pinpoint where the revolution began? We are in the middle of it, it can only escalate, and there is absolutely no sign whatsoever that govt is recognizing this

in a real way.

All they're doing is fiddling around with apartheid, using different words for it, and co-opting some black people - they hope to co-opt some black people into support of the status quo, because those black people, people like the present mayor of Soweto would know very well that come liberation he has not got a chance of any political office or anything else, so it is in his interests to co-operate.

There are a lot of parallels with the Nazi Nazi occupation of Europe during the war.

A whole lot of parallels between Holland and the mayors who started off saying well it wouldn't do any harm this time to do what they say, and then the next time it becomes more, there's always an implied threat of what I will do if you don't do it, until people who have gone into the system - either the homeland system or the community council system - find themselves absolutely in a no-win situation and that means that they intensify their support for the status quo and that's exactly the process that's happening.

i... One of the other parallels perhaps with the evolution of Nazi Germany is the gap of understanding of the ordinary privileged middle class German, the failure of those not directly involved in the political process to perceive what is happening, to perceive in Nazi Germany what was happening to the Jews, the failure of whites in this country to perceive what has been happening over, what is happening to blacks.

Is there any sign that that blindness is changing among the white people?

d... No, I don't believe so at all. I think that cholera epidemic that we were talking about earlier is an indication of this, that there has been no discussion in the white community as to why people are living in those conditions that lead

to cholera being able to spread so fast.

Most of it is certainly in the Eastern Tvl area, is a result of the resettlement policy where so many thousands of people have been moved onto land that can't possibly support them, with inadequate water, etc.

i... This is once again part of the tidying up of apartheid?

d... That's right, because blacks are supposed to live in the bantustans and not in the white areas, so they have been removed to the order of something like 2½-million black people have been relocated, from what is now supposed to be white SA into the bantustans.

Now the resettlement policy has recently received much more - I mean after 20 years of actually trying to highlight it for the first time in 1980 the Black Sash has found receptive audiences in churches and so on and more people are interested but there is no connection in the average white mind between the cholera epidemic and that particular policy.

That's a very good indication. One often finds that the Black Sash gets irate phone calls from employers who suddenly find 'my boy', or 'this boy' who's worked for me for ten years" suddenly arrested for a pass law offence and this is scandalous etc etc, But they really do not know what goes on, they have no excuse for not knowing because the English language press in this country has certainly done its level best over the last 30 years to expose these sort of things.

But in fact there's a kind of thing which I'm sure must have happened in Nazi Germany that you don't want to know, because if you in fact know or try to find out you then have to get involved.

And most people simply don't want to get involved, they want to go on enjoying perhaps the highest standard of living

in the world, and they don't really want to be exposed to the painfulness of understanding what is actually happening, or what that standard of living is actually built on in terms of human suffering.

And I'm sure it was the same in Germany.

i... Do you see any chance of averting the kind of violent confrontation coming which you suggested earlier?

d... No, except in my most optimistic moments. I feel greatly encouraged by, for example the Council Of Churches recognition of the Gandian type of non-violent pressures, of civil disobedience, etc - that is a very encouraging thought, I mean I'm a total pacifist myself and I find it a very exciting concept but in a way that concept is rejected on both sides, it's rejected by whites because you must not break the law - the number of times Romans 13 is quoted as being what the Christian's duty to obey authority and to obey laws.

On the other side it's rejected because blacks will say We have tried non-violent means over a whole century of negotiation and political protest.

Which is very true in a lot of ways. I don't really - I'm being realistic - believe that that kind of thinking is going to win. I think we're going to have to fight this war. But I'm told that as a christian I have to be hopeful. One always hopes.

It was your archbishop of Canterbury, Ramsay, when he came out here, with all those eyebrows going in all directions, he says as a Christian I have to believe in miracles, so one goes on hoping that there will be that miracle of non-violent coercion, but I don't realistically think that it will happen - I think we're going to have to fight.

I mean all the indications are there. They're now talking about, the rumours are that there will be conscription for



white women, which could affect my younger daughter.

There is increasing militarization of our society - you want to look at our toyshops, it's unbelievable the Christmas gifts that are offered, armoured tanks, camouflage uniforms, toy guns etc etc.

i... Yes, television I've noticed.

d... Yes, very much so. And you've probably noticed the graphics behind newscasters. Whenever there's a report about disturbances you have this horrible broad shouldered menacing crowds behind the newscaster's head, all done in graphics and there's a real build-up, partly because our Prime Minister was the minister of Defence, he's very proud of the way he built up the army.

That picture of him the other day when he was officially, the army paid tribute to him as minister of defence, a massive parade, flypast etc etc.

And that's where most whites are. And in response to that of course most blacks, even the middle-aged people, my contemporaries, particularly in the church who are real, they don't want to admit that violence has to be used, but even they are saying that you cannot judge people who go and use violence, blacks who go and join the liberation Army, because there is no other possible response to the kind of thing you whites are saying about war.

(side one ends)