TUSKEGEE, THE JOINT COUNCILS, AND THE ALL AFRICAN CONVENTION

by

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In June 1936 Heaton Nicholls, Member of Parliament for Zululand, and member of the Native Affairs Commission (NAC), launched an attack on the Joint Councils of Europeans and Natives for "carrying on intensive propaganda" and taking "the political stage in attacking the measure before the Committee [stage of the Native Bills]". (1) Nicholls was incensed and charged that:

> It was the Joint Councils which organised the Bloemfontein Conference of Natives. They organised the whole of this agitation throughout the whole of the country ... What is the difference between a Communist propagandist who believes that human happiness can be better furthered if people will only adopt his tenets, and the bishops and the judges who go around the country telling the Natives that if they will only join together and agitate sufficiently, and believe that Parliament is animated by the worst possible repressive intentions they will be the happier for it. (2)

W. H. Ramsbottom, chairman of the Johannesburg Joint Council, in a reply to Nicholls wrote to all members of parliament and to the press denying the accusation. He stated that the Joint Councils had declared against the Native Bills in 1927 but thereafter had waited for the outcome of the deliberations of successive Committees appointed by Parliament. He claimed that his Council had acted with the utmost decorum and had been silent while the issue went before the Select Committee of the House, and had withheld all comment for over six months, to give the Secretary for Native Affairs and members of the NAC time to tour South Africa explaining the Bills to Native leaders. "The Bloemfontein Conference was called and organised exclusively by Native leaders themselves without any assistance from any Joint Council." (3)

Advocate Ramsbottom was formally correct. The All African Convention (AAC), which met in Bloemfontein on 16 December 1935, had been summoned by African leaders. None of the forty Joint Councils in South Africa had called the Convention together, nor rendered any perceptible assistance in getting the 400 delegates to Bloemfontein. Ramsbottom explained further:

> So far from exploiting Native passion, which it would be so fatally easy to do, the Joint Councils strive to face friction and difficulties in race relations in a calm and deliberative frame of mind, and to find a line of action which will lead to an

> alleviation if not a complete solution of the difficulty. Such action generally takes form, after investigation and report, of a deputation to the relevant authority. (4)

Any observer of the Joint Councils could recognize the veracity of this description, although it is questionable whether the Councils could have "exploited native passion" in 1935. The body had been organized in 1921 to defuse "Native passions", and in the fifteen intervening years that preceded the promulgation of the Native Bills had helped dampen the movements of protest in South Africa.

In some respects, however, Ramsbottom had not answered Nicholls. The Joint Councils as an organization might not have organized the Bloemfontein Conference, and bishops and judges might not have agitated against the Bills, but black members of the Councils (and associated bodies) had called for the Convention, summoned the gathering, controlled the platform, formulated the resolutions (in terms not dissimilar from the Johannesburg Joint Council's 1935 resolution on the Bills), provided the executive officers of the newly constituted AAC, and in every conceivable way dominated the new organization.

The list of delegates to the first Convention includes nearly every African actively engaged in political organizations at the time. Those who stayed aloof, or withdrew in 1936 (Seme in the Transvaal, Thaele in the Cape, Dube in Natal) had either stayed out of Joint Council activities or given their first loyalty to Chiefs who were not concerned with the issue of the vote. Even when the ANC split away (and in the process split the ranks of those who adhered to the Councils), the rump of the AAC remained in the hands of Council members.

A convention against the Hertzog Bills might have been summoned if there had been no Joint Councils, but it is not necessary to speculate on what might have happened. The Councils did exist; their members were drawn from every major African organization in the country (officially or unofficially); and their adherents controlled the major black newspapers and used their editorials to call for the Convention. No history of the AAC can avoid a close scrutiny of this organization and the men who participated in its activities.

The First Joint Council of Europeans and Natives

The Johannesburg Joint Council was founded in April 1921 to meet specific South African conditions, but the form which it took came from the American experience of two leading members of the Phelps-Stokes Commission on Native Education who were visiting South Africa.

The Commission had originally been invited to tour Britain's African territories by the Baptist Foreign Missionary Society, to advise on the introduction of (or improvement of) industrial education in the schools. The leader of the Commission was Dr T. Jesse Jones, educational director of the Phelps-Stokes Committee, who had assumed the mantle of Booker T. Washington after his death in 1915. Jones was a firm proponent of the system evolved by Washington at Tuskegee, Alabama, and quite inflexible in his application of a system which has been described as being designed to "guarantee that the Negro would continue to provide a low-level labour supply for the white South". (5)

Jones had stated in 1907 that racial groups evolved differentially on their own time-scale, and it was "natural difficulties" owing to these differences which led to disabilities some groups suffered. To call this "racial oppression" or "discrimination" was incorrect, and it was not possible to counter the "social forces controlling and limiting the development of races". All that Blacks could hope for

was that they did not develop "away from the influences of whites". (6)

By 1918 Jones had established his position as "an expert on the Negro" when he undertook a survey of the morale of black troops stationed in Europe. He conceived of his main task as being to "contain and direct the growing racial dissatisfaction of the Negro troops, and work for their peaceful return to civilian life in the States". He maintained that it was necessary to downgrade black expectations that they were due for immediate full democratic rights in the US. He helped establish Inter-Racial Committees in the Southern States, to select the possible improvements which could be obtained through campaigning in the community - and by this means defuse black radicalism. (7)

In the post-war years Jones and his associates set out to win the souls of Blacks, and protect them from the racial egalitarianism espoused by W. E. B. DuBois, and the even more seditious militancy displayed by Marcus Garvey in Harlem. Now that Jones was touring Africa, he continued his crusade against Garveyism (in particular), and had with him a close ally in Dr J. E. K. Aggrey, the Gold Coaster who had been educated at the liberal Livingstone College, North Carolina, but was a firm adherent of the Tuskegee programme.

Aggrey was a devout Christian who believed that the Blacks had only emerged from barbarism because of the White presence, and that concessions could be won only by soft words, moderation and Christian forbearance. He was an ideal companion for Jesse Jones. His presence in the Commission was aimed to silence DuBois' criticism of the Phelps-Stokes Committee in the States, while his African origin won him a hearing amongst Blacks which Jones could never hope to command. He spoke tirelessly and fluently, condemning violence, and conducting a crusade against Garvey and his adherents in Africa.

The Smuts government had invited the Commission to visit South Africa and had seconded Dr Charles T. Loram, Chief Inspector of Native Education in Natal, to tour with the team. (8) In the Transvaal, J. D. Rheinallt Jones and Loram organized all arrangements for Jesse Jones and Aggrey, and after a ten-day tour of the Witwatersrand the two Commissioners visited Rheinallt Jones at his University office in Johannesburg and pressed the need for urgent action to defuse the violence they said they had observed. They referred to the Black-White conflicts in the slums, the anti-pass campaign organized by the Transvaal National Congress, and the brutal sentences imposed on black municipal workers who had been on strike. They felt that the bitterness this engendered would lead to serious disturbances. (9) Rheinallt Jones, in his account of this visit, continued:

> They thought decent minded Europeans ought to consider these things but it was clear that no white man had any knowledge of what was passing in the minds of the Natives. I asked them what they wished me to do and they replied that they did not think that the [all white] Native Welfare Associations were adequate for the situation, and suggested that their experience in the Southern States during and after the Great War had a lesson for them.

Jesse Jones maintained that the racial friction in the USA, both in the factories and in housing estates, had led to riots and lynchings, and this had led moderate Negroes to devise the Inter-Racial Committees of the Southern States. These Committees reduced or even stopped lynchings and riots, and had "also led to very great developments in Education, Native [sic] Welfare, etc.". (10)

The next step was a visit by Rheinallt Jones and Aggrey to Howard Pim, a leading Quaker "liberal" and chairman of the Johannesburg Native Welfare Society. Aggrey argued that it was necessary for such bodies to include both Blacks and Whites if the existing tensions were to be reduced. Pim was persuaded, and with Rheinallt Jones undertook to gather together moderate and influential whites; Aggrey would recruit likely Blacks.

Shortly thereafter, a meeting was convened at the University. Whites and Blacks sat together, and discussion was heated. Whites, wrote Jones, "had to listen to a torrent of invective from the Natives present. They said there were no decent white men in South Africa, but they stole the Natives' land, and that generally the white man was responsible for the misery of the Natives. Then thanks to Aggrey's winning personality these difficulties were negotiated and the first Joint Council was formed on 27th April, 1921." (11)

It is perhaps natural that Rheinallt Jones, the leading white personality in the Joint Council movement, saw the origin and history of this organization as a product of his own activities. However, it would be quite unhistorical to believe that the Joint Councils were born in those meetings at the University. There had been considerable concern in many quarters about "Native discontent" and much thought amongst both Whites and Blacks about the need to restore peace to the troubled towns. Many Whites thought in terms of regaining the confidence of the educated African leaders - whilst their Black counterparts sought means of taking their rightful place in society. Men and women, Black and White, although few in number, were more than ready to meet together and join the new Joint Council.

In a still unpublished paper, Martin Legassick has described some of the concern felt by White "liberals" about the growing tension in society. (12) Some discerning politicians had sensed the mood during the war and as early as 1917 John X. Merriman wrote about the sullen discontent amongst the Natives. By 1919 several delegates voiced their concern about the unrest of the Africans at a meeting called by the Friends in Johannesburg. (13)

There was cause for this concern. In Johannesburg there had been the strike of men who removed night-soil in 1918, and the ANC had initiated a passive resistance campaign against the passes. But more was to follow, and the fears expressed at the Friends' meeting were shown to be real. In 1920 there were strikes at the Cape Town docks; riots and considerable damage at Kilnerton training college and Lovedale school; a strike on the gold mines involving 40,000 to 70,000 African workers (14); shootings in Port Elizabeth which left twenty-one dead and many more injured after the detention of the ICU leader, S. M. Masabalala; and then, in May 1921, the crowning tragedy when police killed 190 Israelites at Bulhoek, near Queenstown.

Dr F. Bridgman, of the American Zulu Mission, had been a delegate at the Friends' meeting in 1919, and expressed concern over the radicalization of Blacks who had been so much more amenable before the war. He had set out to win back the young people, who, he feared, might become irrevocably alienated, and had asked the American Board of Missionaries to send out a trained social worker. Following this request, the Rev. Ray E. Philips and his wife (both trained social workers) had joined Bridgman.

Together, Bridgman and Philips set up a play centre, and the Gamma Sigma Club to provide lectures and debates. The latter, using the initial letters of Gudthi Senton (Know Thyself!), continued to function for over a decade, and provided a forum in many townships along the Witwatersrand. Young black school graduates, working in the mines, in offices, and in commercial firms, were attracted to the club and were converted. James Dexter Taylor reported on them in 1926:

> Some of [the men who came] were political extremists. Racial feeling ran high and there was little respect for the church ... [but] ... Gradually many of the most radical of its members have been led to more sober views and to a spirit of inter-racial co-operation. A voluntary Bible class has been well attended and religious and moral matters have been discussed with as much avidity as political and economic subjects. (15)

The activities of Bridgman and Philips were extended in the years to come. They obtained money from the mining houses and commercial establishments to set up the Bantu Man's Social Centre (BMSC). This building, with rooms for meetings and relaxation and with tennis courts and other facilities, was a centre for local and visiting Africans over the next five decades. It was governed by a committee of missionaries, businessmen and ministers (15), and all gatherings fell under the supervision of an elected committee.

Other activities grew out of the programme of the BMSC. Philips organized a travelling cinema for the mine compounds showing "carefully selected films combining instruction & entertainment" and secured an annual grant of £6,000 from the Chamber of Mines for this project. School youth were also catered for by the establishment of the Pathfinders Movement - an alternative to the whites-only Boy Scout Movement. (16)

All this work was taken over by the Joint Council. The BMSC became the centre of its activities; the Gamma Sigma Club provided the lectures and debates; Rheinallt Jones became Chief Pathfinder in South Africa and the Rev. J. Calata of the Cape ANC (and Joint Council) was appointed Deputy Chief; Mrs Edith Rheinallt Jones organized the girls counterpart to the Pathfinders, the Wayfarers; and Africans (although not necessarily whites) were "led to more sober views". But that is looking ahead. Aggrey had still to fulfil his promise to gather together Africans to launch the Joint Councils.

Jesse Jones and other members of the Commission left South Africa in April, but Aggrey's stay was extended. He toured the country and was, apparently, highly successful. In a letter to Jesse Jones on 16 April 1921, C. T. Loram wrote:

> There were about 150 Whites and 400 Blacks ... Aggrey was great. He screamed, he yelled, he argued. It was fine to see the effect on the people. The Europeans were delighted; the radical Natives were mad at the idea of a black man praising the Whites ...
>
> There was a running fire of black criticism which Aggrey would not let me check. 'All right my black brother, you just wait till after the meeting' [he said] 'I've got something to tell you about Marcus Garvey that I don't want these white folk to hear.' It was a great show, and we were all pleased and proud. (18)

He always arranged to meet radical blacks at their houses after the close of the public meeting, and there argued the case for patience and for moderation. Loram wrote on another occasion:

> Again and again I have seen him wrestling with the so-called agitators and persuading them by his logic, his wisdom, and I verily believe by his saintliness. (19)

Aggrey was offered a Chair at Fort Hare, and the South African government would have allowed him to stay, but he accepted a post in Achimota. (20) He returned to South Africa in 1925 and on that occasion, it was reported, there were many who went to his meetings and confessed to the error of their ways - and, obviously, proclaimed their conversion to the Joint Councils. (21)

Black Leaders in the Joint Councils

Aggrey's campaign won many converts, and he was particularly successful in winning the young men who had attended the leading Mission schools. The graduates of Lovedale, Adams, Healdtown, and of the University College of Fort Hare, joined the

Joint Councils which were set up in many of the main urban centres. Professor W. M. MacMillan, who occupied a prominent position in the Councils, commented at a later date that he had notices "over and over again that the Africans who counted, for instance in the Rand Joint Council, were almost without exception Lovedale boys". (22)

The Joint Councils would not have become effective, however, if they had not won the effective support of well known African personalities, and this was recognized by those who drew up the Constitution of the Johannesburg Joint Council in 1921. Membership was at that time to consist of 18 Whites and 18 Blacks. The Whites who joined included academics, lawyers, priests and missionaries (including Bridgman and Ray Philips), directors of a mining company and of an insurance company, the former chairman of the Stock Exchange, chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, the manager of the Native Recruiting Corporation, and the president of the Typographical Union. Blacks, it was hoped, would be invited mainly from four organizations: the Transvaal Native Congress (5); the Mine Clerks Association (3); the Native Teachers Association (2); the Native Ministers Association (3); and five others, to be selected by the Council. (23)

The recruitment of Africans had to be altered. The Transvaal National Congress did not co-operate, and was at times antagonistic. But amongst the first recruits there were two men who had been foundation members of the ANC and continued to exert considerable influence in that organization as journalists and as executive members. R. V. Selope Thema, who was to be a paid official of the Johannesburg Joint Council and its assistant secretary, had been a member of the ANC deputation to Great Britain in 1919, and was able to exert considerable influence as editor of the Bantu World. H. Selby Msimang, another prominent member of the ANC, was also president of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU) in the early 1920s. These two men appeared at government convened conferences, at missionary gatherings, and were always at the forefront of ANC affairs (including the special conference of the ANC in 1932, at which they were appointed to assist D. T. Mweli-Skota in reorganizing the Congress). (24)

Both men believed in dialogue, in racial co-operation and mutual understanding. By these means they hoped to achieve equal opportunities and full citizenship rights.(25) They also took a firm stand against radical movements and violence, despite an occasional outburst in print threatening revolution. (26)

There were other prominent names in the lists of Joint Councils in the 1920s. Many of them were in the ANC, including Selby Ngcobo, John Dube and the Rev. Mtimkulu in Natal; the Rev. Z. Mahabane, the Rev. Calata, the Jabavus and the Makiwanes in the Cape; and Vil-Nkomo, Bud Mbelle, D. Dhlomo, the Maxekes, and (later) Dr Xuma in the Transvaal. But by far the most important personality involved in the Joint Councils was D. D. T. Javabu, lecturer and later professor, at Fort Hare.

D. D. T. Jabavu, son of John Tengo Jabavu (one of the earliest black publicists and editors of an African newspaper) was, by his own account, deeply influenced by his father's piety, recourse to the bible, and his belief that the keynote in life was "moderation, moderation, moderation". (27)

D. D. T. Jabavu studied in London, and following his father's example became a member of the Friends' monthly meeting while remaining a devout Wesleyan. The Friends financed him while he obtained a teacher's diploma (to ensure his securing a post at Fort Hare), and paid for a trip to Tuskegee in 1913 by way of preparation for his anticipated new post. (28)

Jabavu was overwhelmed by what he saw at Tuskegee, and wrote a lengthy report at the request of the South African government. He was a firm proponent of industrial education, and accepted the Washington message uncritically. In his report he advocated the full programme of training in agriculture, the trades, hygiene, and,

for girls, cooking and sewing. (29)

He made many references to Tuskegee in his other writings, but he was also most impressed by material Negro achievements: "palatial Negro hotels", buildings that housed "Negro doctors, lawyers, and insurance companies"; "beautiful Negro theatres and YMCA quarters"; "picturesque [Negro] colleges"; "stupendous church organizations"; and "wealthy Negro merchants in their automobiles". (30)

This picture of wealth which, he said, "fired his soul" and which he called upon his fellow blacks to emulate, helped shape his world outlook. He certainly would have nothing to do with those men spreading "Bolshevism and its nihilistic doctrines ... enlisting many Natives up-country". In an address on "Native unrest", he denounced agitators who spread "the atheistic and revolutionist doctrines of Count Henri Saint Simon ... now somehow imported into South Africa". (31)

In 1920 he proclaimed that the work of Dr Bridgman and Ray Philips could provide alternatives to these pernicious socialists, and he advocated the formation of clubs similar to those offered by the American Zulu Mission "in every location, rural and urban, to heighten the tone of Native life". (32)

In 1922 Jabavu wrote again on "Native unrest in South Africa". He explained the riots and threatened riots as the inability of Africans to close the gap between runaway inflation and low wages. But he was horrified at the appeal Garvey had "on our illiterate people", with his "Black Republic propaganda" and appeal to "Negro autonomy (I Afrika mayibuye - Let Africa be restored to us) with Garvey himself as Lord High Potentate". (33)

Having outlined the nature of black stirring where "even from backwood hamlets rings the magic motto 'Ame Melika ayeza' [The Americans are coming]", Jabavu offered the government some advice. First, he admonished:

> the Bantu cannot be successfully administered as one homogeneous population. Opportunities must be given for those who have advanced in civilization to obtain suitable outlets for their capability. To repress them is impracticable. (34)

It was not only that the aspirations of those "advanced in civilization" had to be satisfied, but there was also a role for them in the country.

> The coloured races ... need to substitute for untrained leaders a number of intellectual spokesmen of the type of Booker T. Washington, J. E. K. Aggrey and R. R. Moton, among the American Negroes, who will call attention in a vigorous but constitutional manner to some of the glaring examples of injustice ... and who will at the same time furnish constructive schemes for the amelioration of the conditions of their people, on lines of co-operation with the friendly section of the Whites. (35)

In case the message had not got home, Jabavu then reiterated that: "On the part of the rulers, certain principles deserve study: the better educated Natives cannot be neglected in legislative affairs ... If they are allowed to become disaffected their influence will react injuriously to the country." Finally, he suggested that"social uplift of the benighted races" was of primary importance - and that "Black people are easy to manage if you love them, for they are emotionally sensitive and quick to respond; otherwise they are difficult". (36)

In many respects this address, simple in its contents, summarized with great care the role that black intellectuals saw for themselves if the government would only recognize their abilities, give them the necessary positions and status in society,

and allow them the means for obtaining some amelioration (or at least the right to press for such changes) in the conditions of their people - all this to be done in "co-operation with the friendly sections of the whites".

The "friendly Whites" at the Conference addressed by Jabavu got the message. Liberalism in South Africa in the 1920s was much more than a concern with "Native welfare". Men on both sides of the colour line, liberals all, were required to work together to defuse a potentially dangerous situation. This had been the message as spelt out by Jesse Jones and Aggrey, and this was the understanding of Rheinallt Jones, of Dr Bridgman and Ray Philips, of missionaries, academics, lawyers and businessmen who joined the Joint Councils.

The urgent need to build a political bridge between Blacks and Whites did not alter the basic attitudes of most of the participants in the "liberal" camp. Whites spoke and wrote as members of a white-dominated society, and Blacks, despite their frustrations and occasional outbursts of anger, accepted the tutelage of their white mentors. The Whites, in the main, continued to be condescending do-gooders, and Rheinallt Jones, who directed the Councils, still wrote in 1928 of Africans as barbarians who needed to be emancipated by the Holy Spirit in order that their minds be "opened to receive and understand the rational conceptions of modern civilization". (37) He never saw the African masses as any other than uncivilized. It was only organized recreation, brought by missionaries, which stilled "the loud and obscene talk of the uncivilised and the un-Christian". Furthermore, it was only because cast-off clothing, unhygienic as it was(!), was given to the Bantu that they obtained "passage into the neat, self-respecting dress of the more progressive". (38)

In deference to such views, Selope Thema wrote: "The story of my life may be summed up in the phrase 'Up from barbarism', for at the time of my birth the Transvaal was practically a jungle. My people were living in a state of barbarism in the Northern Transvaal." Fortunately, it seems his family were converted when he was ten, and he was saved from that fate worse than death - the heathen state. (39)

The issue, however, was not the rise from "barbarism", nor the wearing of clothes (cast-off or otherwise), nor the use of "loud and obscene talk". Nor, on the other hand, did it matter much whether the Whites in the Councils were impressed by (or disillusioned in) their African colleagues. MacMillan, in 1931, was scathing:

> They [the Africans] had nothing to say; are not ready; have no power to do anything for themselves ...; I do not think they are really thinking, anyway not ahead... The leaders are in chaos ... Selope Thema [has been driven] to hopeless drinking ... their organisations and their leaders are in chaos. (40)

The African leaders were none the less the key to Joint Council activity, and, as noted by Brian Willan, were not appendages to the white liberals. They could not be dismissed, and they could not be ignored, because they alone could address the African people. (41)

The Joint Councils and Native Legislation

Five objectives were laid down in the 1921 Constitution of the Johannesburg Joint Council. They were to "promote co-operation between Europeans and Natives in South Africa", to "investigate and report on matters relating to the welfare of the Native peoples", to make representations on behalf of Natives to the relevant public bodies, to publish such investigations as "thought desirable", and to enlighten the [white] public on Native questions. (42)

The investigations, representations, publications and enlightenment of whites became the task of the lawyers, academics, and missionaries: the promotion of co-operation (which was listed as the first objective) rested largely on the ability of blacks to organize groups in the townships. (43) There were 26 Joint Councils in existence in 1931, and many of these Councils sent speakers into the locations (or townships). An appraisal of this work was issued as a 86-page appendix to the report of the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) by Rheinallt Jones in 1931. (44)

The Councils, wrote Jones, tended to spend considerable time in discussing issues relating to land, the franchise, and pass laws. This, he stated, was understandable in view of the segregatory measures embedded in the Hertzog Bills which were placed before Parliament in 1926. The Joint Councils were "the only forum where Europeans and Bantu met to discuss matters of common interest; where the thoughtful European can hear the 'other side' of a matter in which the European is 'judge in his own cause'". None the less, warned Jones, some Joint Councils (in rural areas, particularly) ceased functioning if politics were discussed. Europeans there, presumably, had no desire to hear the other side!

The issue on which the Joint Councils had most to offer, said Jones, was in helping Blacks to adjust to urban life, and, furthermore, in the creation of a sound (black) public opinion. For this, the "best types of Natives" were gathered together and given "opportunities of hearing the official point of view explained rather than declared ... They learn to discuss questions objectively ... [and] they help to disseminate wholesome opinions on Location politics and public matters generally". As a result, "within one generation the moral tone of a Location may be radically improved", or, as Jones elaborated, "for the cleansing of the moral and physical life of the people, and for the creation of a clean and healthy public opinion". (45)

Rheinallt Jones's views were in accord with Charles Loram (now in the USA), the Phelps-Stokes Committee, and the Carnegie Corporation, which had financed much of the Joint Councils and of the SAIRR's activities. The reaction of Council members was far more complex, and it would need another paper to discuss the position of the more radical Whites who joined the Joint Councils. The story of S. P. Bunting's effort to join the Council (he was not accepted), of Bram Fischer's move from a belief in segregation to membership of the CPSA, and of Clare Goodlatte , one-time nun, who became secretary of the Cape Town Council before joining the Workers Party and editing Spark, indicate the catalytic effect of the Councils on only a few of their white members.

The history of Blacks in the Councils also indicates that there were some who were more radical - or at least spoke more radically - than others. But few, if any, ever moved to the left. There were calls for a"recognition of the common heritage of both races" and for "understanding" in order to secure a "peaceful and prosperous South Africa" (46), and there were the more bellicose statements of Selby Msimang's pamphlet on the Hertzog Bills (47), which called for "complete segregation on a fifty-fifty basis".

The agitation against the Hertzog Bills was protracted, and culminated (on the government's side) in the convening of four provincial conferences. The ANC, the Cape Native Voters Convention, and other organizations also convened conferences and urged that the new legislation be opposed. But most of these organizations consisted of committees with little following, and none were able to act independently.

There was, in the circumstances, only one organization which could offer a serious examination of the contents of the legislation; only one organization which had contacts in every major centre of the country; and only one organization to which most African leaders owed some allegiance. That was the Joint Council of Europeans and Natives. It was the African leaders closest to the Councils who proposed in their local or national organizations that a national Convention be summoned.

But, of course, Heaton Nicholls was wrong when he smelt conspiracy. The Joint Councils consisted of small, locally centred committees. These committees operated on the basis of consensus of opinion, and the local committees had very loose contact with committees in other towns. The African leaders in the Councils, consequently, did not have a national following, and they were only loosely associated with one another. All responded to the threats contained in the Bills, but in their own parochial organizations they viewed the Bills in different lights. The campaign against the Bills inside the Joint Councils provided common ground for them to act in concert in calling the Convention together. Their differences, however, were all too obvious, and the Convention had little to cement it together after the "compromise" and the passage of the Bills.

The All African Convention was not summoned because of massive agitation amongst the people. If there had been such a movement amongst the masses the Joint Councils would have failed in their task. On the other hand, if it cannot be said that the Joint Councils fathered the AAC, at the very least they were responsible for the act of cloning which begot the AAC - and, being cloned, it was quite natural that the AAC should be sterile. In that respect, the Joint Councils fulfilled all that Aggrey, Jesse Jones and Charles T. Loram expected of them.

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Notes

(1) The attack by Nicholls was reprinted in the South African Outlook, 1 July 1936, p. 157.

(2) Ibid.

(3) W. H. Ramsbottom was reprinted in ibid., pp. 158-9.

(4) Ibid., p. 159.

(5) H. J. King (1971), Pan-Africanism and Education in East Africa: a study of race, philanthropy and education in the Southern States of America and East Africa (Oxford, Clarendon Press), p. 21.

(6) Ibid., pp. 23-4.

(7) Ibid., pp. 54-5.

(8) See, for example, C. T. Loram, "The Phelps-Stokes Education Commission in South Africa", International Review of Missions, Vol. 10, 1921.

(9) Typed memorandum by Rheinallt Jones, on the origin of the Joint Councils, unsigned and undated. All Rheinallt Jones papers referred to are on microfiche, available at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies.

(10) Ibid. See also C. T. Loram, "Race Conflict and the Way Out", South African Quarterly, Vol. III, No. 4, December 1921.

(11) Ibid.

(12) Martin Legassick (1972), "The Rise of Modern South African Liberalism: its assumptions and its social base", ICS seminar paper (mimeo).

(13) Legassick quotes William Hosken, the Bishop of Pretoria, Dr F. B. Bridgman of the American Zulu Mission, and James Henderson, principal of Lovedale, on the unrest of the time and the need to win the confidence of leading Africans. (pp. 4-8)

(14) See, for example, Frederick Johnston, Class, Race and Gold (London, 1976), p. 181.

(15) James Dexter Taylor, "The Rand as a Mission Field", International Review of Missions, Vol. 15, 1926. The Rev. Taylor was a member of the American Zulu

Mission, and also of the Joint Council. See also J. D. R. Jones,"Missionary Co-operation in South Africa", South African Outlook, 2 April 1934.

(16) J. D. Taylor, op. cit.

(17) Ibid.

(18) Edwin W. Smith (1932), Aggrey of Africa: a study in black and white (SCM Press, London), p. 171.

(19) Ibid., p, 173.

(20) Ibid., p. 181.

(21) Ibid., p. 176.

(22) W. M. MacMillan (1975), My South African Days (Cape Town, David Philips), p. 179.

(23) Rheinallt Jones papers.

(24) See T. Karis and G. M. Carter, From Protest to Challenge, Vol. 1 (Hoover Institute Press, 1972), pp. 312-3.

(25) See, for example, R. V. Selope Thema, "The Race Problem", in The Guardian, September 1922, reprinted in Karis and Carter, op. cit., pp. 212-4.

(26) In an unpublished interview with Mary Benson in 1961, Msimang mentioned a campaign he had conducted inside the ICU to combat Garveyism in the Eastern Cape in 1920. (This was pointed out to me by Brian Willan.) Msimang's outburst in 1936 in The Crisis is discussed below.

(27) D. D. T. Jabavu (1922), The Life of John Tengo Jabavu (Lovedale), p. 129.

(28) Printed letter to fellow members from the London Committee of Friends, 3 July 1915. (Available at the library, the Friends House, London.)

(29) The South African government had undertaken to publish the report in full, but then decided not to use the document. Jabavu published an abbreviated copy, "Booker T. Washington's Methods applied to South Africa", in The Black Problem: papers and addresses on various Native problems (Lovedale, c.1920), pp. 25-67.

(30) Ibid., p. 173.

(31) "Native unrest: its cause and cure", a paper read before the Natal Missionary Conference, July 1920, printed in ibid., pp. 15-16.

(32) Ibid.

(33) D. D. T. Jabavu, "Native Unrest in South Africa", International Review of Missions, Vol. 11, 1922.

(34) Ibid.

(35) Ibid. R. R. Moton was Washington's successor at Tuskegee.

(36) Ibid.

(37) J. D. Rheinallt Jones, "Missionary Work among the Bantu in South Africa", International Review of Missions, Vol. 17, 1928.

(38) Ibid.

(39) An undated typescript (2 pp) in the Rheinallt Jones collection. This was the beginning of, or the first draft of, his larger Ms.

(40) W. M. MacMillan, op. cit.

(41) Brian Willan, "Sol Plaatje, De Beers and the Old Tram Shed", Journal of Southern African Studies, Vol. 4, No. 2, April 1978.

(42) Rheinallt Jones papers.

(43) See, for example, Selope Thema on the formation of groups in Sophiatown and Krugersdorp. Letter to the Secretary of the Joint Council, 22 July 1925, in ibid.

(44) Second Annual Report of the South African Institute of Race Relations (Johannesburg, 1931), Appendix A, pp. 11-96.

(45) Ibid.

(46) From a Native Pen, "The South African Point of View", Round Table, No. 7,

September 1929.

(47) Selby Msimang, The Crisis (Johannesburg, 1936). Extracts appear in Karis and Carter, Vol. 2, pp. 57-61.