

WUS In Basutoland

by CECIL ABRAHAMS

On the southernmost tip of Africa, surrounded by ominous looking mountains, and enclosed by the hateful fetters of South Africa, lies an extremely picturesque country known as Basutoland. Contrasted with its magnificent scenery, is the presence of ugly and harsh REALITY. For in this small British enclave poverty, malnutrition, disease and ignorance play havoc on the lives of 650,000 inhabitants. To people in Canada such a situation is inconceivable — but to the Basutho, it is so excruciatingly REAL. How many infants will die today because fate has transported the innocent to a home where the relishing sight of food has long been blotted out? How many more will succumb this evening to the cruel, devastating Winter? Most of all, how many emaciated bodies will rot away through disease?

The painful and deplorable thing about it is that Basutoland has to accept her unenviable position; she is just unable to develop. More than half the land lays wasted through soil erosion; big ugly caverns show their depressing marks on the arable fields. Those areas which can be profitably used for agricultural purposes are not fully exploited because the people are still living in an era of backwardness and ignorance.

To aggravate the already hopeless situation we have the anachronistic chiefs and witch-doctors dominating and influencing the thoughts of the Ba-

sutho. The enlightened wept when they viewed the cruel world of Oliver Twist; in the same manner one cannot help weeping bitterly when one is confronted by the desperate, helpless, and of course hopeless cries of thousands of emaciated, malnourished children: 'Morena, Morena, Sinkwa', (Sir, Sir, Bread).

In the midst of this terrifyingly pathetic picture, shines a faint glimmer of hope — the World University Service of Basutoland. Day after endless day, footsore, these dedicated men and women who have long been oblivious to the comforts and luxuries of life, plunge their diverse ways through broiling summers, and biting cold winters, to salvage some of the fallen, by administering in miserly quantities 'the bread of life'. On the shoulders of these superhuman beings lie the greatest responsibility of mankind, TO PRESERVE LIFE.

WUS is the fire that is supposed to burn away devastation, distress and utter despair. But WUS supplies have long been used up; the river of alleviation has long run dry. The coffers of WUS Basutoland CANNOT, I repeat CANNOT overcome or even mitigate the inhuman obstacles that exist in this underdeveloped area.

Unlike WUS Canada, WUS Basutoland has to extend its life-saving tentacles outside its defined domain: the university. Last year WUS was supplying 500,000 people with a pint of skimmed milk daily, to sustain their diets. Over

100 volunteers under the guidance of WUS Basutoland, go out to remote areas of Basutoland to inform and teach the people how to combat common diseases.

During the summer vacations WUS undertakes projects like ploughing fields, making gardens, building huts and mapping out roads. To the average Basutho these yeomen services are regarded as miracles, and WUS to them is like a saviour who has come to wipe away their tears.

Basutoland has a university which was founded in 1945 by a Canadian order of the Roman Catholic Church. These kind priests combined all their energies to improve the only multi-racial university in Southern Africa, but their efforts are not enough, much has still to be done.

Our fellow students are deprived of the basic comforts students should enjoy. They have two residences on campus which need to be furnished. They are denied through lack of finance, proper sports fields and equipment, recreational facilities among other basic necessities. WUS Basutoland has been able to achieve something, but the organization's resources are too poor to be of significant help.

Under the guidance of WUS, the students have built a much needed dispensary, (the nearest hospital is 25 miles away), extended the library building, and are at present building roads on the campus. A WUS co-operative bookstore has been set up to cut down the high premium on texts. All these projects are commendable but much more will be required and very soon too, if these students are to be elevated to a position of human dignity.

I wish to conclude this article by throwing out the challenge to our generous student body. If you feel that you can do something about this pitiful situation in Basutoland please contact Cecil Abrahams in Neill House. I sincerely hope that you will RESPOND.

"Variables" Invites Contributors

The third edition of *VARIABLES*, the journal of the Sociology Club, University of Alberta, will make its appearance in mid-February, 1964. The Editorial Board encourages the contribution of papers dealing with subjects of sociological interest. Material received prior to January 1, 1964, will be considered for publication in the February issue; papers received after that date will be considered for subsequent editions.

VARIABLES is a journal of scholarly nature published primarily for graduate and undergraduate students in the social sciences, particularly Sociology. It aims at becoming a literary link between social science departments in Canadian universities, both as a news media, and as a vehicle for the publication of noteworthy articles of sociological interest.

VARIABLES has experienced rather spectacular growth in the two years of its existence. The second issue showed an increase from a 28 to a 68-page volume, from offering six major articles and four book reviews to offering thirteen, from a circulation of 800 to one of 1800, from including only articles by Sociology students and professors to presenting material from many of the social science disciplines. This growth is continuing. Previous editions have been printed by the university multilith services, but this year's edition will be commercially printed.

VARIABLES' editorial policy is sufficiently flexible to allow the journal to include a diversity of topics. The second edition included articles on the Hutterites, Negro social movements, alcoholism, drinking habits of U. of A. students, northern education, management decisions within the family, and a linguistics article, as well as current notes about Sociology departments in U. of A. and four other Canadian universities, and their research. This should give some idea of the variety *VARIABLES* offers to readers, and the variety of contributions which the Editorial Board is willing to consider.

Contributions should be mailed to Editor, *VARIABLES*, Sociology Department, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta. The papers should be typewritten, include footnotes, and be less than 2000 words in length. The Editorial Board reserves the right to edit all material.

ENROLMENT REACHES NEW HIGH

More elusive than the Scarlet Pimpernel is the way University of New Brunswick registrar Miss Edith G. McLeod describes registration figures which rose at UNB to a new high of by late registrants and a jump in graduate school numbers, Miss 2,501.

This revision upwards from last month's totals was caused McLeod said.

But this figure is for the regular academic year only. If summer school and extension enrolments are included the total is more than doubled.

Last summer UNB had 1,647 enrolled while this year's extension department counts 985 students. This brings a total registration at the provincial university to 5,133.

The breakdown picture during regular session, however, remains pretty much the same. The Arts faculty still hold a commanding lead over runners-up engineering, education and science.

The engineers number 608 and include civil, electrical, mechanical, chemical, surveying and mining students. The faculty of education, only recently divorced from Arts, totals 234 and includes those studying for bachelors' degrees in education, physical education and teaching. Students in science number 216.

A faculty breakdown follows: arts, 781; engineering, 608; education, 234, science 216; forestry, 183; graduate school, 168; nursing, 72; law, 49; and Teachers' College 190 (special program). Total 2,501.

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