

While Canadian students insist that they will not involve themselves in International Affairs until they have "cleaned up their own backyards", the struggle which they prefer to ignore goes on. Here are

descriptions of . . .

The Black Life Under Apartheid

A South African at the hinge of fate

The room, on the second floor of a building in Victoria Street in Cape Town, is bleak and unfurnished. The walls are painted grey and it looks like the magistrate's court in a country town.

This drab place is where the lines that divide race from race are finally drawn. It is the meeting place of the Race Classification Appeal Board.

A rather frail, sallow-faced man with spectacles and a grey business suit sits on a steel chair at one end of the austere chamber. Beside him is a pregnant woman with long black hair. She is trying to control their three-year-old boy who, if this appeal fails, becomes the consequence of an offence under the Immorality Act.

The man is classified as Colored and the woman as White. They met six years ago. They are living together, but she learned only recently that he was classified as Colored.

His future at stake

The man is nervous because the Board is hearing his appeal against his classification, and all the most important things in his life are at stake.

In front of him sits the advocate, Mr. Brian Bamford, and the attorney, Miss Vivian Malan, who will argue his case. To the right sits a lawyer representing the State.

Across the room, behind a row of tables sits the tribunal which will decide the man's race. The chairman is Mr. A. Barnard, a practising advocate and former magistrate. He is assisted by two retired magistrates who sit on either side of him.

The chairman is an amiable, paternal man, who starts proceedings by gently requesting the man to move a little to the left so that the Board can see him.

Seeing him is important. For the first question which the Board has to decide in order to satisfy the terms of the Population Registration Act is whether he looks White.

Plain to see

In simple, lucid words the Chairman explains the law to the man. As he speaks he and the other two Board members gaze at the man across the room.

The Chairman describes the first requirement of White status. "Some-one must be obviously White. It must be plain to see," he says.

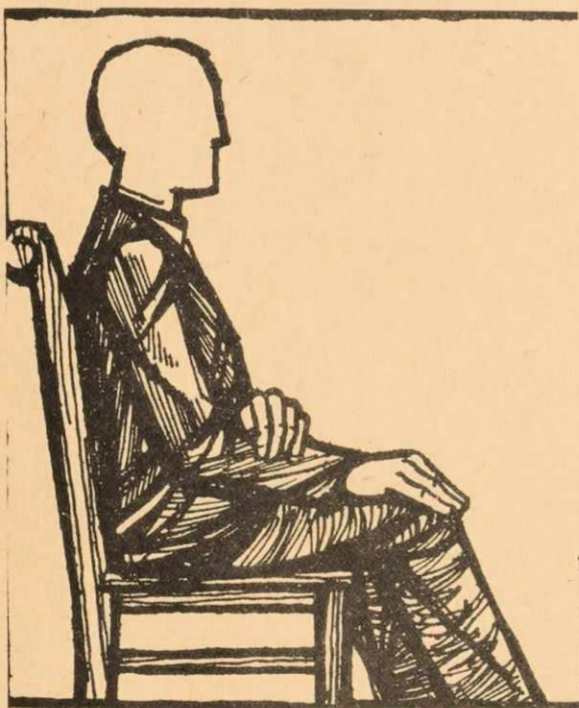
Then it depends on whether he is generally accepted as White, where he lives, where he works, where he worships, where his children go to school.

A few more minutes and the first hurdle has been crossed. The Board has decided that the man looks White. It took about eight minutes.

The respectable barber

"Now the question of acceptance must be decided," says the chairman.

The first witness to testify for the man is a barber from Salt River. Lawyers regard hairdressers as among the best witnesses. The barber's shop, they



say, is a White sanctum and if a man's barber says he's White it must make an impression on the Board.

"I cater for Whites only," says the barber in a thick Mediterranean accent. "The appellant has been coming to me for about two years and I take him for a White person. I don't know his mother and father."

The State's representative observes that many Colored people live in Salt River. "How do you know whether your clients are White?" he asks.

"If a man comes in and he looks White and he is nicely dressed I cannot ask him for his identity card. I am not a policeman," says the barber. "I get a lot of dark-complexioned customers. As long as they look respectable I cut their hair."

Next, a director of companies who employs the man as a salesman. He first met the man in 1959 and has always regarded him as White. Sometimes the man has visited his home to discuss business over tea and a cigarette. The director's wife has accepted the man as White. On one or two occasions they have had lunch together at a White restaurant.

Then comes one of the ultimate tests. The director tells the Board that the man uses the White lavatory at work.

Friends and wife

A cafe proprietor enters the witness box. He has known the man for twenty years and has always taken him to be White. They were children together and lived on the same street. It was occupied by both Whites and Coloreds. The man lived at the White end, he says. The man's mother was White and his father "very White."

Other friends of the man come and say the same thing. Finally the woman enters the witness box to testify that the man whose child she bore is White. Both her parents were White, she says. About six years ago she met the man at a party for Whites and they started going out. She regarded him as White. They wanted to get married. The little boy had been born as a result of the relationship. They lived together at the home of the man's White niece. "I know she's White because I've seen her card," says the woman.

No, she does not know of the man associating with Colored people, she says in reply to a question by the State's representative.

She was a Roman Catholic and a member of a church attended by both Whites and Coloreds, who sat on separate sides of the centre aisle. She always sat on the White side.

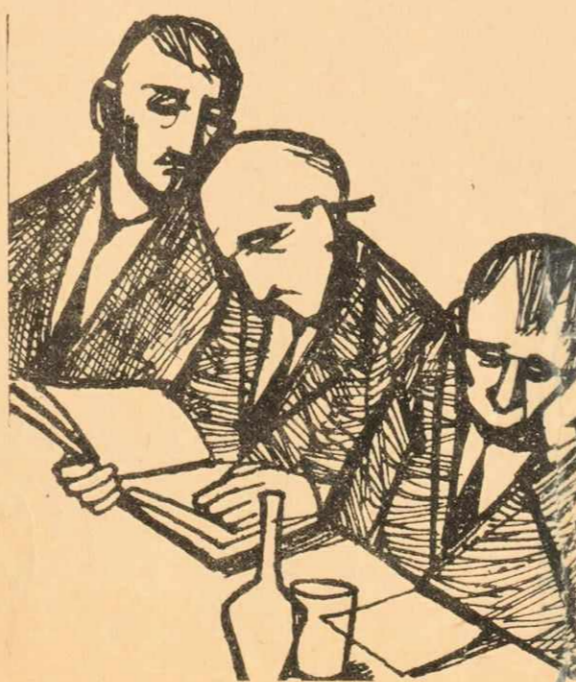
1951 census form

The chairman begins to sum up. The 1951 census form completed by the man's father, he says, listed the race of his family as "South African," and later on as "Mixed." The race of his last child was given as "mixed." He says that when the man applied for an identity card he used the form for Colored people. He had given his own race as "mixed," his father's as "mixed" and his mother's as "white."

On the man's birth certificate in 1927 the father had given the race of both parents as "mixed." On the basis of these forms, says the Chairman, the Secretary of the Interior had classified the man as Colored.

The Board decides

"But now we have an abundance of evidence to show that you are accepted as a White person," he says.



Therefore the Board agreed that his classification should be changed. The Board members leave the room. The man rises and nervously lights a cigarette.

"I'll have to get used to this," he says. "It has been a great strain. Never knew what might have happened. There are more avenues open to me now. We plan to get married." The man, the woman and the small boy leave. The man is ruffling the boy's tousled hair as they walk.

He had waited 18 months for his case to be heard. He has to pay 200 pounds in lawyer's and counsel's fees. But now he can exchange the card that identified him as a Colored man for one stating that he is White.

His race has just been officially changed by the three representatives of the South African state. (From an article by Tertius Myburgh published in the STAR, South Africa).

Policeman canes africans

A former Hartbeesfontein police constable, Jacobus Johannes Nel, was last month found guilty of assaulting six African prisoners by hitting them several times with a cane, slapping, kneeling and throttling them.

In evidence against him another constable, Solomon Mere, said: "We arrived at Leeudoringstad at 11:25 p.m. Nel drove into a back yard of a house from which the sound of music was heard. I came to the conclusion Nel was going to a party."

"He got back into the police van at 1:15 a.m. smelling strongly of liquor. On our way back Nel said that we had to call at Dominion Reefs, as he wanted to 'pick up a few quick cases.' He stopped at a house and went into the servant's quarters where we found several Africans in a room. Nel told me to stand guard at the door while he awakened the (White) owner of the house. The owner said that only one African had permission to sleep on the premises. . . . Nel started hitting the Africans with his cane. . . . Later he asked the prisoners if they knew of any other Africans sleeping illegally in servant's quarters. They said they did not. "He then ordered one of the Africans to get out and told him to lean against the police van with his hands above his head. He then started caning the man," Nel was fined 10 pounds on each charge.

Pretoria sees African drink with whites

Police temporarily suspended the liquor laws at a Pretoria hotel one day last month to allow Mr. Abel Sikunane, Principal in the Botswana Ministry of Home Affairs, to drink with his White colleagues who were accompanying him on a delegation from Botswana.

Mr. Willem Olivier, the hotel manager where Mr. Sikunane stayed, told reporters that it was not the first time that a non-White had slept in the hotel. "We are prepared to accept people of standing," he said. "This is done discreetly. Of course, unless there has been a special arrangement with the police, no liquor can be served."

Pretoria - No collections for non-whites

For more than a year the Pretoria City Council has banned street collections for non-White causes



without this fact having been reported in the Press or becoming common knowledge.

This was revealed for the first time last month at a Pretoria Management Committee, when an application was made by the Union of Jewish Women for a new street collection date for White charity. Mr. A. Delpert, clerk of the Council, revealed that the organization's earlier request had been turned down because "they would have collected in aid of non-Whites."

Lawyers to be disqualified

The Suppression of Communism Amendment Bill which has been introduced in the South African Parliament will disqualify "named" Communists or persons convicted of Communism Act from practising as advocates, attorneys, notaries or conveyancers.

The Bill will also empower the Minister to prohibit "named" Communists from receiving direct benefit of any kind from any organization specified in the Government Gazette without the consent of the Minister or a magistrate. Such order may also prohibit such persons from participating in any way in the activity of any organization so specified.

The existing law only empowers the Minister to prohibit "named" Communists from becoming office-bearers or members of organizations. The new provision is designed to deal with organizations such as the Communist Party of South Africa, which has been declared an illegal organization.

(Note: "Communist" does not refer to the Minister of Justice. A "named" person is one whose name is on the list of "named" persons.)