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# A short history of "The World" (and other Black South African newspapers)

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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

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Title: A Short History of "The World" (And Other Black South African Newspapers).

by: Tim Couzens

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by Tim Couzens
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# A SHORT HISTORY OF "THE WORLD" (and other Black South African Newspapers).

## INTRODUCTION

This paper developed out of my interest in black literature. It soon became apparent that an understanding of early black written literature was dependent on a knowledge of the history of the black press. It also soon became apparent that the history of the black newspapers is a grossly neglected field: and it is furthermore a very complex one which I doubt I can do full justice to. My aim will be to give an outline idea of some of the problems and crucial events and to make familiar some of the names of the prominent black journalists of the past. (Thereafter, I shall briefly outline the implications for early black literature.)

Literature does not materialize out of thin air, it is not an isolated phenomenon (despite the efforts of literary critics to make it so). To create a written literature it is necessary to create a basic infrastructure. A written literature cannot survive without a section of the population being literate and here schools and newspapers help in the spread of literacy. One of the main functions of black newspapers in South Africa has been to create a reading public. Only via this medium, through it, has the reading of books, of literature come about. The black newspapers have helped create the skills and the taste for reading literature to the extent that those skills and tastes exist among black people today. Furthermore, until very recently, the black newspapers provided the major, if not the sole, outlet for literary production and creativity. Almost all our early black writers were connected with newspapers as editors, reporters, or contributors: John Dube, Sol Plaatje, the Dhlomo brothers, Stanley Silwana, Peter Abrahams, Walter Nhlapo, Can Themba, Ezekiel Mphahlele etc. In this paper, therefore, I shall be talking about the background, the infrastructure, the very basis of black South African literature even though I shall scarcely allude to it directly. The production of literature is not the most important function of newspapers and to bias my paper in favour of literary influence would be to elevate literature to a status it does not merit and that is not my intention.

To summarize: there are three main phases in South African black journalism: 1. the early origins which are mainly mission-controlled.
2. the period from 1884 to 1920 when black newspapers were largely independent but struggling to survive.
3. from 1920 when whites begin to exert increasing influence on black newspapers.

## The Missionary Origins

The first African newspaper was started by the Wesleyan missionaries in 1837 and survived till 1841.[1] Between 1844 and 1945 a second press, established at Lovedale, printed four issues of Ikwezi (Morning Star) which A.C. Jordan describes as "the earliest records of anything ever

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written by a Xhosa speaker in Xhosa".[2] A monthly magazine, Indaba, produced between 1862 and 1965, owed much to the efforts of one of its main contributors Tiyo Soga, the first great black literary figure of the Nineteenth Century, translator of Pilgrim's Progress into his own language.[3] (A word of caution: our oral literature - the truly great tradition - obviously predates this: I am discussing the growth of a written and Westernized literature. It is largely inferior - or different - to the oral tradition.)

In 1876 Lovedale started the Kaffir Express, and the Christian Express which, in 1922, became the South African Outlook which still survives. But the influence of the missions is not confined to the actual starting of newspapers. (Since, although these above examples have frequently been called "newspapers", they are not really full newspapers as we know them today - they were, however, important as examples of early leads-ins to the proper newspapers.) Much more crucial has been their role as educators of early black newspapermen. Healdtown, Lovedale, Adams Training College in Amanzimtoti helped produce most of the key early black politicians and newspapers. At these institutions, men like Jabavu, Dube, Selope Thema, Rolfes Dhlomo imbibed Christian and Western "civilization". The mission influence thus survived long after most of the mission newspapers. This was because many blacks internalized the mission ideology and many of these men still dominated the black newspapers into the 1930's and 1940's. This is a key factor: successive white governments and proprietors have allowed a measure of freedom to their black newspaper-editors because such men have often been chosen for their innate conservatism. In other words social control in South Africa has been maintained not only through overt violence and compulsion, but also through a colonization of the minds of part of the oppressed population. One must, perhaps, be sympathetic towards many of these black leaders, however. One must remember what Dr. Shula Marks has called "the ambiguities of dependence".[4] With little political power black leaders have had to walk an ambiguous tight-rope between collaboration with and resistance against their white oppressors. This has led to a variety of black responses.

## THE INDEPENDENT BLACK NEWSPAPERS 1884-1920

The "father" of black newspapers was John Tengo Jabavu who founded the newspaper Imvo Zabantsundu in Kingwilliamstown in 1884.

> The decade of the 1870's witnessed the emergence of a deep cleavage in the eastern Cape African population, a cleavage that the Africans themselves recognized by the labels "School People" and "Reds" or "Blanket People". The School People were those who possessed some formal education, were Christians, or had otherwise assimilated prominent aspects of European culture. They generally regarded themselves as

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> progressives .... The Reds were traditionally-oriented people who adhered to the older and more familiar patterns of life. Their name derived from their habit of colouring their bodies and clothing with red ochre. This was to become a positive symbol of their conservatism, as were their blankets which they wore in preference to western-style clothing.[5]

It is these School People who were the founders of the early black press and the originators of the black press tradition. It was they who initiated a significant change in black response to white power. Perceiving the powerlessness of their people on the battlefield they resorted to the attempt to bring about change through political and other means. As one poet I.W.W. Citashe wrote in the newspaper Isigidimi in the 1880's:

> Your cattle are gone, my countrymen!
> Go rescue them! Go rescue them!
> Leave the breechloader alone
> And turn to the pen.
> Take paper and ink,
> For that is your shield.
>
> Fire with your pen.[6]

Like Selope-Thema after him, John Tengo Jabavu began life as a cattle-herd. Trained as a teacher at Healdtown, educated at Lovedale, he started Imvo (with the help of two whites, Rose-Innes and Weir) at the age of 25. In helped him to become the most powerful black politician in the Cape by the end of the Century. The practical success of Jabavu and his newspaper was not inconsiderable. As his son wrote in his father's biography, "it is difficult to separate the doings of Tengo Jabavu from those of the Imvo." Their intervention, for instance, prevented an uprising in Pondoland and secured the release of Chief Sigcau from Robben Island 1886-7. The Native Disfranchisement Bill was "effectually destroyed" by the Imvo - Jabavu partnership and a deputation consisting of Jabavu, Rev. Elijah Makiwane and Rev. Isaac Wauchope secured a relaxation in the Cape Pass Laws. On the negative side it was perhaps the success of early deputations which led to the persistence of this form of protest into the early part of the Twentieth Century - and to the failures of the deputations against Union in 1910 and the Native Lands Act 1913. Jabavu and Imvo also challenged the imprisonment in May 1887 on Robben Island of Chiefs Maqoma, Gungubele, Matanzima, Edmund Sandile and others for "sedition". "The charge never was and never could be proved, and eventually the chiefs were released in 1888". Imvo still exists: it is owned by Perskor.

The key figure amongst the Amakolwa, the School People, in Natal was John Dube. He went twice to the U.S.A. before 1900 and visited Booker Washington's famous "Negro" self-help college at Tuskegee. He returned to Natal where he started the well-known "Zulu Christian Industrial School" called Ohlange Institute in 1901. In 1903 he began the

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newspaper Ilanga Lase Natal (in Zulu and English) whose circulation is now over 150,000! Dube was to write an interesting novel around 1928 (Insilɨka Shaka).[8] He lived until 1946, a powerful figure in Natal and National politics.

To the West, amongst the Tswana people, the outstanding figure is Sol T. Plaatje. S.M. Molema chose Plaatje to edit his Koranta Ea Bechoana, "an English-Sechuana newspaper" founded in Mafeking in 1901. After its demise several years later Plaatje edited, between 1910 and 1915, Tsala Ea Batho (The People's Friend), a trilingual weekly owned by a syndicate in Thaba 'Nchu. It was published in Kimberley. Plaatje was a remarkable man: his Boer War Diary,[9] detailing the Siege of Mafeking, recently discovered, is well-known; he translated five Shakespearean plays into Setswana and he wrote the first black novel in English. He collaborated with the famous linguist Daniel Jones on one of the first South African books on linguistics. He travelled extensively in Britain and the U.S.A. and introduced a "bioscope" to the Kimberley district - which he transported on his bicycle. His greatest work was probably his political book Native Life in South Africa[10] to protest against the iniquities of the crucial 1913 Native Lands Act. Also to the West, in Basutoland, H.S. Tlali found Mochochonono (The Comet) in 1911.

Meanwhile, in Johannesburg, a crucial turning point was about to be reached. In 1910 there returned to Johannesburg Pixley Ka Izaka Seme, (born in Natal of a Christian family). Educated at Columbia and Oxford Universities and at the Middle Temple, London, where he was called to the bar, Seme, together with three other early black lawyers, Alfred Mangena, R.W. Msimang and G.D. Montsioa, founded in Bloemfontein, on 8th January, 1912, the African National Congress. Its significance is described by Selope-Thema (later first editor of the Bantu World).

> It was a gathering of tribes that had never met before except on the battle fields. It was a gathering of Chiefs who had never seen each other before. And they came from the four provinces and the High Commission Territories. It was a gathering of educated Africans who had never exchanged views before. It was a gathering, if I may say so, of the departed spirits of the African race, among whom were such men as Sandile, Tshaka, Moshoeshoe, Cetyewayo, Moroka, Khama, Sekhukhune, Sotshangana and Ramapulana.[11]

Newspapermen John Dube and Plaatje became first ANC President and Secretary-General respectively. Only Jabavu remained aloof. Seme concluded an article of his in 1906 with the following poem:

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Oh Africa!
Like some great century plant that shall bloom
In ages hence, we watch thee; in our dream
See in thy swamps the Prospero of our stream;
Thy doors unlocked, where knowledge in her tomb
Hath lain innumerable years in gloom.
Then shalt thou, walking with that morning gleam,
Shine as they sister lands with equal beam.

Seme "conceived the idea of establishing a newspaper which could be used as the mouthpiece of the national organisation" which he saw as "the regeneration of Africa".[12]

Two newspapers were being printed and published in Johannesburg at the time - Morumioa, founded and edited by D.S. Letanka, and Molomo Oa Batho, founded and edited by L.T. Mvabaze. Seme persuaded Letanka "to merge his newspaper with the proposed company" to found "a strong national newspaper". Seme, Letanka and the Queen of Swaziland were the promoters of the company and the newspaper. Abantu-Batho was launched in 1913 with C. Kunene as English and Zulu editor and D.S. Letanka as Sotho editor.[12]

It must be remembered the conditions under which the A.N.C. and Abantu-Batho were founded. Selope-Thema describes the period.

> The conditions under which Africans lived and worked, particularly in the Northern Provinces, shocked him (Seme) and stirred his mind to action. In those days the black man of the Northern Provinces was treated as a beast of burden. He was knocked and kicked about with impunity. In the magistrate's courts his voice was hardly heard and his evidence hardly believed. He was stopped at street corners by policemen demanding the production of his pass and his tax receipt. He was not allowed to walk on the pavements and had to dodge motor cars in the streets.
>
> He was not allowed to travel first, second or third class on the trains. He travelled in trucks almost similar to those used for cattle and horses. His education in the primary schools, which were few, did not go beyond Standard 3, and not beyond Standard 6 in the training schools which were only two in the Transvaal and none in the Orange Free State. Politically he had no voice in the making and administration of the laws. Economically he was kept in a state of abject poverty.[12]

Establishing a black newspaper, given all this, was thus not easy. Unfortunately, I have not managed to lay my hands on any early copies of Abantu-Batho, since no libraries have files on it - a reflection of the prejudice against or sheer ignorance of black newspapers of the time. It is not easy therefore to assess the stance or influence of

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Abantu-Batho. White reaction to early black newspapers, however, is interesting. The Resident Commissioner in Basutoland wrote to the well-known segregationist-liberal Howard Pim in 1908: "I think I allude in my last report (1906-7) to the native press and its attitudes. I felt it necessary to do so but did not want to make too much of it. The native press in South Africa is going to be always with us, and they are certain to criticize the white man as freely as he criticizes them. It is not an unmixed evil - it is quite as well to know what they are thinking about".[13]

What one does know is that in 1921, partly to counter the influence of Abantu-Batho and partly as a result of an African miners' strike, the Chamber of Mines started its own newspaper Umteteli Wa Bantu. In several languages, it was distributed in the compounds and on the streets. At first, free, it was clearly meant to undercut and undermine Abantu-Batho. In addition the Mines tempted away several Abantu-Batho compositors with donkey carrots.[14] Editorial policy was fairly strictly controlled. One of the paper's black editors has said "You know the whole thing was circumspect in that it had to agree with mining policy so that there was no question of going beyond the boundary, you understand. You had to protect the interests of the mine: low wages and one thing and another, (inaudible) down any others who tried to pop up their heads, you understand.... I had been told, you understand, how far I had to go, you understand. And not beyond that. Any contentious matter I used to refer to the board of the N.R.C., you understand.[15] The paper was also useful in countering the impact of the more "trade union" I.C.U., which sprang up in the 1920's under the Nyasa, Clements Kadalie. The Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union started its own newspaper, The Worker's Herald, and Kadalie appointed H.D. Tyamzashe as editor. Interestingly enough Tyamzashe tells us, in an unpublished monograph, that he managed to resist A.W.G. Champions' attempts to dominate the paper and refused "to publish every bit of clotted nonsense that flew from his (Champion's) erratic pen".[15]

## BANTU PRESS (PTY) LTD AND THE LOSS OF BLACK INDEPENDENCE

1932 is the year of what I regard as the key turning-point in the history of the black press. This was the year of the founding of the Bantu Press (Pty) Ltd. with its "national newspaper" The Bantu World. The idea originated with a man of 30 years of age called B.G. Paver.[17] Having failed at farming in the Bethel area (it was the time of the depression), Paver (while working for an advertizing company) conceived the idea of a central organisation to take over most of the existing black newspapers and to co-ordinate advertizing in these newspapers. He saw that there was a huge potential market amongst the blacks for local manufactures - the blacks, he believed, were no longer satisfied with what was called "kaffir truck" - cheap goods specially made for "kaffirs" - but many preferred to buy "European" goods.[18] He was to see the black press as a magnificent medium for advertizers to tap this market. In fact, Paver did not look first at the newspapers. After his farming failure he made for Durban which he saw as a potential

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central point for bicycle manufacturing of a large scale. He worked out a comprehensive scheme in terms of which a big enterprise could be produced catering for the increasingly urbanised blacks. It was his idea that the schemes the breweries used for selling beer could be used for selling bicycles: the idea was to "tie up" (like tied-houses) hundreds of small retail outfits all over the country dealing primarily with "kaffir truck". This plan was given the brush-off by those he approached and he went to work for the advertizing company in Cape Town. It was when this company collapsed that Paver happened to notice some copies of black newspapers in the company's basement where filed copies were kept. His first reaction was to look at them from the advertizer's point of view: but this soon changed - a crucial turning-point in black press history.

> I wanted the advertising agencies to offer these people a square deal, to put a little bit of money in and get the sole rights and push the advertising and they would work on the commission. They couldn't see any joy on (sic) that so what I had to do was to start the hard way from 'tother side. I had to go over into the publishing side and show that it could be done, get the newspapers to come in with me and then deal with the agents and say, Well, this is what the prices are now going to be.[19]

On similar lines of thinking, Paver was to set up the Bantu News Agency, to establish "tied houses" for distribution (this was at first done by agents, teachers and businessmen). This news agency was part of the whole larger scheme to sew up advertising, printing and distribution but was eventually incorporated into the Central News Agency.

> I realised the CNA know-how and that sort of thing would be at an advantage and to them it would give a very big opening for the development of African literature: school books and all sorts of things - the whole thing would have tied up.[19]

He persuaded J.D. Rheinallt-Jones, head of the South African Institute of Race Relations, of the viability of this idea. Howard Pim was drawn in, and later the Argus Company and the Maggs family took out substantial numbers of shares. The idea was to take over the existing black newspapers and to start Bantu World. By 1936, Imvo, Ilanga, Ikwezi le Afrika and Mochochonono, with a measure of reluctance from writers and owners, had been gobbled up.[20] Umteteli, the Chamber of Mines newspaper, remained independent as did the Communist newspapers Umsebenzi and later Inkululeko. It must also be remembered that this was long before the days of African radio-broadcasting.

An unpublished memorandum[21] proposing the setting-up of the Bantu Press makes interesting reading (this memorandum was, without doubt, written by Paver). Beginning with the observation that between 1921 and 1931 the literacy rate among black South Africans had increased

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from 9,89% to about 12,4% it continues that "The present is the time to foster this desire for reading matter". Perceiving that one of the functions of the black newspapers is "the moulding of native opinion" the memorandum believed that the present black owner-publishers were "on the eve of valuable political and commercial developments", but "lack the ability to guide the political situation and to exploit the commercial opportunities presented". The Bantu Press and the Bantu World had therefore three main functions:

1. Commercial: "The keeness of competition is forcing all commercial interests to seek new markets, and in the opinion of advertizing authorities, a large and increaseing amount of advertizing is likely to be carried by the native press".

2. Circulation: "Improved printing, layout, editorial contents and the creation of an efficient system of sales distribution "would" result in an enormous increase in circulation". Certainly, whereas Ilanga and Imvo averaged about 3,000 in circulation at this time, by 1933 Bantu World had reached a circulation figure of and nowadays has a circulation of over 100,000.

3. Political: "Rapidly increasing literacy brings in its train a real need for the development and sane guidance of Bantu opinion as expressed in the native press "and" their importance in the moulding of native opinion makes their control a matter of the utmost importance to South Africa's future well-being". Yet further, their function was "to maintain a progressive yet moderate policy on political and economic questions".

At first Paver had much difficulty persuading people of the value of advertizing in the black press. It was not that there was resistance to advertizing. There was

> No resistance, there was just no reaction whatsoever. It was so unheard of, something so completely out of its time and context that, I mean, people thought you were mad ... so it was heartbreaking trying to make an impact and the way it was done was to ... I thought up an idea of a trade exhibition for the African population and in the height of the Depression I took a whole block of an Engineering firm who had packed up, the property wasn't being used ... and they agreed to let me have it for free because they hoped it would sell provided I whitewashed the place ... and even then resistance was so great to taking stands that we had to think up a whole system of package deal to get people advertizing.... We had to give them a translator, an African ... the space ... we had to give them 5,000 leaflets.... Now, the catch about the leaflets was: the leaflets were a reprint of an advertisement in the paper. If you'd asked them for the other way around they would have said, 'No, Nonsense' ... that really broke the ice.

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This trade exhibition was held in 1933 - among the companies etc. represented were the "Railroads, Henwoods, Ackermans". Bechuanaland and Basutoland sent carving, weaving and pottery. "They played ball".

Since this agreement was that the advertizing would run a few weeks, there was a doubt that it would continue. So to give further impetus, to break inertia, Paver had the idea of fitting a small van with a projector and screen (with a white to run it). Advertizers in the newspapers of Bantu Press got a free slide - the first slide-advertizing to tap the black market. The van travelled over 4,000 miles on the venture. As Paver repeated, this was the "only way one could break this absolute, this complete ignorance" of white commercial interests. "It wasn't resistance: it was just disbelief". This was partly how Paver got the company moving: his other task had been to organise his ideological backers like Pim, Rheinallt-Jones etc. Fortunately, these could be largely relied on as Paver himself says, "I was so damned busy that I couldn't be sitting around engaging in conferences and meetings and things. I really didn't have time ... I had to do everything, nobody was doing it ... it was quite new ground."

R.V. Selope-Thema became the first editor with Paver and Le Grange managing directors.[22] Le Grange brought from America the idea of putting news, not adverts, on the front page and Bantu World was the first paper to introduce this to South Africa. A social gossip page and a woman's page appealed to the emerging black middle-class. Bantu World, representing, more, commercial capital, often took somewhat different stances from Umteteli, representing largely mining capital - the latter being, practically, forbidden to criticize mine management or condone strikes.[23]

At this stage it is crucial to understand two differing trends, one amongst whites, one amongst blacks. Among white liberals one can distibguish at least two strands of thought and action: on the one hand, there was the more conservative group of liberals among whom were people like Rheinallt-Jones (later Native Senator), Rev. Ray Phillips (an American Board missionary who had written regularly for Umteteli and who was given £2,000 by the Chamber of Mines to use among the blacks as he saw fit), Howard Pim, Edgar Brookes and others (men of the Joint Councils). Their liberalism was elitist: blacks were acceptable but only if they reached certain "civilized" standards. (It is this group which won control of Bantu World.) Slightly more radical were other liberals, rather more democratic. The main representative here is W.G. Ballinger. Ballinger was a young Scottish trade unionist brought out to sort out and organise the I.C.U. when it got into financial and other difficulties - an unenviable job which incurred him the enmity of Kodalie and other blacks. Though more radical than Rheinallt-Jones et.al. he was nevertheless not pro-communist (perhaps he is best described as a product of the British Labour Party). His first year's salary was paid by Mrs. Ethelreda Lewis, the novelist,

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well-known for her Trader Horn. Behind-the-scenes manipulation by Mrs. Lewis persuaded Kadalie to purge the I.C.U. of communists and this obsession was her main driving force in her encouragement of Ballinger. (Anyone who believes that her novels are innocent of ideological bias - or indeed those of any of the liberal tradition of South African writers - should bear this action in mind.)

Amongst the blacks there were at least three strands of thought (which are pretty well perennial divisions amongst South African blacks). Firstly there were those who went along with the white liberals, co-operated in Joint Councils etc. Secondly, there were the communists, radical but multi-racial. Thirdly, there were the Africanists or African Nationalists - early strains of this philosophy can be seen in the early John Dube, in the "Mayibuye i'Afrika" ("Come back, Africa") cry of the early A.N.C. and in the Garveyism which possibly influenced the I.C.U. It was later to surface more positively in the "Africa for the Africans" cry of the Congress Youth League founded in 1944 by Anton Lembede, W. Nkomo and others, and later to include Nelson Mandela, A.P. Mda, Yengwe and others. In the late Fifties the Africanists of the A.N.C. split off to form the P.A.C. under Robert Sobukwe. In the present time the London exile group of the A.N.C. seems to be undergoing a struggle between multi-racial Communists and Africanists, just as the SASO and black power movements again represent the Africanist element within South Africa's borders.

The importance of these distinctions is to be seen in the early opposition which Bantu World encountered. For a while it was threatened by a weekly called The African Leader. The African Leader prided itself that it was African-owned and African-run - it was established early in 1932, a few months before Bantu World. Because of the Depression and poor printing Abantu-Batho had collapsed in 1931. It's printing press was bought by George Hashe, an African businessman.[24] In a letter to the English novelist Winifred Holtby, Ballinger describes Hashe as "somewhat illiterate, who has made money as a compound (Native) official and had visions of getting very rich as a newspaper proprietor".[25] The former editor of Abantu Batho, T.D. Mweli Skota, was the editor of African Leader and Msimang was soon to join it. Clearly its Africanist philosophy is related to its black commercial interests. In other words the white commercial interests of Bantu World were pitted against the incipient black commercial interests of the African Leader. The African Leader collapsed within a couple of years.

But a further interesting struggle developed from this point - between the left and right-wing liberals. Ballinger had been approached by Howard Pim to join Bantu World. Ballinger made certain proposals and conditions which Pim and Paver could not accept. Ballinger therefore joined a man from Durban called MacDonald and proposed to begin a newspaper for blacks called The African Defender in which would be incorporated the failing African Leader. Ballinger was scathing about the Bantu World, charging it with being controlled by the South

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African Institute of Race Relations.

> .... as a certain Mr. Charley Maggs of Pretoria is reported to have said when endowing Brookes' effort (to raise money for the SAIRR) "the Inst. is the best insurance against Native disorders in the country". Maggs is a very wealthy business man. He is the behind-the-scenes owner of the Bantu World, a pseudo Native weekly launched first over a year ago. I was consulted during the preliminaries prior to the launching and asked if I would assist with voice and pen. Then a change came over the scene. I was dropped because in the first place I no longer counted due to illhealth, but in reality because I suggested an editorial policy that should -
>
> (1) Attack the Chamber of Mines one man wage rates in favour of the average family minimum wage (2/8 per day as compared with minimum decency of /6 per day) or in other words the subsidisation of Mine Labour by the agriculture of the Reserves.
>
> (2) Definite attacks on White Labour Policies.
>
> (3) Vigilance Committees to combat Pass and Night Raiding.
>
> (4) Abolition of the Master and Servants Act.
>
> (5) Fostering the growth of an Industrial Union.
>
> (6) Cooperative Marketing and Retail Stores.
>
> and in general a challenge to present conditions right up to the uttermost limits, stopping short of only useless martyrdom. The Bantu World has been a sad disappointment to those who had dared to hope for at least a moulding of Native opinion on sound radical lines".[25]

Ballinger had told Pim that the Bantu World had failed to "serve Native interests because of a fear that advertisement revenue would suffer and the pull of the important Maggs commercial interests plus the fact that Prof. E. Brookes was on the Board of management touse the paper to propagand on behalf of the Institute of Race Relations". The African Leader had a bond of £100 with a Printing Machinery Company. This Company informed Ballinger that "the Bantu World, through Mr. Maggs, and the Umteteli wa Bantu through its backer - the Gold Producers Ass. had asked where to get possession of the African Leader - 'lock, stock and barrel' and 'put it into cold storage'."[25]

Thus mining and commercial interests, with their attendant liberal ideology, managed to squash both more radical liberal ideology plus black commercial interests and "Africanism". It should be noted that this was done with the help of black editors and staff - relatively willing or relatively unwilling.[26]

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During the 1940's the Bantu World continued to grow despite the fact that it was twice bombed by the Ossewabrandwag during the war. This growth, helped as it was by a Government subsidy, shows the importance Government attached to the control and "right management" of the Black Press. The paper was also printed for the black soldiers in North Africa, then flown to Cairo and the paper printed there so that Bantu World had the unique distinction of being a newspaper printed at both ends of a very large continent.

During the Forties there was started in Durban a new newspaper Inkundla ya Bantu - proudly proclaiming it was African-owned and African-run. It was edited by a journalist and writer of considerable talent, Jordan Ngubane, now in exile in the U.S.A. This paper supported the Congress Youth League, the ginger-group within the A.N.C. begun by Anton Lembede and others. It was largely responsible for Albert Luthuli's crucial victory over Champion in the elections for President of the Natal A.N.C. - a vital step towards his ultimate elevation to National President of the A.N.C. Inkundla died about 1951. There does not seem to have been a successful independent black newspaper since.

One interesting example of the effective control exerted by the management was in the case of Mochochonomo (The Comet) started by the Tlali family in Maseru in 1911. The editor, N. Tlali, was out of favour with the Basutoland somewhere around 1950, seemingly for its handling of the ritual murders affairs. Several meetings were held between the Resident Commissioner, the Attorney-General and representatives of Bantu Press. Meanwhile Mochochanono was being printed from an old engine run on diesel oil. Since Tlali was "veering more to the left than we liked", pressure was applied: promises of new facilities in exchange for moderation of editorial policy. Tlali refused to co-operate, the engine failed and Mochochonono died. The Basutoland Government was uneasy without a "responsible paper" so the British Government subsidized Impotletsane, a newspaper Bantu Press printed in Johannesburg.[27]

The Fifties saw the spectacular rise of the "glossy" magazine Drum which made famous the names and work of many of our best black writers - Can Themba, Ezekiel Mphahlele, Nat Nakasa, James Matthews, Casey Motsisi, Henry Nxumalo, as well as Nigerian writers like Cyprian Ekwensi. Its music critic Todd Matshikiza was to produce the famous 1950's musical "King Kong". Before most of them disappeared into exile, committed suicide or died of alcohol. It is my belief that the success of Drum and Zonk, with their racy township's style and numerous photographs, owes much to rising literacy rates. These magazines mark a departure from the rather formal and intellectual newspapers and were geared to a greater mass appeal.

It is very interesting to note that Paver himself, through Bantu World, launched a large "each one, teach one" literacy campaign after the Second World War. (This involved participators taking a kind of

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pledge to teach, as in a temperance society).

About 1960 the Argus Company took over most of the Bantu Press holdings. The Bantu World, up till then a weekly, was turned into a daily, The World, which is now a sex, crime and sport paper along the lines of the British Daily Mirror. The changing of this newspaper into a daily was opposed by its founder, Paver, who thought this was coming too soon and who hence foresaw the degeneration of the newspaper into a sex and crime sheet as "inevitable". (Paver resigned and went into black newspapers in Rhodesia.) Like Drum, the later expansion of circulation of the sensation-bound World is probably linked to growth in literacy rates - indeed the decision to change its character and format seems to have stemmed from a desire to tap the now-literate urban masses, rather than the educated elite as formerly. Paver's objections are interesting: he wanted to merge with Drum and he felt that to start a daily would change the whole structure of the newspapers which had been "growing with the people" and would introduce "disturbing features". He further believed that Africans had not got to the stage where sufficient news could be generated for a daily - correspondents would have to be trained, the "structure" was not there. He also pointed to a very interesting potential change - from a newspaper with a partly rural readership to a primarily urban paper.

> So the result would be that either you produce a paper which was entirely urban in its outlook and presentation and things like that and it would tend to dissipate what I was trying to do with the whole thing .... And basically I was right ... but the African newspaper enterprise that I conceived didn't come to pass ... basically because of that.... Well, I felt that the magazine should be part of the whole complex and there wasn't really room for two magazines ... there was room for one good super magazine - at that particular stage. Later on, you could have women's magazines as a separate thing .... Bailey's idea, again, was that a continental club which became a disaster because there again what was good for Kenya wasn't good for here.... It was pioneering at the wrong time.[28]

With television the future of newspapers seems to lie in the black market. Already the Argus Company seems to be thinking along those lines. (The World has a circulation of 100,000; Ilanga over 150,000.)

## "COLOURED" NEWSPAPERS

The first known "Coloured" newspaper was The Citizen[29] published in 1895 in Kimberley by a member of a troupe of American Jubilee singers who had been on tour in South Africa.

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> The Citizen of 1895 was a triple-column, four-page paper, that carried reports of various meetings, and concerts that were held. In addition to these, it contained articles on culture. These articles had a distinct American flavour. The praises of various American institutions were profusely sung. Since the Jubilee singers hailed from the Fish College in America, their Alma Mater naturally received pride of place in the columns of "The Citizen". This first effort in Colou Coloured journalism lasted four issues. It was indeed a crudely produced paper that had type of all shapes and sizes jumbled across its pages. Printers of that time used to quote "The Citizen" as an example of how printing should not be done.

This was followed, in 1900 or thereabouts, by the South African Spectator edited by a fascinating character, F.Z.S. Peregrino. Peregrino was born in Accra (his uncle was a Methodist "bishop"). He went to Britain, worked in some kind of steel foundry works, then moved to the U.S.A., where he worked in a steel mill in Atlanta, Georgia. Here he set up a newspaper called The Spectator. In 1900 he arrived in Britain for a Pan-African Conference and seems to have come to the conclusion that, with the Anglo-Boer War still going strong, he had a role to play in Cape Town. Within a few weeks of his arrival he had established the South African Spectator, full of amazing American-worded advertisements. Peregrino was constantly asked to move from his premises and his difficulty in finding alternative accommodation led him to found an accommodation agency and to propagate ideas of self-help.

In 1903 Dr A Abdurahman was instrumental in founding the African Political Organisation. This organisation, one of the first black political "parties", founded the A.P.O. , a paper which seems to have lasted into the Twenties. It was this newspaper which helped in the founding of the Coloured Teachers' Association (after a letter by "A Coloured Teacher" proposing such a scheme). In 1913 The S.A. Referee was founded and managed to last a year - it contained political articles by Peregrino so that the entry of politics into sport is a relatively old South African custom!

In March, 1919, the South African Clarion was started and supported the South African National Party (where the A.P.O. threw its weight behind the South African Party). According to "Gemel", it was generally believed "that this publication which was well-written and circulated throughout the length and breadth of South Africa, was the means of bringing the Pact Government (Nationalists and Labour) into power". The Clarion lasted only just over a year. It was followed by The Sun. "Gemel" indicated that the paper's attraction was similar to that of the black newspapers of the time.

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> The novelty of a Coloured paper made almost every intelligent Coloured man and woman a reader in the Cape. Much of the "Sun's" popularity and success at the time was due to the space devoted to social news. It was something new to see one's name in the paper.... For the first time the progress of our prople was being chronicled. The idea for the establishment of a debating society was first given voice to by a writer in the "Sun". The upshot of it was the establishment of the Cape Literary and Debating Society, which may yet produce some public speakers of note.[29]

Amongst the blacks, Ilanga Lase Natal would publish lists of who was seen at Lutuli's cafe and in Bantu World "Gossip Pen" (Godfrey Kuzwayo) would detail the social activity (holidays, illnesses, visits) of teachers, nurses, doctors, writers, ministers and others.

In May, 1936, the Cape Standard first appeared on the streets. It has tried to make the Coloured child ambitious and race conscious; it has fostered in the Coloured youth the benefits to be derived from healthy exercise. In its fight for equality of opportunity it has reflected Coloured opinion, and stated the cause of the Coloured man in a fair, sane and lucid manner." "Gemel" finished his article by putting the history of Coloured newspapers into perspective.

> The most powerful newspapers in South Africa to-day had many years ago just as humble births as the Coloured newspapers have had. The non-European press has a future which rests entirely with the support accorded it by the thinking Coloured men and women, and ie behoves every reader to help to make it a mighty weapon of a unified people fighting for equality, justice and freedom.

## The Black Press's Perception of Itself, 1930-1950[30]

After the early Thirties, with the newspapers largely white-financed, most of the writers (with individual variations admitted) tended to be middle-class or aspirant middle-class and moderate, liberal rather than radical nationalistic against tribalistic. (The exception was the Communist press which frequently attacked the other papers - and was attacked in turn.) An anonymous article (possibly by H.I.E. Dhlomo), on the African Press written in 1953 to celebrate the 50th birthday of Ilanga Lase Natal described the press as "a legitimate, sedate and moderate organ of Protest and as the Voice of the People" but also claimed that it was "a better watch-dog of African interests than political and social bodies. It (was) more alert, articulate, militant and informed."[31] In T.D. Mweli Skota's extraordinarily useful book The Black Folks' Who's Who, a compilation (written in the Thirties) of short biographies of prominent people, the word "progressive" applied to a black was the most frequent praise-term. The poet and playwright, H.I.E. Dhlomo, for instance, was described as "a young man of fine personality, very progressive in his ideas.[32]

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Although it is easy to condemn all these men for going overboard for "European civilization", for frequent imitation of white models, nevertheless the basis of their philosophy contained an element of realism. They perceived that one of the factors which helped the whites conquer the blacks of South Africa was the latter's lack of unity, the fact that the whites had managed each time to isolate tribes and deal with them separately, often with the assistance of black allies or "collaborators". The men of the newspapers tended to believe that the black man would be strongest if he was organised into a unity, crossing tribal lines, avoiding separatist tendencies. The ambiguity of the European imitation lies in the fact that it also partly contained the seeds of African nationalism, of a Unity movement.

A letter from Orlando in 1940 by Simon Malaza defends the black newspapers in terms of the handicaps they suffered compared with the white press and points to their nationalist role: "We owe these Bantu papers gratitude, because they have opened an essential and new way towards progress and are invaluable agents for unifying and inspiring a sorely divided people like the Bantu".[33] R.V. Selope Thema had reiterated this idea many times before. "It is", he wrote in 1929, "the duty of those of us who have access to the Public Press to call the attention of the leaders of our race, particularly at this juncture when the fate of our race hangs in the balance, to the things that are detrimental to the unity and solidarity of the race."[34]

The aims of these writers in the early days of black journalism are summed up by M.T. Moerane (later editor of The World) in 1953.

> It is a matter for great satisfaction to note that the Ilanga has maintained its delicate but invaluable policy of being both a Forum, for a people with few other facilities for making their views and aspirations heard, and an Educational instrument of uplift.[35]

The black press saw its objectives, therefore, as being a forum for opinions and protest and as an educational instrument.

## The Press and Black Literature up to 1950

With the kind of circulation achieved by the newspapers, it was not surprising that black writers gravitated to the press. Complaints about the lack of publication outlets were frequent. Describing the discussion at the African Authors' Conference held in the Transvaal in 1936, for instance, J.D. Rheinallt-Jones, after mentioning the difficulty Sol T. Plaatje had over many years in getting his novel Mhudi published, goes on to write:

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> For the African author ... the comparatively small reading public in the Bantu languages is an additional hindrance. Thus is occurs that publishers will not publish meritorious material because it can only command a small reading public, and the reading public is not being extended because of the lack of reading matter. Instances were given of the disappearance of manuscripts through lack of publication.[36]

Similarly Walter Nhlapo was to complain in 1938:

> There are many authors but the difficulty is that their medium of publication is lacking. In this transition period of the world's affairs, where can they find a medium, since there are few publishers and these are for a certain kind of literature and no more?[37]

Most of the well-known early black writers were also journalists: the newspapers gave them both a public platform and a measure of social status in the aspirant urban middle-class. Poems, both in English and African languages, appeared fairly frequently in the newspaper columns and the occasional short story was not unknown. Journalism gave writers a certain measure of social status.

Although the artists thus had some influence on the lay-out and content of newspapers, the corollary was also, in some measure, true: newspapers probably influenced the writer's style. Firstly, the papers had, for commercial reasons, to appeal to its readership and private wrangling of conscience could not be greatly tolerated. As the influential pen of "Scrutator" (R.V. Selope Thema) was to write:

> My advice to these who want to use the pen as the vehicle of expression is, start writing on subjects of personal appeal and of general interest to the reading public.[38]

In addition to this emphasis on public pronouncement, the newspapers tended to encourage the essay form and a discursive and moralistic style (partly in conformity with its educative function discussed earlier). H.I.E. Dhlomo's descriptive pieces, for instance, have been known to bring tears to the ideas of their readers. Essay competitions, run by the papers, also encouraged this. One competition run by Umteteli wa Bantu in 1934 attracted 561 entries.[39] Because the newspapers appeared weekly they relied less for their impact on the immediacy of their news than on comment. Journalists tended to be philosophical and moral commentators rather than reporters in search of contentious local items. Due to space limitations the very short story was encouraged and brief, rather than extended, efforts in all fields were the order of the day. The autobiography form (so important in South African black writing) probably owes much to the newspaper eulogies and obituaries of prominent men. (R.V. Selope Thema himself wrote an autobiography - as yet unpublished at the time of writing). Public

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themes, such as the anniversary of Mendi Day or Dingaan's Day or the Orlando Train Disaster of Christmas 1941, were standard subject matter. The poet Obed S. Mooki, for instance, made a habit of writing praise poems in English to prominent people, dead or alive. The humorous column was also a popular favourite. R.R.R. Dhlomo was the major exponent of this: under the pseudonyms of Rollie Reggie (in Ilanga in the Twenties), R. Roamer Esq. (in Bantu World in the Thirties) and Rolling Stone (in Ilanga in the Forties and after). He probably picked up the technique from Stephen Black, the editor of Sjambok between 1929 and 1931: Black used to write a column, conducted in the form of a debate between two Africans, (a teacher and a preacher), Joshua and Jeremiah.

The system of using pseudonyms allowed writers both to vary their style and to write more than their unsuspecting readers realized: a few writers could hence dominate a whole newspaper. This tendency was taken to such an extent that the editress of the women's pages of The Bantu World was, in the late Thirties, Rolfes Dhlomo, undoubtedly male in all other respects! Indeed, as is predictable, the newspapers were largely male controlled. A picture of the 15-strong staff of Umteteli wa Bantu in 1930, for instance, features an all-male cast. B.W. Vilikazi was to lament the lack of women writers in an article in 1933:

> Why can't our educated women ... patronise the Ilanga and express their views and exchange ideas.... Why can't they tell our womenfolk about this and that? To be a writer does not mean much, nor does it cost money. We want the wisdom of their heads.[40]

The women's pages tended to confirm the woman's peculiar and subordinate role: concentrating on articles such as how to behave at English-style tea-parties and emphasizing religious ideas of acceptance of suffering and such like. I have found the poems of only one woman, Rahab S. Petje. Her writing is not without an element of sharpness. An example is her poem "Africa's Song of Freedom".

> Sing songs ye children of Africa,
> Songs of mirth and songs of love,
> Songs of praise for your native land;
> For the Lord with His merciful right hand,
> Has blest us with freedom and love.
> Forget ye sons, of slavery!
> Ye daughters forget your orphanage!
> Arise and show your bravery!
> For lost are the days of strife with age,
> And Liberty is at hand.

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How long have we longed Oh Africa!
Have we longed for the joys of our land?
How long have we struggled with thess Oh
Fate!
With thee Oh Fate! Thou cruel Fate,
'Gainst struggle, hate, and strife?
Let us with our banner unfurled,
March to the graves of our dead.
With hand overflowing with offering,
With hearts full of mirth and joy.
Then Oh then
Let us with one voice our prayers raise.[41]

To a large extent, the newspapers must also have been responsible for the spread of some terminology and language style. The early papers (although often fascinated by the American blacks - with frequent articles on Negro politicians and writers) tended to put across "standard English", in terms of their middle-class and "civilized" aspirations. It is not till the Fifties, with Drum and later The World, that language becomes racy in some conformity with the township slang. There are, however, early elements of American influence (often because of Negro influence within the separatist churches), one example being the ending of a poem called "A Bantu Lament" written in 1933 by Simon Lekhela; where the growing nationalism is also present.

Hasten, Black fold, time now arrives,
Let unity our ideal be.
Union our destiny decides,
Endeavour for it each colleague.
By fate or chance depressed we are
Oh Spirit Great! we trust in Thee.[42]

Journalism and literature are, for a long time in South African black literary history, Siamese twins.

There were numerous literary writers, both in English and African languages. In English, the productions of Sol Plaatje and H.I.E. Dhlomo were by no means isolated events. There were many other writers: R.R.R. Dhlomo and others wrote short stories: W. Nhlapo, Obed Mooki, "L.D.R." and others produced many poems. The novelist Peter Abrahams was first published in Bantu World in 1936 - as a "schoolboy poet" and B.W. Vilikazi and others frequently contributed poetry in African languages. All these names became fairly well-known amongst their own people.

Although an early attempt to form a journalists and writers society failed in the Thirties the spirit of comradeship and cohesiveness which then prevailed has been continuous ever since and the early days of writing and journalism were a necessary tempering fire for the achievements

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of Drum, Classic and the "flowering" of black literature after 1950. In 1953 M.T. Moerane (later editor of The World) paid tribute to Ilanga Lase Natal:

> Our gratitude goes to the Builders to whom the torch was handed - The Bantu Press, Ex-assistant Editor J.K. Ngubane, Editor R.R.R. Dhlomo, H.I.E. Dhlomo, R.C. Mkhize, Msimbithi, Busy-Bee Joe the Cow, Rolling Stone and many other Free-Lances and Contributors, Subscribers and readers who have supported this great venture for fifty years. Nobly have they played their parts in this stupendous Drama.
>
> And what a Drama! Nay, the story of Ilanga is an epic of the mighty deeds of a great people, struggling relentlessly against the odds uncounted, pitting themselves against principalities and powers, a panoramic pageant whose glories shall yet be sung, for the history of the last 50 years of Natal is mirrored in, nay, bound up with J.L. Dube and the Ilanga. In "those days" Dube fought and won freedom of Expression for the Africans, but not before he was arraigned before the highest citizens of this Colony in Her Majesty's name. The Amaqadi warriors rallied.... Dube had won the Freedom of the Press.[43]

There is an element of humour here: Jordan Ngubane was Jo the Cow, Herbert Dhlomo was Busy Bee, and Rolfes Dhlomo was Rolling Stone. But there is also a strong measure of truth, even if couched in highly rhetorical terms: the full story of the South African black press has yet to be written. When it is, the debt of the newspapers and the literary artists to one another must occupy at least a small section. And, finally, mundane as it may sound, the story of the newspapers could, one day, be deservedly embodied in a drama or an epic.

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## NOTES

There is comparatively little secondary source material. Fairly helpful are (not necessarily accurate):

1. "Bantu Journalism in South Africa", E. Rosenthal (SAIRR pamphlet, circa 1947).

2. "The Non-European Press", A Friedgut in Handbook on Race Relations in South Africa, edited by E. Hellman, 1949, pp.484-510.

3. The Story behind the Non-White Press , B. Bunting, 1959 (Pamphlet).

There is also a recent doctorate by F. St Leger, from Rhodes University: this is mainly a content analysis of a couple of recent years. The newspapers themselves remain the best source material. I would also like to thank Harold Kumalo, T.D. Mweli Skota, D.S. Harrison and B.G. Paver for their patience in the hours I have taken up interviewing them.

1. Albert S. Gérard, Four African Literatures, Berkeley, 1971, p.30. This newspaper was called Umshumayeli Indaba (The Preacher's News).

2. Ibid. p.30. The paper came to an end because of the 1946 war.

3. Ibid. p.34.

4. Sheila Marks, "The Ambiguities of Dependence: John L Dube of Natal", unpublished paper presented at Conference, Oxford, October 1974.

5. Davis, "Elijah Makuwane and the School People", unpublished paper.

6. A.S. Gérard, Op. Cit. page 41.

7. D.D.T. Jabavu, John Tengo Jabavu, Lovedale, 1922.

8. Translated by J. Boxwell as Jeqe the Bodyservant of King Tshaka, Lovedale, 1951.

9. The Boer War Diary of Sol T. Plaatje, edited by J. Comaroff, Johannesburg, 1973.

10. Tsala ea Batho, Kimberley, 1916.

11. "How Congress Began: The Life of the Late Dr Pixley Seme", R.V. Selope-Thema in Drum, July 1953, p.41.

12. "The Regeneration of Africa", in The African Abroad, 5 April, 1906; quoted in T. Karis and G. Carter, From Protest to Challenge, vol.I, p.71.

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13. Letter to Howard Pim from the Resident Commissioner's Office, Maseru, Basutoland, 22 April 1908 (the signature is difficult to decipher). Pim papers, University of the Witwatersrand archives.

14. Interview with T.D. Mweli-Skota, Sun Valley, Pimville, 24 September, 1974.

15. Interview with Harold Kumalo, Kliptown, 1 October, 1974.

16. H.D. Tyamzashe, Summarised History of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa, unpublished copy in the South African Institute of Race Relations. On page 3, Tyamzashe writes about Champion's attempt to take over the paper while Kadalie was in Europe:

> He installed himself Editor of the paper and "ORDERED" the writer to publish every bit of clotted nonsense that flew from his erratic pen. The climax was reached when Champion endeavoured to compel me to publish a libellous article.

Tyamzashe censored the article and nearly lost his job.

17. I owe much of the information which follows to two interviews: with D S Harrison (a business-manager of Bantu World in the Fifties), Roodepoort, 25 August, 1975; and with B.G. Paver, Pennington, Natal, 10 December, 1975.

18. Mr Paver's memory is accurate. It can be checked by, amongst other things, a letter from J.D. Rheinallt-Jones to R. Muir, General Manager of Argus Company, 16 September, 1931 (Rheinallt-Jones paper, Box 47, University of the Witwatersrand archives), in which Rheinallt-Jones noted two significant recent changes. The first was:

> A complete transformation within five years of the range of goods stocked by those traders who cater specially for Native customers. I have examined traders' stocks and have questioned the traders themselves, and I find that Kaffir Truck has become a minor part of Native trade.

The second:

> There is a wave of enthusiasm for Education. Never have Native schools been so full. In the Transvaal alone the number of pupils in Standard VI has risen from 400 in 1929 to 1400 in 1931. A very significant advance! For it means that all over the country there has suddenly developed a new reading public, and one that offers a new market for books and newspapers.

He later added that "it would be unwise at first *my italics* to interfere with their i.e. the present black owners nominal Editorships" and that "the time may come when we shall be glad to have *steady leadership provided by these papers*".

19. Interview with B.G. Paver, 10 December, 1975.

20. Abantu Batho collapsed in 1931. It seems to have been saved for a time about 1929 by some "self-sacrificing action" on the part of Josiah T. Gumede, President General of the A.N.C.. A committee was proposed to float a new Company: it comprised such illustrious names as Gumede, Selope Thema, Mvabaza, Plaatje, Letanka, Champion, Horatio Mbelle, Mini and T.D. Mweli Skota, the last editor. (See memorandum, "Affairs of the Abantu-Batho", Saffrey papers File D3, S.A.I.R.R.)

21. J.D. Rheinallt-Jones papers, Box 47, University of the Witwatersrand archives.

22. To the question, why Selope Thema was appointed, Paver replied.

> I liked Thema's personality. He was frustrated ... but he was very earnest and sincere about the development of his people. He was a politician but he was about the most balanced of a whole crowd of, well, what one might call the intelligentsia of that day and they were very thin on the ground, you know, there were damned few.

Paver summed up his own attitude to his Staff on the question of control:

> I didn't interfere with the editorial, I had the sane approach that as long as the chaps, you know, realised that flying for the moon wasn't going to get anyone anywhere ... that it had to be done slowly, slowly, catchee monkey and there had to be moderation. They had to do the editorials and so the policy was really a co-operative one. We used to have meetings and when I had new reporters I would brief them.... There was a lot of goodwill and faith.... I couldn't presume to put a blue pencil through what was said. It had to be done by my personality, by these chaps realising that ... and I had to say to them, well you know you'll have Native Affairs officials who are proficient in your own languages reading this.

The fact that there was a measure of political control, however, is indicated by a letter (ambiguously worded?) Paver wrote to Howard Pim on 15 February, 1933:

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> I must thank you for your advice regarding P. ka I. Seme. You may be sure that I will watch him very carefully in future. I do so earnestly wish to help these people, and it is not easy to know who is most worthy of the paper's support, that I am more than sorry when we appear to be misleading in our efforts.

(Pim papers A881/B12/47, University of the Witwatersrand archives.)

23. For a perception of this clash, see, for instance, "What Africans Read", in Inkundla ya Bantu, First Fortnight, September, 1946. That Bantu Press was closely associated with the liberals of the Race Relations Institute is testified to in a letter on Institute paper from Edgar Brookes to Rheinallt-Jones in which Brookes suggests a kind of affiliation membership for the Press "in view of its special character from our point of view". (Rheinallt-Jones papers, Brooker to Jones, 2 June, 1934. University of the Witwatersrand archives).

24. Hashe was described by the African Leader, on 29 April, 1933, as follows:

> One time an Assistant Compound Manager (commonly known as "Induna") of Durban Deep Roodepoort Mine. In the first month of last year, Mr Hashe, prompted by a sense of patriotism, reclaimed, for the Bantu people, the printing plant of the "Abantu Batho" Ltd. This plant was about to be lost to our people when Mr Hashe came out and recalimed it for his people.
>
> Mr Hashe was born in 1881 at Middledrift Dist. of Kingwilliamstown. His father was a Councillor and Chief Speaker of Chief William Shaw Khama. He is one of the Children of Cungwa.

25. W.G. Ballinger to Winifred Holtby, 7 June, 1933. Recently discovered box of Ballinger papers, University of the Witwatersrand archives. See, also, Ballinger to Rheinallt Jones, 30 December, 1931; Ballinger to Winifred Holtby, 14 June, 1933; and Howard Pim to Winifred Holtby, 21 June, 1933. The extent to which Pim and Ballinger were at odds is indicated by Ballinger's affirmation that he "cannot submit" to Pim's "economic pressure" and that it "looks as if Mrs Lewis has been right and I have trusted him a little too much": though Pim maintains only that it was "a curious and difficult position but we remain on friendly terms".

26. Two other newspapers appeared about 1936: The African Liberator and The African Defender. The former seems to have been in the nationalist line of the African Leader. It claimed a circulation of 6,000 and the March-April, 1936, issue stated:

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> Our first attempt was to infuse new life into the defunct African Leader. Secondly we collected over £40 to start the African Defender in 1933. Both those were colossal failures. Our last attempt was to organise the African Writers and Journalists Association which was stillborn. Today we decided to have no deliberation but took our courage in both hands and fill the crying need. That we are doing so beyond our expectation is proved by the fact that in our short career we have made some remarkable achievements. We have converted Professor D.D.T Jabavu B.A. President of the All African Convention from a willy nilly upholder of White Leadership for Africans into a staunch self-respecting African national leader. We are disarming hostility and suspicions. We are giving the Trade Union movement a greater impetus. We are giving the Co-operative movement a greater upsurge.... It is necessary that the oppressed and exploited Africans should have an independent champion not a champion of the Octopus which would drive all Africans underground or to slave under Boer farmers. It is essential that oppressed and confused Africans have their defender. It is essential that all allies of the downtrodden slaves - the white workers the natural allies of Blacks and the European Liberals have a mass organiser. Hence our stand.

The latter was Eddie Roux's paper which sold out 10,000 first issue copies because of the black interest in the Italian-Abyssinian war. Both papers soon failed, however. Eddie Roux and The African Defender did, however, produce an interesting little literacy reader called The Mayibuye Reader which taught English through snippets like, "The pass-law is bad. The old laws were good", and "Black men and white men are living in Africa. The black man is still not free. Some white men are free."

27. Interview with D.S. Harrison, 25 August, 1975.

28. Interview with B.G. Paver, 10 December, 1975.

29. The following account owes much to an article by "Gemel", "Coloured Newspapers that I have known, in the Cape Standard, 29 March, 1938. I have not yet traced the exact influence of Coloured newspapers on literary writers: Peter Abrahams, however, published his first poems there. Much of the information on Peregrino was given to me by S Trapido

30. The remaining part of this paper is due to appear as part of a longer paper, "The Black Press and Black Literature in South Africa 1900-1950", in the September, 1976 issue of English Studies in Africa.

31. Ilanga Lase Natal, 20 June, 1953.

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32. T.D. Mweli Skota, The African Yearly Register: The Black Folks' Who's Who, R.L. Essen and Co., Johannesburg, p.143.

33. Bantu World, 7 September, 1940.

34. Umteteli wa Bantu, 9 March, 1929.

35. Ilanga Lase Natal, 13 June, 1953.

36. Bantu World, 14 November, 1936.

37. Bantu World, 20 August, 1938.

38. Bantu World, 18 January,, 1936.

39. Umteteli wa Bantu, 15 December, 1934.

40. Ilanga Lase Natal, 17 March, 1933.

41. Bantu World, 14 March, 1942.

42. Umteteli wa Bantu, 10 June, 1933.

43. Ilanga Lase Natal, 20 June, 1953.