

## U.N. Column

by Laura Parks

Tribalism in Africa, when used as a political tool by the minority white ruling establishment, has always served the political and economic interests of the establishment by playing off the elite tribal chiefs against the rest of the tribe and by putting one tribal group against another. Thus, the tribes are kept from attacking the power centers of the white dominated governmental structures.

Tribalism is an exceedingly complicated matter. Few westerners have any real understanding of the tribal politics in southern Africa for the simple reason that the white minority governments are reluctant to reveal their relationships with the tribal leaders. This ignorance about tribal politics extends all the way to the State Department's African Desk.

Only the general principles of tribal politics are understood. But the understanding of these general principles by the opponents of apartheid has failed to prevent the South African government from successfully establishing "two homelands" for selected tribes. The white governments operate from a privileged sanctuary and take full advantage of ancient tribal-cultural traditions and manipulates them within the framework of the modern world and local conditions. The elders of the tribe and the chiefs, frequently denied access to the outside world, by official government orders remain prisoners to cultural traditions deliberately befouled by the ruling colonial elites.

In South Africa, the Vorster regime, in hot pursuit of its apartheid "separate but equal doctrine" provides all of the trappings of sovereignty to its "Bantustans" or so called "independent" homelands, but deprives them of any real economic power base. The "Bantustans" are always located in the most desolate and economically useless regions of South Africa. This forces the "Independent African" to seek work far away from home, at very low wages, in some white South African town, where he or she is not permitted to stay after dark. But back home in the "Independent Bantustans" a so called sovereign chief rules his people as "national flag" proudly flutters in the wind.

The issue is vital. For what is happening with the "Bantustans" in South Africa is being deliberately emulated by Ian Smith in white ruled Rhodesia. Not exactly, of course, because the two areas have different histories and traditions, but the similarities are plain to see, not in their complex daily details about which we know very little, due to heavy censorship but in their overall purposes. And this purpose is to divide and rule, taking full advantage of tribal traditions and animosities.

Prime Minister Ian Smith of Rhodesia, with the cooperation of Tribal Chief Jeremiah Chirau, Bishop Muzorewa and the Rev. Sithole plans to hold elections to demonstrate to the world at large that the black Rhodesians are in fact supporters of the new constitution that Ian Smith claims will grant majority rule to the ancient people of Zimbabwe.

The white minority government of Ian Smith hopes to demonstrate to the world that Zimbabwe's 260 tribal chieftains support his policies and that the Patriotic Front of Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo have little or no support among the people. If the Smith ploy succeeds it will once again demonstrate that the old tricks of the colonialists may still be used to certain advantage.

For the often narrowly technical and short-sighted policy planners in Washington and London, who may be inclined to support the Ian Smith gambit, it may be a useful reminder to recall the words of the former Tory Prime Minister of Britain, Harold MacMillan, who was the first among establishment politicians

to recognize that "winds of change" were sweeping the world and that it was the better part of valor to seek accommodation with the new forces that time and history has presented to our common destiny rather than seek short-sighted evasions or use mean tricks employed by club house politicians, to thwart the will of the people.

If the lies, tricks and deceits are allowed to triumph in Rhodesia then it will be only a matter of short time before all of southern Africa is engulfed in terrible armed insurrection. Sparks from this conflict may easily alight in our urban hells.

## Happiness Through Health

by Otto McClarrin

**POSSIBLE REASON FOR HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE AMONG BLACKS:** Blacks in America may have inherited a kidney system suited to the rigors of life in Africa but which makes them prone to high blood pressure on the high-salt diet of the western world, a hypertension researcher suggested recently. Dr. Richard F. Gilum of the University of Minnesota said that black persons would be wise to reduce their salt intake by at least 50 percent.

Gillum spoke recently in Lake Buena Vista, Fla., to a symposium studying reports on why blacks are twice as likely as whites to develop high blood pressure.

He said he thinks that blacks are genetically prone to high blood pressure and that makes them more vulnerable to a high salt diet, a combination of both hereditary and environmental causes.

But Dr. Gilum's findings do not jibe with those of Dr. Gerald S. Berenson, who led the Bogalusa (La.) heart study. Berenson said his research had not found any striking evidence that diet, living environment and socioeconomic factors are responsible for higher blood pressure among blacks.

**POSSIBLE CAUSES OF JUVENILE ARTHRITIS:** The cause of juvenile arthritis is unknown but a recent Rochester, N.Y. report suggests that emotional stress such as that caused by a broken home may have an important role in the development of the disease.

There are at least 250,000 children in the United States with arthritis. Many are only a few years old and many must live with severe pain and increasing disability because there is no known cure.

"It is likely that several different factors have to be present in combination for a case of juvenile arthritis to begin," said Dr. John Baum, professor of Pediatrics at the University of Rochester School of Medicine.

The idea that stress may be a factor has been suggested by several researchers, including a Finnish team which reported recently that 37 percent of the patients with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis it studied had a significant psychological problem within a year before the disease appeared.

Dr. Baum and two co-workers, Monica Jean Henoch of the Monroe Community Hospital and Jean Batson of Strong Memorial Hospital, examined the cases of 88 children who attended Strong's arthritis clinic between 1960 and 1977. The youngsters' histories were compared with information obtained from a 1971 survey of 2,952 children in the same area. The results were reported as follows:

Twenty eight percent of the children with arthritis had undergone a psychologically upsetting event caused by divorce, separation or death of a parent. In comparison only 11 percent of the children from the normal group came from broken homes.

The study found that 48 percent of the family stress events took place within two years of the beginning of arthritis.

The survey also noted that adopted children were found three times more often in the arthritic group than in the normal group.

## J.C. Penney

Governor Mike O'Callaghan today announced the JC Penny Company has taken options on two parcels of land in Southern Nevada to build its seventh catalog distribution center.

With a similar distribution center now being built in Reno, the JC Penny Company will become one of the state's largest nongaming employers, with a labor force of over 5,000 at the two centers during peak operation.

The Las Vegas area plant, when built, will be the biggest building under one roof in the state encompassing 2.1 million square feet, an area large enough to house 37 football fields.

"The fact that the third largest catalog merchandizer in the United States has chosen Las Vegas and Reno for its western catalog centers is a great endorsement for the Silver State," O'Callaghan said. "Great care and extensive investigation led this corporation to the decision to locate both of its centers in the same state. No other state has two Penny's distribution centers.

Proximity to the population centers of the Pacific Northwest, Southern California and the Southwest put Nevada in a uniquely favorable position for warehousing," the Governor said.

"Among the determining factors were the transportation services, the availability of labor, the presence and availability of higher education facilities, a very acceptable tax structure, and a generally high quality of life," the Governor said.

"The catalog center will improve the employment picture in Southern Nevada and diversify the tax base," Governor O'Callaghan said. "The distribution industry provides steady employment year round with additional employment during the winter months when tourism employment is down," the Governor said.

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