

ALL BRIDGES TO SOUTH AFRICA ARE FOR "WHITES ONLY"

Before the advent of a Nationalist Government in 1948 it was possible for black South Africans, albeit only a small minority, to share the same educational facilities as those available to whites. Since 1948 and the application of apartheid in education - as in every other sphere - equality is not the aim of education. Dr Verwoerd, the architect of apartheid: "Natives should be taught from childhood to realise that equality with Europeans is not for them."

With the introduction of "Bantu" education in 1955 and university apartheid in 1959, the purpose of education for black South Africans was defined - that it "should be controlled in such a way that it should be in accordance with the policy of the State..." (Hansard, 17 September 1953).

This means that all education in South Africa is segregated.

In 1971-72, the estimated amount spent on each African school pupil was R20; on each white school pupil R282.

Unlike parents of white pupils, African parents are required to pay for their children's stationery and text books and to contribute to school funds.

African school teachers are paid 32-46% of the salaries earned by white teachers.

At university level, enrolment in June 1971 was: Whites - 77,221; Blacks (including Coloureds and Indians) - 11,668. These are figures for a country where black South Africans constitute 82% of the population.

Of the 16 universities in South Africa - one of which is concerned only with correspondence courses - ten are for Whites, one for Coloureds, one for Indians and three for Africans. The last five are colleges rather than universities since the standard of education is generally recognised to be much inferior, degrees obtained are not recognised internationally, and a number of courses - including architecture, engineering and town planning - are not available. Blacks may attend "white" universities for these courses only with the permission of the Minister.

There is not at this time a single African architect in South Africa.

Prior to 1970, the Institute of South African Architects was administered by a Council elected by the members, with powers conferred on it by a Private Act of Parliament. In 1970, the Government changed this position by introducing new legislation, which provided for a Council of Architects to be appointed by the Minister. This Council is composed of 12 practising architects nominated by the profession, plus four ministerial appointees and a representative of the Public Works Department. Thus, the final authority in the Council is effectively that of the Government.

The special relationships between the RIBA and the ISAA were established a long time ago, when conditions did not force this question of South African racism to the forefront of the attention of all men. Since that time, not only has the number of black students who have reached university entrance levels vastly increased but - more important - the growth of legally entrenched racism in South Africa has been challenged by the black population themselves, despite the persecution to which they are being subjected.

The call for a boycott has come from the African organisations and has been upheld by numerous UN resolutions on the subject. There are no arguments in favour of the "special relationship" between the RIBA and the ISAA which overrides these calls to all men of goodwill made by those whose future we should be most anxious to uphold.