

Tzaneen

17/3/33

Dear Mr Fortes,

And now I can go back to your letter in an open manner, and not as I did in a guarded way, since I can call a "spade - a spade".

The letter I just closed, I intended to send a copy thereof to Jerry, and I have to write in a distorted, hinting manner, wherever I have touch upon the Bolshevistic doctrine and its practical effects. One can never tell, his letters be all of a sudden be tampered with, and our friends, the OGPU I never trust too much. You will therefore a notice, a distorted tendency in my letters to him, a hinting here, there and everywhere, but dodging the plain word, and the coming to a point.

I must, however, take you to task for a few parallels you have drawn between gruesome facts in London, the exploitation of Natives in South Africa, with the "slavery" pure and simple that is being practiced by our friend "Stalin"....

I do not know much about gruesome sights that can be collected in London, outside of what I read in the Newspapers. I know fully well of the state of affairs of our Native population. I hold no brief for present "Society" in London or elsewhere. I have been a "radical" and a "rebel" all my life as regards our Social institutions. I have, however, no room for "dogmas" and have also an open mind, and am further wide open for conviction on such and similar matters. I must set out to judge on results, and not on "pretensions". If the "cure" is as "bad" and even "worse" than the "disease" it sets out to "remedy", it can be nothing, but a "~~quack~~" "quack" remedy, and nothing else.

I am fully aware of the state of Serfdom existing within S. Africa, and I know fully well as to how far these aboriginals are disgracefully exploited. The Dutch element consider that they are but God appointed to exploit them, and they hold a "divine right" with a "Heavenly Charter" to do so.

However, all said and done, the Russians would be in Paradise were they treated in a similar manner by these lofty preachers of Fraternity and Equality. In semi-tropical South Africa clothes can be discarded to a minimum, and there are also wild berries, wild fruit and roots and what not, that are edible. One can also steal a little, and if the worst happens and that native is caught, he can afford a bellie-full of mealie porridge with vegetables some times, and twice a week a piece of meat. A native in South Africa can discard with all shelter, since the elements are much more kindly disposed to him than in Arctic Russian Winter conditions. The Winter is mild, and he can creep under a tree or some similar shelter when it rains, clothes he hardly requires. He can in any case stay in "jail" and be fed with a minimum of effort.

And this, after all, but "Chattel Slavery", pure and simple. We all know it, often say it. It is true, it has very ugly features, under the pretence of distrbing the so called good relations between White and Black, and to stop agitation for the emancipation of the native despotic legislation has been lately passed in Parliament, under Riotus Assemblies Acts, Master and Servants Acts etc. but on the whole, there is nothing like, no comparison with, the state of affairs as created by our modern interpreters of the Stalin school of Marxism... Facts must remain facts, by which alone one can compare things, for lofty idealism disguised as slavery are no consolation in the least, and but becomes a monstrosity in real life.....

Dialectical Materialism has no room in realities of every day facts, and whilst I shall leave out passing judgment on history, I cannot blink my eyes to realities...

It is, as you say, impossible to moralise from the armchair.

Appreciating again your interest in Jerry, I beg to remain,

with sincerest best wishes to Mrs Fortes and yourself