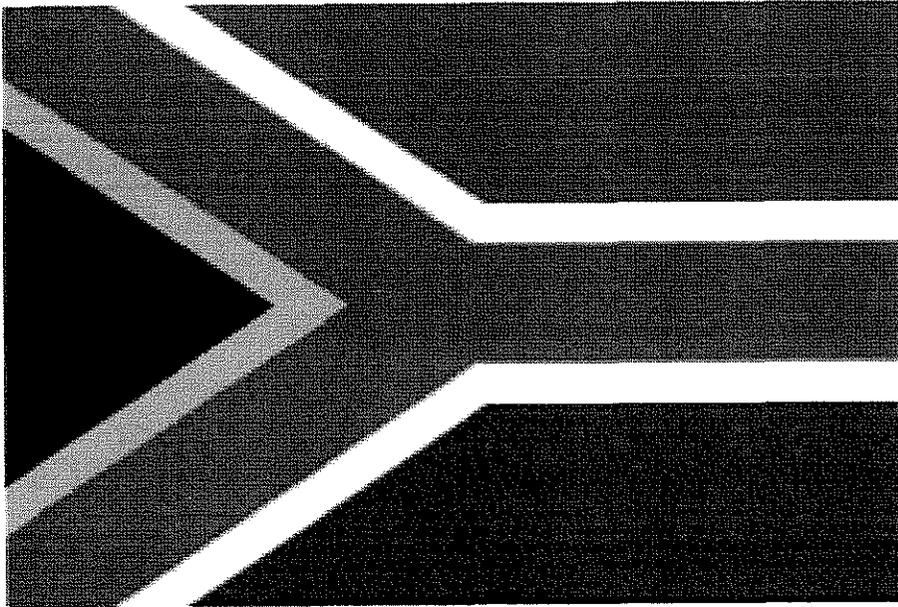
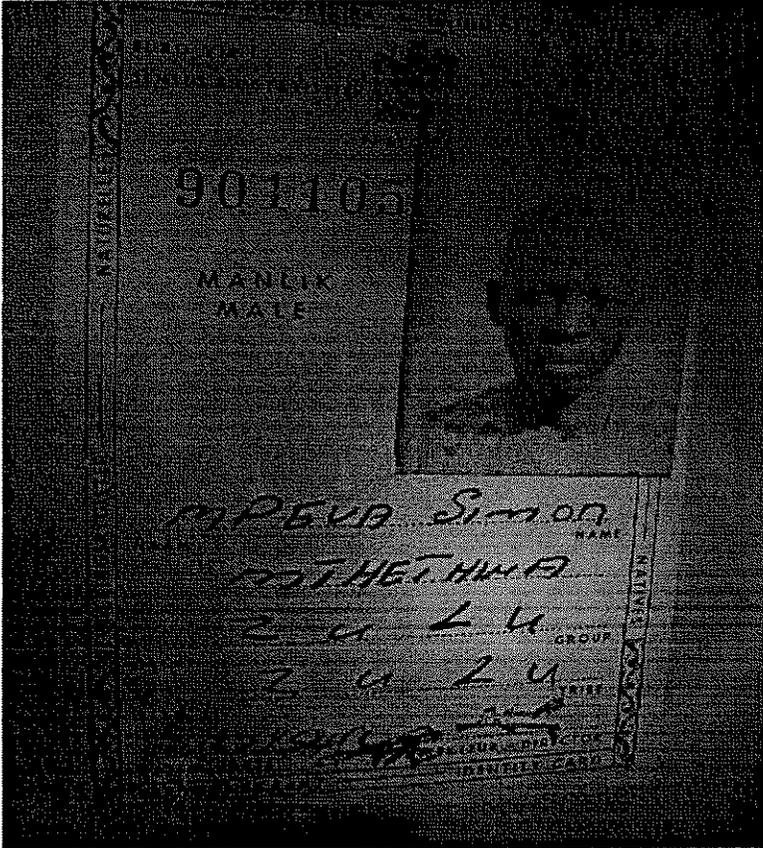


Aim: How were South Africans affected by the system of apartheid?

Define: apartheid—



Mrs. Gewitz



What information is included in the passbook?

Does any information included in the passbook strike you as odd?

When have you been forced to carry identification? What makes that situation different?



Life in the Homelands

In 1950, the Group Areas Act was passed by the South African government dividing 13 percent of South Africa's land into ten homelands (also called reserves or bantustans) for the Black population. The remainder of the country was set aside for whites. Asians and Coloureds were permitted to live within segregated areas located in white South Africa. Blacks living in urban areas were forced to move to sites outside the cities called "townships." This reading describes life in the Black reserves of South Africa.

Widowhood--a life of void and loneliness . . . is the daily lot of tens of thousands of (South) African women whose husbands are torn away from them to go and work in the cities, mines, and farms. Husbands who, because of the migratory labor system, cannot take their wives with them and, because of the starvation wages they receive, are forced to remain in the work centers for long periods--strangers in a strange land--but equally strange at home to their wives and children.

These women remain alone in the reserves to build the homes, till the land, rear the stock, bring up the children. They watch alone the ravages of drought . . . (when) the crops in the fields wither in the scorching sun . . . Alone they bury their babies one by one and lastly . . . their husbands whose corpses alone are sent back to the reserves. For the world of grinding machines has no use for men whose lungs are riddled with tuberculosis. . . .

At home in the morning these lonely women see to it that their children get ready for school, those underfed and scantily dressed children whose breakfast is a piece of bread, mealie papa without any milk, and for many just cold mush and beans. Their desire to see their children educated is so great that the women work extra hard in order to keep their children in school so that they will have the education that will free them from poverty. . . .

. . . For some women there is a letter of good news from the father and husband far away in the work center--the long-awaited letter with money has come. Part of the debt at the trader's will now be paid off . . . For others it is bad news. . . . The loved one far away is ill, has met with an accident, has been thrown into jail because he failed to produce his papers when demanded by some government officials. Not that he did not have them, but just that by mistake he forgot them in the pocket of his other jacket. A Black man in South Africa cannot forget! . . .

Adapted from: "The Widows of the Reserves," Phyllis Ntantala, *Africa South* (Capetown, South Africa, 1958). Found in Fred Burke, ed., *Africa: Selected Readings*, rev. ed. (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1972, 1969), pp. 220-223. Permission pending.

EXERCISE

Answer the following questions based on the reading:

1. Why is the condition of women in the homelands referred to as "widowhood"?

2. What are some examples of the hardships that women in the homelands have to endure?

3. Why do women tend to work extra hard in the homelands? _____

4. Why do the women wait in anticipation for word from their husbands? _____

5. How is the Black South African family unit being affected by the homelands policy?

Education for Blacks

"When I have control of native [Black] education I will reform it so that the natives will be taught from childhood to realize that equality with Europeans is not for them."*

These are the words of Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd, then Minister of Native Affairs and later Prime Minister of South Africa (1958-1966), on introducing the 1953 Bantu Education Act. Verwoerd, from Holland and an Afrikaner, was also the prime shaper of apartheid.

Ntshebo Sylvia Mohau remembers how nervous she was last October. It was time to take the government exam to certify her graduation from high school. (She) . . . knew that the results might determine her entire future. If she passed, she could apply for entrance to a South African university. And she would have at least a slim chance of someday becoming a pharmacist, her dream job. If Ntshebo didn't pass the exam, she would have to struggle through another year of high school or take some menial job. Worse yet, she might be forced to join the 50 percent of South Africa's Blacks who are unemployed and living in dire poverty.

. . . Like over half of the 137,600 Black high school seniors who took the exam, she failed. . . . Ntshebo, like millions of other young Blacks, is a victim of inferior schooling. From early childhood, she has been educated by poorly trained teachers at a series of poorly equipped schools.

Education experts agree that Black schools are in terrible shape. . . . For every dollar the South African government spends on a Black student, it spends seven dollars on a white. The effect on Black students is devastating. Because they are poorly prepared, many Black students routinely fail their courses. . . .

In 1976, the white-led government passed a law that made Afrikaans, the language of the white Africaners, the sole language of instruction for math and social studies in all Black schools. Many Blacks viewed Afrikaans as the language of the white oppressor--a language they didn't respect. The law triggered a student uprising that began in (the township of) Soweto and spread throughout the nation.

[With education their issue at Soweto, Black students took on the resistance movement, making it also a youth concern. In their own fearless way, they protested, boycotted (using several forms--school, bus, rent), and were killed, maimed, and scarred. And they caused the world to focus a little more

closely--and caringly--on their country's struggle. For whites, education was free and compulsory, but not so for Blacks. Then, in 1979, largely because of the Soweto uprising, the Bantu Education Act was replaced by the Education and Training Act, No. 90, under which Blacks will gradually have the benefit of compulsory education, free tuition, and free schoolbooks.*]

* * * * *

Anthony Tshatsinde, 20, wants to become a civil engineer. But he failed his exam. For Anthony, the answer is clear. "Until we Blacks can get a free, nonracial education," he says, "we will remain, with a sprinkling of university graduates, the people who draw water and cut wood."

*Lyle Tatuni, ed., *South Africa. Challenge and Hope*. American Friends Service Committee, rev. ed. (New York, Hill & Wang, 1987), pp. 48, 69. Permission pending.

Adapted from: *Scholastic Update*, "Special Report: Education in South Africa," February 12, 1988, vol. 120, no. 11, pp. 17-19. Permission pending.

EXERCISE

Answer the following questions based on the reading:

1. Why was Ntshebo so concerned about her exams? _____

2. Why is it extremely difficult for Black people to pass government exams?

3. Do you think the Soweto student uprising in 1976 was justified? Why or why not? _____

4. What accomplishments, if any, did the Soweto uprising bring about? _____

5. What did Tshatsinde mean by the statement, "We will remain . . . the people who draw water and cut wood"? _____

6. Why, under the system of apartheid, are Blacks given an inferior education?

7. What do you think might happen if Blacks were given an education equal to that of whites? _____

Working in the Gold Mines

Approximately 500,000 men work in the gold mines of South Africa, which are the richest in the world. The following selection provides a description of work in these gold mines.

We continue on to one of the hostels, the single-sex compounds where virtually all Black miners live for ten or eleven months a year. . . . The place had the . . . regimented feel of an army base. Hundreds of men moved along the paths between the various buildings . . . There was not a single woman in sight. . . .

[We were] led . . . to one of the hostel rooms. It was clean and bright, with ten double bunk-beds lined up along the brick walls. A few curtains had been placed strategically, evidently to provide a little privacy. . . .

We arrived at the immense dining hall just as a section of the day shift poured in. The men moved through the serving line at a dogtrot, stretching out their . . . trays for the food. . . .

In the past ten years, between seven hundred and eight hundred men have died in the mines, and thirty thousand have been injured each year. Such dangerous work is at least partly rewarded in some other countries with high wages. But not in South Africa. In real terms, pay for Black miners remained about the same for six decades, at only about twenty-five dollars a month as late as 1969. Raises in the early seventies brought some improvement, but Black miners in 1982 were still only starting at about a hundred dollars a month. White miners earn more than five and one-half times as much. . . .

The South African government used the pass laws to prevent the workers from bringing their families with them. The resulting single-sex migratory system has served the interests of the mine owners well. The migrant's family remains at home, raising at least some of their food. The mine owners are thus relieved of the need to pay wages high enough to support entire families. The owners also cut costs by not constructing adequate family housing at the mines. . . .

Adapted from: James Worth, *Freedom Rising* (New York: New American Library, 1986), pp. 158-168. Permission pending.

EXERCISE

Answer the following questions based on the reading:

1. Why might Blacks feel that working in the gold mines is like being in the army? _____

2. Why do you suppose that there have been so many deaths and injuries in the gold mines? _____

3. "Unequal pay for equal work"--How does this phrase apply to Black gold miners? _____

4. How do you think that the single-sex migratory system affects the gold miners? _____

5. Why did the South African government establish this system? _____

6. How do you think the single-sex migratory system affects the gold miners' families? _____

C



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