

March 1935
Written before the Native Land
Act was published.

As a result of the enhanced price of gold South Africa's treasury is overflowing. It has been able to pay off its war debt to England, to write off or reduce its loans to drought- & locust-stricken farmers, to restore civil servants' salary cuts, to start an iron industry and to lighten the taxation of its white population.

But what do the natives, who form five-eighths of the whole population, gain by all this prosperity? Very little. They seem almost disregarded or forgotten. Their dinner-times have not been reduced, their wages on the mines have not been scaled up, neither has their condition as far as servants' hours improved, while their crowded reserves and locations, overstocked with scrub cattle, become less fertile year by year.

Prior to Union there were four different governments in South Africa, each jealously holding its own view of the native question and each impatient to force its view on the country as a whole.

After Union General Smuts, when in power, was content to let evolution take its course.

In 1924 General Hertzog, on taking over the reins, said, at Smithfield, that he was going to solve the question, but during his five years of office he did as little as his former political adversary towards a solution.

Now that there is a combined Hertzog-Smuts government it remains to be seen whether a definite native policy will be ^{laid down and} carried out.

General Hertzog wants to take over Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland, partly to get more native land space and partly because he feels uncomfortable in an "independent" South Africa with these native territories in its midst or on its borders, controlled from England.

General Smuts would not only favour taking over these

three native ~~territories~~ areas but would go still further and try to induce Southern Rhodesia to come into Union as well. It is many years since he visited Rhodesia with this object in view ~~but~~ not long ago he sent his trusted lieutenant - General Reid - to Salisbury to renew the invitation ^{which the} ~~the~~ Rhodesians declined, ~~with the~~ The result being that the Union has begun a policy of squeeze in that direction.

At Union in 1910 there was no Statute of Westminster and no thought ^{the later} of ~~the~~ changes ^{in the} of Statute of South Africa. The Imperial Government left the door open for the ~~ultimate~~ ^{the ending} inclusion of Basutoland, Swaziland and Bechuanaland in the Union as it was then, but even in those days insisted that before ~~any change~~ inclusion took place the inhabitants of those three territories should at least have a say in the matter. ^{summits} The status of the Union has altered very considerably since the Imperial Govt laid down those terms.

~~There is no doubt that~~ The natives concerned would have plenty of pertinent questions to ask before being handed over. They would ~~would~~ refer back to the history of how they arrived at their present ^{standing} position in the British Empire. They would want to know what they are going to gain by the change and whether a fair proportion of the abundant revenues of the Union would be spent on them, or whether they might, perhaps, be neglected in this respect as are the natives of the Union. They would also want to be certain about the possibility of the alienation of parts of their land to whites for any purposes and whether other tribes or groups from the Union might be dumped on them.

They would ask questions about rights of appeal, parliamentary representation, ^{powers of chiefs} ~~on~~ ^{citizen} ~~citizen~~ ^{rights} ~~rights~~ ^{privileges} ~~privileges~~ for minerals, taxation, education, change of officials, carrying of passes, liquor, stock, trading, missions and a hundred other points both great and small but all

important to them. There is no doubt that they are, ~~alive~~
~~to the situation~~ and always have been, alive to the situation
 since the days ^{prior to 1908} when ~~the~~ ~~union~~ of the provinces was the cry
 of the "closer union" cry when, ^{in 1908} ~~in 1910~~, the ~~formation~~ of
 the Union became ~~practical~~ ~~feasible~~. The Conference met
 to formulate a scheme which resulted in the Act of Union.
 It was in that year, 1908, that Chief Letsoa and the
 whole Basuto nation petitioned the King that "Basuto land
 may not be included in such Union, but may remain outside
 it" adding ~~that it is the desire of an independent nation~~
~~that the province of~~ The Secretary of State, Lord Curzon,
 in answering the petition assured the Basuto that if a change
 took place their land would be preserved to them.

As outbores
 They are also well

Lately from a different quarter, northern Bechuanaland, Chief
 Tsekeledi of the Bamangwato tribe has also ~~sent~~
 petitioned against inclusion in the a change over.
 aware that safeguards, however strictly drawn up, wear very thin with time.

The Union Government would be in a stronger position if,
 before asking for Basuto land and the two Protectorates, ~~is~~
~~its own house in order~~ ^{it gave} indications that it means
 seriously to tackle its own native question on broader lines
 of progress and by a more sympathetic rule. ~~Before~~
 handing over these ~~two~~ areas the Imperial Government
 may well ask, — Are you quite sure that your own
 house is in order in respect of your own natives?

The Union may ^{reply} that within recent years it has
 made great strides towards giving a helping hand to its
 native population. It will show that it has
 examined its position through a Native Economic
 Commission and is prepared to act; that it is about to
 deal with the question of parliamentary representation of
 natives; that it has established a Native Agricultural
 sub-department to deal with the Reserves; that its native
 natives are well fed, housed & kept in good health;

that it has many years clear record in regard to rebellions or similar upheavals; and that in various minor matters such as the carrying of passes, railway travelling and the care of town natives it has made improvements.

Yet there are more steps which the Union might take to better the lot of its natives.

Admittedly it is difficult, in fact it might be suicidal ~~for any South African~~ for any South African government that we can visualize, to attempt to expropriate farms of white people on a large scale, in order to attempt to provide a fairer division of land between white and black. But something could be done in this direction without raising a storm. It is largely in the Transvaal that the natives feel the pinch for land. There are Government-owned farms, especially in the northern and north-eastern Transvaal unoccupied by whites, which could be made over to the natives. Again, big land companies own stretches of country ^{there} which they do not develop but from which they collect heavy annual ~~rents~~ rents from their native tenants. Many of these particular Transvaal farms are of no great value as white farming propositions, as they are far from railways or in mountainous country, but would be useful for close native occupation. These farms could be expropriated by the government at a fair valuation and made into locations without stirring counter to local sentiment, as the general public has no great sympathy for soulless concerns like land companies. An arrangement might even be made for the companies to retain the mineral rights if their point was considered a hindrance to the transfer. This would not reduce the native land

Land question entirely but would go some way towards it - & be a guarantee of good faith that the Union means to do its best in this direction.

The Native Affairs Department should not be subordinated to the extent it is at present to the Department of Justice. In some farming districts

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The squatting system on farms is too open to abuse. Squatting contracts or agreements are ^{often} ~~usually~~ loose and vague, & they give rise to endless disputes in some parts of the Union which are most difficult for magistrates and native commissioners to decide with equal justice to all.

The whole system ~~is~~ requires to be better regulated.

The vote for native education should be largely increased.

The £170,000 voted in the last Union budget ~~in~~ ^{on} behalf of the Native Development Fund ~~is partly~~ ^{may} it is time, be ~~specifically~~ ^{intended} to be spent ~~on~~ ^{partly} on native education but the whole sum is ~~partly~~ compared with what is ^{required} ~~required~~ ^{to} ~~be~~ ^{done} with the ~~global sum~~ ^{to} ~~directed~~ ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ ^{other} ~~directions~~. Many people

say } grievance.

The native is heavily taxed compared with his wage earning power. He has to pay ~~down~~ the ordinary direct tax and many indirect taxes besides. In days gone by the direct tax may have been intended as a lever to induce.

him to go and work, but nowadays his wants have increased and with them his indiffer-^{ent} taxation, so there is no longer any excuse for ~~the~~^{his} heavy^a ~~taxation~~^{drain}, as he ^{must now} ~~must~~ go out to work ~~is~~ for his living in any case.

The Union should find the screw on ^{all} its towns to clear native shanty areas and ^{to} provide healthy recreation for town natives. This would be synonymous with the lessening of illicit-liquor traffic, ^{the suppression} ~~the abolition~~ of malaita gangs and other evils.

The representation of natives in parliament should be made real & not a sham. The ~~present~~ ^{present} proposal to do is understood that the present proposal is to separate the white from the native vote in the Cape Province, giving, instead, ^{to} the Union natives as a whole, a few ^{special} members specially to represent their interests in the House of Assembly. The further proposal that these particular members should have the right to vote only when matters concerning natives come up for discussion may easily prove as farcical as the present representation of natives in the Upper House when certain Senators have been appointed on account of their ^{special} knowledge of the natives.

The above are a few suggestions how the Union could make up more of its lee way of inaction before asking for the Protectorate. ~~Basutoland~~

~~With~~ ~~Great~~ ~~Britain~~, ~~France~~, ~~Belgium~~ ^{and} ~~Portugal~~ ^{and} ~~Portugal~~ do not seem to have the same fear of competition in regard to their African natives that seems to obsess the Union.

The Union is the main stronghold of the white population of the Continent of Africa & is likely to remain so while its mines hold out & prevent the country from becoming stagnant. That is all the more reason ^{why} ~~that~~ it should lay down a policy that shall can be regarded as an example & guide to the rest of Africa. Not a policy based

up to date,

based on the fear that seems to obsess the mind of
 Mr. Piow but one which is more ~~a~~ ~~less~~
^{more in time with} ~~less~~ ^{the methods of} less antagonistic to the other Powers which are
 interested in this Continent. In fact the Union should
~~be the~~ take the lead & not be the shocking example.
 Till then & till our policy is ~~known~~ ^{widely} known it is better
 that the Protectorates should stand ~~clear~~ apart as
 interested ~~in~~ ~~separate~~ ~~outlook~~.

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