

STRIJDOM'S ELECTION:

"FASCISTS TAKE OVER,"

SAYS A.N.C.

JOHANNESBURG.

THE "fully-fledged fascists" have taken control of the Nationalist Party. That, in the view of the African National Congress, is the meaning of Mr. Strijdom's appointment as Prime Minister. Expressing the very widespread anxiety among all Non-Europeans, as well as considerable sections of the European population, a statement issued by the working committee of the A.N.C. last week reads:

The election of Mr. J. G. Strijdom to the position of Prime Minister is a further confirmation that within the Nationalist Party itself the fully-fledged fascists have taken control.

To the Non-European people of South Africa it is clear that the Strijdom-Verwoerd clique will now intensify its inhuman, draconic measures. We have never been under any illusion about the coming into being of a police state in the land of South Africa. We have warned other sections, and to-day it has been proved. It will be clearer to-day even among Europeans that the election of Strijdom will not only affect Non-Europeans but will mean a step forward in the establishment of the Afrikaner Republic on the pattern of the Hitlerite Republic of Nazi Germany.

Whilst we know that Malan, Havenga and Strijdom stood for one policy and had the same outlook towards the Africans, we nonetheless cannot ignore the degrees of extremism to which the Strijdom-Verwoerd clique aims. We are aware that, apart from intensifying oppression within the Union of South Africa, the demand for the incorporation of the High Commission Territories will be speeded up.

We ask our people to prepare for darker days, to organise and vigorously fight all the evils of apartheid even more under the leadership of our Prime Minister—Strijdom.

WAR ON THE WORKERS

From MICHAEL HARMEL

JOHANNESBURG.

Strijdom's appointment of his brother-in-law, Jan de Klerk, as Minister of Labour is an open declaration of war on the trade union movement. As a founder and originally secretary of the Blanke Werkers Beskermingsbond, de Klerk began his political career as a professional disrupter and splitter of trade unions.

The Blanke Werkers Beskermingsbond (White Workers' Protection League) was set up specifically to bring about Nationalist penetration and control in the trade union movement. Financed by the £10,000 Marais Fund—a foundation established by the will of a wealthy widow to "combat un-Afrikaans influences in the trade union movement"—it set to work systematically to undermine trade unions, slander their leaders and win positions for Nationalist Party nominees.

The main successes of the Bond have been in the Mine Workers' Union, where, with the assistance of the Nationalists, Ellis and his clique gained control; in Pretoria, where it managed to get the former local committee of the Trades and Labour Council to break away to form the "Ko-ordineerende Raad" and in the Germiston branch of the Garment Workers' Union. It is also active in numerous other industries, in both the Transvaal and the Cape,

in the leather, building and other trades.

Die Transvaler, Johannesburg Nationalist newspaper controlled by Strijdom and Verwoerd, wrote last week:

"He (de Klerk) was co-founder and secretary of the Blanke Werkers Beskermingsbond, an organisation which in the years before the general election of 1948 prepared the foundation for the (Nationalist) organisation of the White workers of the Witwatersrand. Among other things, this resulted in the domination of the Mine Workers' Union by the Afrikaner workers and the establishment of nationalist ("volks-georiënteerde") trade unions on the Rand, in Pretoria and also in certain places in the Cape."

SLANDER, RACIALISM

Despite stout support from the Government, in the shape of the banning from trade unions of many anti-Nationalist leaders, the Bond's tactics of unbridled slanders and shameless racialism have not succeeded in bringing any great return for the large sums of money lavished on them, not only from the Marais Fund but also reinforced from the substantial funds of the Mine Workers' Union.

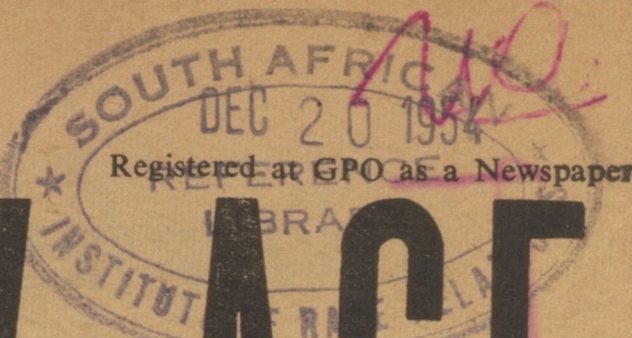
These efforts, however, it must be anticipated, will be greatly intensified with de Klerk at the head of the Labour Department. If free trade unions are to survive in South Africa they will have to clear the decks for militant and determined resistance to the pincer movement now clearly threatening, from the Department on one side and from subsidised Nationalist disruption on the other.

The first essential will be to drop the trend towards appeasement of apartheid and the wishful dreams of co-operation with the Government which so markedly manifested themselves at the "Unity" conferences and the formation of the Trade Union Council this year. That way lies defeat and disaster for the movement.

The new Minister of Labour is certain to insist upon forcing Schoeman's Industrial Conciliation Bill through and to implement vigorously the Native Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act. Both pieces of legislation are directed against the trade union movement as a whole. More and more, trade unionists are beginning to realise how the latter Act continually and directly menaces registered as well as African trade unions. Already many unions in industries where there is a large African labour force are finding that the Native Labour Act directly interferes with their negotiations with the employers. The I.C. Bill will complete the programme.

Unless both African and non-African unions are able speedily and effectively to combine their forces in an all-out campaign of resistance and mass organisation of the unorganised millions, a Nazi-type "Labour Front" will be erected on the ruins of the movement.

SOUTHERN EDITION



NEW AGE

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Regina Brooks and her daughter Tandi.

Huge Crowds at Regina Brookes Trial

Huge crowds have gathered to hear the case of Regina Brooks and Kumalo, who have been convicted under the Immorality Act.

Police have had to be called in to disperse the crowds that packed the courtroom and corridors, jammed the streets, collected bail money as a hat was passed round—and even bought parcels of rice (to be used as confetti) in case the couple were acquitted. Many among Regina's adopted people call her the "African daughter-in-law." The Europeans, she said in her evidence, spurn her. But, she added, she is welcome to live with the Africans, who sympathise with her in her plight.

I spent an afternoon last week talking to this 22-year-old European, who has a sentence of four months' imprisonment hanging over her. So, too, has Kumalo, the African police sergeant. While we talked Tandi, Regina's 17-month-old little girl, who in court had perched on the ledge of the witness box and imitated

the gestures of the prosecutor questioning her mother, played happily on the floor with a lucky-packet.

Regina Brooks is a frank woman, bewildered and shaken by the events of the past weeks but not broken by them.

To more than one horrified European she is unnatural, criminal. The court said she would have to be rehabilitated. It is this rehabilitation about which Regina seems to feel a little hopeless.

About Tandi she is anxious. When she was granted bail attempts were made to accommodate her in an institution and to put Tandi in another place. An orphanage was suggested for the babe of 17 months who plays so happily about her mother's skirts and on the floor. Regina fiercely resisted all attempts to separate her from Tandi.

For the moment they are together. Her appeal is pending, and it may be several months before it comes before court.

RUTH FIRST.

EDITORIAL

LISTEN, STRIJDOM!

STRIJDOM, the man who inherits the hob-nailed boots of the Prime Minister of South Africa, inherits with them the title—Most Hated Man in Africa.

It matters very little whether the man in those boots is Strijdom or Havenga—or Strauss. South Africa's Prime Ministers are not so universally despised because they are personally bad but because they stand for apartheid. And apartheid means oppression; apartheid means inequality; apartheid means inhumanity.

The frightened English Press has thrashed about for gentlemanly things to say about Strijdom. New Age cannot be any less the gentleman.

Mr. Strijdom, we wish you the great future you deserve.

We hope that you maintain your good health and remain in office long enough to hand over the reins of office to Luthuli, or Sisulu or Kotane—the men who are most likely to succeed you when all South Africans have the vote.

We hope that you develop the broadness of vision which will make it a pleasure for you to witness the inevitable conversion of the Cabinet of South Africa into one composed of Africans, Europeans, Indians and Coloureds in the place of its present limited group of Afrikaner Broederbonders and your relatives.

But we rather doubt that you will develop the human characteristics required before you will be able to welcome with all your heart the forward march to freedom of the people of South Africa.

We rather think that you will try very hard to stop that forward march by attempting to use oppression even greater and fiercer than that of the past.

Such an increase in oppression would only be a sign of the desperation of the small group which is determined to retain power in South Africa. It would be only a further sign of the madness to which the supporters of apartheid are driven, a madness which leads steadily to their own undoing.

Listen, Strijdom, the people of South Africa will not be intimidated. Every new repressive move will be met by a fresh advance to freedom, towards the new age in South Africa.

It is not the people who are afraid. It is those who have chosen a man like you as their Prime Minister who are afraid. If it is the onward march of freedom they fear, they have good reason to be afraid.

TARGET: Up To 8 Pages in January

Our friends in England have certainly been busy over the last few weeks—another £7 15s. arrived in this week's post from that country, with a promise that more will be forwarded soon. Living in a comparatively free political climate, our readers over there perhaps see more clearly than we do how rapidly the political situation in South Africa is deteriorating.

By the end of January, when Parliament will be in full swing again, the situation is likely to worsen. The Strijdom-Verwoerd-Swart outfit will do their very best to move us even farther

along the road to a fascist republic. Every weapon the democratic movement possesses will have to be used to the full if we are to maintain the few liberties we still enjoy.

Amongst those weapons is our paper, New Age. At whatever cost we must bring it up to eight-page strength not later than the middle of next month. We shall not be able to cover the parliamentary scene adequately with only four pages.

Prepare now to defend your country from those who wish to destroy it by sending New Age a donation to-day!

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