

PETITION FOR PARADISE

Four Steps In Nat. Policy

NOW COMETH ECONOMIC APARTHEID—

BUT WHAT IS IT?

IN the debate on the Group Areas Bill in May last, Dr. Donges, Minister of the Interior, referred to a petition which was signed by more than 230,000 people and presented to Parliament in 1939. He quoted this petition in support of his argument that the Nationalist Party was legislating in accordance with popular desires.

It asked:

- “ . . . that legislation shall be passed without delay
- (1) To prohibit all mixed marriages between Europeans and non-Europeans;
 - (2) To make punishable as an offence all miscegenation between Europeans and non-Europeans;
 - (3) To put a stop to European and non-European living together in the same residential areas;
 - (4) To carry out economic as well as political segregation between Europeans and non-Europeans.”

Dr. Donges declared that his Government had met the first two demands by the passing of the Mixed Marriages Act and the Immorality (Amendment) Act. He said that the Group Areas Act would give effect to the third demand; and he stated that the fourth demand (economic as well as political apartheid) “must still be done.”

Political Apartheid

The Government has signified its determination to proceed with legislation to place Coloured voters on a separate roll. This will certainly be done during the coming session of Parliament, and will satisfy the so-called desire for “political apartheid.”

In this regard, Dr. Donges made a point of telling Parliament that he had looked at the Petition at a page showing the names of signatories in the constituency of Major Van der Byl (Green Point), and, he said, “I am quite sure that there are members sitting on the Opposition benches to-day whose names appear in this petition.”

Perhaps it is his intention to seek such names for use when he introduces his Bill to remove the Coloureds from the Common Roll. It may be that many people supported the Petition in 1939 without knowing or caring what its full implications might be.

To-day, with the threat to diminish the political rights of the Coloured people, the phrase “political segregation” conveys a meaning that none thought of in 1939.

Economic Apartheid

After dealing with the Coloured Vote, there will remain only one last demand of the Petition which remains to be fulfilled. That is economic apartheid.

There can be no doubt whatsoever that this Petition referred to by Dr. Donges was inspired by the Nationalists as part of their political scheming.

One must look to their official policy in order to discover what the Nats. mean by economic apartheid. Does it mean that the different racial groups must not operate on the same labour market? Does it mean that certain industries must be reserved for one particular racial group? Does it mean that European and non-European must not work in the same factories or warehouses? Does it mean that non-Europeans must be paid lower rates than Europeans?

The official policy of the Nationalist Party reveals that it can mean one or all of these things. For example, they talk of

“an equitable quota system and segregation policy in the provision of employment for both Europeans and non-Europeans.”

On the other hand, in dealing with the non-European “as an economic factor,” they declare:

“ . . . in their (the Natives’) own interests, and with a view to promoting harmonious co-operation with the European section, their advancement must only take place after due consideration of the essential social divisions obtaining between the races.”

In defining the role of the worker in the ultimate Nationalist State, the policy is based upon the following principles:

“ . . . account must be taken of the responsible and leading position of the European section, in addition to the difference in standards of living between the respective groups of non-Europeans.

“In employment in industry the principle of separation between European and non-European must be taken into consideration where practicable . . . if it should be considered possible and desirable, certain stated industries or fields of employment may be reserved for certain stated groups.”

Productivity And

Apartheid

Anyone with the slightest practical experience in industry knows that “apartheid” will be achieved only at grave cost. Even the architects of Nationalist policy realised that fact, judging from the phrasing of their policy, as outlined above. It will be noted that they say “should it be considered possible to desirable,” and “where practicable.”

In effect, they know this is a lot of tommyrot, but they desire to have the power to interfere with those industries where they may impose certain quotas and regulations in order to further their own propaganda.

The test of sincerity lies in the fact that if apartheid is necessary and desirable in one industry it must be so in all industries. For example, if it is objectionable and undesirable for Europeans in the engineering industry to work with non-Europeans, surely the same must apply in the printing industry, or any other industry for that matter.

In practice, South African workshops are manned by Europeans and non-Europeans, each being complementary to the other, although the majority of the higher grades and skilled operations are performed by the Europeans. Very few workshops would be able to operate without the non-European, especially as the European worker in South Africa has grown to depend upon his Native assistant.

F.C.I. Rejoinder

When the Minister of Labour, Mr. Ben Schoeman, told a Nationalist Party gathering at Newlands in October, 1948, that priorities for building permits would be given to industrialists who desired to make alterations in their factories to bring about apartheid, the Federated Chamber of Industries pointed out that increased production demanded priority and not apartheid.

At the present time, the Minister of Labour is having talks with leading trades unionists on the important and vexed question of wage incentives. He is a firm believer in the incentive system as the means to achieve increased production and a higher national income.

To be consistent, Mr. Schoeman should also stop to consider the enormous cost of industrial apartheid and its possible effect upon the national income.

In the meantime, South Africa awaits further news about the Government’s plan to apply “economic apartheid.” In the national interest, there should be an early elucidation of its meaning, as understood by the Government, as well as some indication as to their plans to apply it.

XMAS IN THE TOILS OF LOUWCOL

★ 22/12/50 "LET'S DANCE AND SING AND MAKE GOOD CHEER,
FOR CHRISTMAS COMES BUT ONCE A YEAR."
ARE WE HAVING THE TIME OF OUR LIVES?

There was a time in our lives when even the poor could enjoy Christmas. That was when the pound was worth about twenty shillings. Of course, wages were not as high then as they are to-day, but at least the worker was able to get some sort of value for his hard-earned money.

I remember some very happy Christmasses as a child, when my parents had little or nothing to spend on presents for their children. My father, like all other skilled artisans, earned £6 a week, and was laid off without pay over the Christmas holidays. Most workers dreaded the coming of Christmas, because it meant hard times, even though they had scraped and saved throughout the year to provide some

sort of a merry Christmas for their families.

BY

ALEX. HEPPLER, M.P.

Times have changed. After many hard and bitter struggles our fathers succeeded in winning many benefits for our generation — paid holidays, higher wages and greater security.

We now take these things for granted and are allowing ourselves to be cheated out of them. Because the pay envelope of today is fatter than that of our fathers, we don't stop to ask ourselves whether it is worth as much.

The capitalist has given with one hand and is grabbing back with the other. Money and jobs are plentiful. But the money is a delusion. Every day the pound becomes worth less and less, while our Minister of Economic Affairs makes fine speeches and bragging excuses. He not only admits that the Cost of Living has gone up; but says that it will go higher. Meanwhile he and his colleagues have pegged the Cost of Living allowances of the civil servants.

In practice this means that the salaries of public servants have been reduced.

Wages and Profits

Our Nationalist Government, "neither capitalist nor communist," has made no move to limit profits. That would be an attack on private initiative and the profit system, which they are determined to protect at all costs. Despite import control and other handicaps, it is surprising how many public companies have not only maintained their profits, but have even managed to make that little bit more. Private companies have also had an excellent year.

It is very good for South Africa to see progress and rapid development of our industries. We would also like to see progress for those who toil in the factories and shops and who help their employers to success. It is a bad government that allows the rich to grow richer at the expense of the poor.

What Sort of Christmas Present?

In these difficult times of rising prices everyone is faced with the problem of what to give for Christmas. If one decides, as many workers have done, to give "sensible and practical" presents, the prospect is gloomy.

Take clothing, for example. Flannel trousers cost £4 to £5 a pair; sports coats £5 to £8 each; shirts 30s. to 50s.; ties (in the usual horrible patterns) 4s. to 17s. 6d.

Girls' and women's dresses cost more than ever before. If one looks to novelties, one discovers how really high prices can be. As far as toys are concerned, good quality articles are beyond the purse of the average citizen; most prices suggest dealings in gold.

The Christmas Dinner

There will be a little whisky for the lucky ones this year (at 26s. a bottle) and other liquors at the usual prices. Turkey costs 3s. 9d. a lb., ham 4s., and other adornments of the Xmas table have also become luxuries. Few households can aspire to such extravagance this year. For the majority it must be an austerity fare.

The Christmas Spirit

It goes without saying that everyone will make the best of it and take their pleasures where they may. A jaunt in the old car can be pleasant, even by using petrol at the special Xmas rate of 3s. 2d. a gallon.

"Christmas comes but once a year" will be the motto as usual and the hangovers will be left for the

WHO GOT THE "FAIR SHARES"

29/12/50
IN 1950?

BY
ALEX HEPPLER, M. P.

People's Benefits Were A Higher Cost of Living

IN his broadcast New Year message at the beginning of 1950 the Prime Minister, Dr. Malan, said: "... greater prosperity is already coming into view — a well-being in which all sections and interests will have a fair share ..."

The year has now ended and we can look back and see how all sections and interests have fared in the light of this promise. For most businesses it has not been a bad year, despite import control. Big business made big profits, some of them even more than before. An expanding export trade has helped to build South Africa's sterling and dollar reserves. According to leading Nationalist authorities, South Africa turned the corner in 1950, in so far as her finances are concerned.

But what of the majority of the people, those who work for wages and salaries and who do not share in the profits? Devaluation has brought with it soaring prices, to say nothing of the never-ending lectures and speeches from Mr. Eric Louw, Minister of Economic Affairs.

SOARING COST OF LIVING

The cost of living has risen steadily throughout the year, the official Index climbing from 153.6 in November, 1949, to 162.5 in November, 1950.

While a small increase in the cost-of-living allowances of workers was gazetted during the year, it bore no proportion to the steep rises in commodity prices. The Government excluded itself from granting relief to its own employees by pegging the cost-of-living allowances of civil servants until March 1951.

Tenants throughout the Union received as their "fair share" a change in the Rents Act which has landed many on the streets and cost thousands of others higher rents.

Mineworkers, despite the mighty and unofficial leadership of Dr. Albert Hertzog and the frightening array of Nationalist M.P.s as honorary members of their Union, failed to get its second instalment of 115 per cent. increase in wages.

PROMISES LIKE PIECRUSTS

When Dr. Malan promised his "fair shares for all sections and interests," did he have any practical scheme in mind that would guarantee the fulfillment of the festive season and, like most other people, quick to make New Year resolutions and promises?

An experienced politician like Dr. Malan should know that "fair sharing" is impossible under our capitalist economic system. Capitalism, which his party upholds as its main plank, can only offer riches for the rich and poverty for the poor. In present-day society, where profit is the incentive, rugged individuals come out on top. The mass of the people are deluded with promises of better days. These promises are cheaper and easier to give than material benefits.

WHAT IS THE PROMISE OF 1951?

It is customary to look on the bright side of life when we say good-bye to the old year. We all desperately hope that next year will be better—but it seldom is. We accept all sorts of New Year resolutions seriously and condone the early breaking of them with all good humour. Likewise, we accept New Year messages and promises of brighter times in the same spirit.

The Nationalist Party should find no difficulty in promising South Africa great things for 1951. Most people, however, would be satisfied with a simple pledge from the Government that drastic steps will be taken to keep the cost of living down, or, alternatively, a pledge that the real wages of the people shall be raised to keep in line with higher living costs.

South African Labour And The Socialist Objective

By ALEX HEPPLÉ, M.P.

[To give the Labour Party an opportunity of putting its views before the public "The Natal Mercury" places this space at its disposal once a month. "The Natal Mercury" does not necessarily associate itself with the views expressed. This is the tenth article.]

"SOCIALISM is not charity nor loving kindness, nor sympathy with the poor, nor popular philanthropy with its something-for-nothing almsgiving and mendicity, but the economist's hatred of waste and disorder, the aesthete's hatred of ugliness and dirt, the lawyer's hatred of injustice, the doctor's hatred of disease, the saint's hatred of the seven deadly sins."

—George Bernard Shaw.

All those who become disgusted with the unending miseries of capitalist society must eventually turn to Socialism as the only alternative. In all walks of life we are confronted with the evils of a social order which allows a few people to live in luxury while the majority struggle for existence, constantly haunted by the fear of unemployment and poverty; a social order which allows surpluses and wasteful competition or shortages and prohibitive prices.

Unplanned capitalist society creates large armies of poor and endeavours to salve its social conscience by providing a few charitable organisations to help the needy. Not only are these charities unable to meet the demand for charity, but they demoralise the poor into cringing and clamouring beggars, who eventually lose all independence and freedom of thought. Even in the exercise of the franchise they fear to offend.

The Coming of Socialism

THERE can be no doubt that capitalism has failed and more and more people throughout the world are turning to the planned society of Socialism. It would be extraordinary if South Africa escaped this trend. Although the development of the African continent has barely begun and nine-tenths of its people still live in feudal conditions, great changes are already taking place. Industrialisation is proceeding rapidly, especially in the Union and the Rhodesias. This brings into being large numbers of industrial workers of all races. These industrial workers will have a marked influence on political trends in Africa.

In the Union industrial workers are becoming a powerful force in politics. Not only in their own interests but in the interests of orderly development is it essential that these workers should have a stake in the future of South Africa. However, only a small section of these workers enjoy the franchise. Most of them, being non-Europeans, have no vote.

It is necessary, therefore, for all Europeans who talk of progress, increased production and social justice, to play some practical part in moulding the future. On this point there is always some confusion as to the role of a Socialist Party in South Africa.

Socialism For South Africa

IT is often said that there is no room in South Africa for a Labour Party. Some say that the Labour Party speaks only for the minority group of White workers who have the vote and is therefore not a true Socialist Party. Others complain that the Labour Party too often champions the cause of the non-European worker and therefore forfeits the right to represent the European worker. Neither of these statements is true.

The Labour Party fights in the interests of all those who suffer under our present system. It would be false to its principles if it supported exploitation of any group of people. Clever propaganda against the Labour Party by its opponents puzzles would-be supporters; sometimes the Party is charged with being too "Communist" and sometimes with being allied (and bound) to a capitalist party.

It is surprising how readily such contradictory accusations are accepted in many quarters. The basic principle of the South African Labour Party is Socialism. The objective is a society in which production will be for use and not for profit and the immediate policy of the Labour Party is based upon this objective.

Today's Needs

LIKE Socialists the world over, the South African Labour Party is faced with the task of educating people in an understanding of Socialism. A planned democratic socialist society can abolish misery and want and ensure that all will work and give their best for the common

good. But until Labour rules and is able to set in motion the machinery to attain these ends, it must play its part in the problems of today. It has a role to play in present-day society.

However benevolent capitalism may become, it is incapable of ridding itself of its economic ills and diseases. Insecurity, poverty, unemployment, fear, racialism and dozens of other evils are chronic to a system where private gain is the only incentive.

The task of the Labour Party today is to force the pace of reform and to curb the greed and power of vested interests. It can restrain those who seek to exploit the underprivileged. In fulfilling this role the Labour Party must speak for all the people. It cannot demand a better world for the Poor White and deny it to the Poor Black.

Economic Justice

ALTHOUGH the Labour Party believes that it is in the interests of racial peace that there should be social and residential separation, it demands economic justice for all sections. It stands by the principle of equal pay for equal work and will resist all attempts to use the non-European as a source of cheap labour. It opposes those who would lower the standards of the European worker on the pretext of creating opportunities for the non-European worker. At the same time, it insists that there should be full opportunity for the non-European to learn trades and acquire skills.

Labour is against all policies which aim at retarding the progress of the Native. This is reflected in Labour's attitude to recent legislation. It demanded not only the continuation of school feeding for Native as well as European children, but also an extension of the scheme, because hungry children cannot learn.

Social Security

LABOUR opposed the exclusion of Natives from the Unemployment Insurance Act because it firmly believes that all workers are entitled to this meagre form of social security. It fought against certain changes in the Rents Act, because it knew that these changes would benefit rich landlords at the expense of poor tenants.

The Labour Party constantly fights for drastic steps to reduce the cost of living, because every time commodity prices rise the wages and salaries of all workers, White and Black, are automatically reduced. It demands steeply graded taxation in order that the rich may return a large slice of their profits to the people who helped to make those profits.

Expediency or Courage ?

THE Labour Party knows that it must often take a stand that is not immediately popular, that it must lead public opinion rather than timorously follow it. There are serious political risks in this—risks which perhaps other parties would not take. But the Labour Party must take such risks if it is to be true to its Socialist objective. It dare not depend upon adroit political manoeuvring to win votes.

The Labour Party has had setbacks in the past and will have more in the future but there can be no doubt that South Africa needs a strong Labour Party. The false prosperity of the war and post-war years has delayed the inevitable march towards democratic Socialism in South Africa. Instead, we have earned the victory of the Nationalist Party, which hopes to solve the economic ills of capitalism by the machinery of the fascist Corporate State, ruled by their Central Economic Council, controlled trades unions, and State partnership with private enterprise.

This system depends upon compulsion and not co-operation. It relies upon disrupted trades unions, dragooned workers and frightened people for its retention of power.

Only a true Socialist Party, pledged to change the economic system, can offer any real hope to all the people of South Africa. Those who talk of a better world, increased productivity, social justice, and a mighty South Africa cannot stand aside and criticise. They must play a part in the fight for these things.

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MR. HAVENGA'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE

Admirable Sentiments; But Shall We Practice What We Preach

★
BY
ALEX HEPPLER, M. P.
★

MR. N. C. HAVENGA, Minister of Finance, who deputised for the Prime Minister in delivering the Government's New Year message to the people of South Africa, voiced some laudable sentiments.

Most outstanding of these was his plea: "Let each one of us resolve that exploitation and incitement of racial feelings are a crime toward both our people and our country."

That is something all right-thinking South Africans will support. Some of these right-thinking South Africans are Members of Parliament, who, at the present moment, are facing the prospect of a Bill to reduce the status of the Coloured people. Mr. Havenga and Dr. Malan have decided that the existing rights of the Coloured people must be taken away, and that legislation will be enacted in the coming session of Parliament to place Coloured voters on a separate roll.

Such legislation, in the opinion of these M.P.s., falls in the category of "exploitation and incitement of racial feelings," and would be in conflict with Mr. Havenga's New Year message.

There are many South Africans who agree with Mr. Havenga's New Year sentiments, but wonder what appeal they may have to many members of the Government party. For instance, there is Mr. Van den Heever, Nationalist M.P. for Pretoria Central, who recently objected to the cost-of-living allowances for the lowest-paid workers, on the grounds that most of those workers were Natives. "This is not fair to Europeans," declared Mr. Van den Heever. Will he now retract, as a gesture to his Parliamentary leader, and as a gesture of goodwill?

Free Development

Mr. Havenga also said: "Let us accept as a cornerstone of our South African nationhood the free development of Europeans and non-Europeans in their own spheres."

Naturally, one does not expect the Deputy Prime Minister to expand upon this subject in a goodwill message. However, it would be wise if he or the Prime Minister would take an early opportunity to explain what is meant by "free development of Europeans and non-Europeans in their own spheres."

As our Minister of Finance, Mr. Havenga is constantly faced with the problems of the nation's economic health. He is presumably well informed on the matters of production and production costs. He himself has repeatedly appealed to the people to produce more and to raise their efficiency. He knows

that industrialists are perturbed by the Native policy of the Nationalists, insofar as it affects the Native in industry. Apartheid, labour quotas and other threatened restrictions are serious handicaps to maximum efficiency and maximum production.

If the Minister of Native Affairs has understood what he has seen on his travels through the Native townships, and if he has taken seriously what he has been told by Native workers, he could impress upon Mr. Havenga that the majority of urban Native workers are living in conditions of hopelessness.

The constant whining of the Nationalists over criticism of their policies has surely infected our Minister of Finance. He included in his New Year message the appeal: "Let each one of us at all times be prepared to defend and protect South Africa's good name and honour against attacks from within and without."

It is high time that Mr. Havenga and his colleagues realised that South Africa's good name and honour are vastly different from

the name and honour of the Nationalist Party. When South Africa is attacked because of the policy of the Nats., and the laws of a Nationalist government, does the Government expect all South Africans to throw honour aside and to say that wrong is right?

South Africa's good name is not something created by the present Government; it has been moulded by those who went before; it has a lot for which we can be proud and a lot for which we can be ashamed. But history will show that the record of the present Government has added little to the prestige and credit of the country.

If, however, the Government lives up to the high sounding sentiments of its own New Year message, it can change the present course of events and make South Africa "a nation which will not only win and hold the love of its own children, but also the respect of the outside world."

LABOUR'S PLAN TO FIGHT THE COST OF LIVING

U.P. Elements that Snipe at Labour

THE Fortieth Annual Conference of the South African Labour Party, which was held last week-end in Johannesburg, concerned itself chiefly with the economic crisis of soaring living costs and the best way to defeat the reactionary policies of the Nationalist Party.

There were many resolutions dealing with the cost-of-living, cost-of-living allowances and high prices. Delegates protested against the failure of the Government to halt the rise in living costs and to spread the burden over the whole community. It was asserted that the worker was being made to shoulder the entire burden, while the rich were not only escaping, but even making bigger profits than ever before.

The Seven-Point Plan to solve the problem of living costs, which was unanimously adopted at last year's Conference at Durban, was re-affirmed. This plan provided for:—

1. The consolidation of cost-of-living allowances and basic wages.
2. Increased subsidies on food-stuffs.
3. Revision of the present system of marketing and distribution to eliminate the many agencies between producer and consumer.
4. Controlled rents at rates that will reduce the present high-rent structure in South Africa.
5. A Cost-of-Living Index that will truly reflect living costs.
6. An increase of 10 per cent. in all wages and salaries.
7. The fixing of profits at pre-war levels.

The Party's public representatives were directed to fight for the implementation of these demands at every opportunity.

Defence of Democracy

Once again the rank and file of the Party raised the question of "pacts and alliances" with other political parties. There has always been a strong body of opinion against any sort of entanglement with Labour's political opponents. Some of the old stalwarts remember the disastrous end to Labour's pact with the Nationalists a quarter of a century ago. Others saw in political arrangements the steady decline in enthusiasm and a weakening of party branches.

It was said that Labour was being destroyed by its own political allies, and delegates severely criticised certain elements in the U.P. who were constantly "sniping" at the Labour Party; they also accused some of their own members of being too easily influenced by the U.P.

It was quite clear that most of the arguments were based upon the wrong idea that there was a pact between the Labour Party and the U.P. Perhaps that is because of clever propaganda designed to discredit the Labour Party.

After it had been emphasised that there had been an "electoral agreement" between the two parties at the last general election, and not a pact, Conference was able to agree to a resolution which said: "While realising that the interests of the South African people and their democratic rights will be best served by building a powerful, independent South African Labour Party, Conference calls upon the liberty-loving people of South Africa of all political parties, and in the trade union movement, to fight for a truly democratic South Africa, and determinedly to oppose all reactionary measures of the Nationalist Government."

Conference unanimously acclaimed this resolution — but it offered no suggestions as to how it could be made effective. It now rests with the National Executive Council to take the necessary steps to rally support and give practical meaning to these sentiments.

To mark its Fortieth Annual



MR. ALEX. HEPPLER, M.P.



Sabra Looks at the Native Industrial Worker

AND ABANDONS REALISM FOR THE DREAM OF APARTHEID

BY
ALEX. HEPPLER, M.P.

THE second annual conference of the South African Bureau of Racial Affairs (SABRA) was held in Pretoria last week. Its chief topic for discussion was "The Native in South African Industry." There were addresses by Professor J. L. Sadie, of Stellenbosch University; Mr. C. W. Prinsloo, of Pretoria non-European Affairs Department; Mr. R. Wronsky, Assistant Director of Native Labour; Dr. F. J. van Biljon, Under-Secretary for Agriculture, and others.

Arising from these addresses and subsequent discussions, the Conference adopted a number of interesting resolutions. Before dealing with these resolutions it is necessary to know something about SABRA.

New Approach to Race Relations

In August, 1947, two Stellenbosch professors, Dr. B. I. C. van Eeden and Mr. N. J. Olivier, decided that it was essential for South Africa to have a new kind of Institute of Race Relations — one that would serve to approach racial questions from a viewpoint directly opposed to the usual "liberalism."

This new Institute would base its approach to the Native question on Apartheid. It was officially formed in September 1948 under the name of the South African Bureau of Racial Affairs (SABRA). Among its foundation members were Dr. T. E. Donges, Minister of the Interior, Mr. J. H. Viljoen, M.P. (now Minister of Mines, Education, Arts and Sciences), Dr. N. Diederichs, M.P., Mr. W. de Wet Nel, M.P., of the Native Affairs Commission, Dr. William Nicol, Administrator of the Transvaal, and Dr. W. W. M. Eiselen, now Secretary for Native Affairs.

The Bureau declared that it would be above party politics and aimed at "the scientific study of racial matters and the promotion

of good relations between the various race groups in South Africa." It also promised to explain to South Africa and the outside world the elementary facts in connection with race matters, as well as the implications and application of the policy of Apartheid.

At the first annual conference of SABRA, held in Cape Town in February, 1950, Dr. E. G. Jansen, who was then Minister of Native Affairs, declared: "SABRA is a new organisation consisting of seekers after a just solution of South Africa's racial problems, who are not possessed with the liberalistic idea of equality."

Decision First, Research Afterwards

Having decided upon the answer to South Africa's racial problems, SABRA has now proceeded with its research and the formulating of its reports to prove its answer. It is finding the task a difficult one. There are signs that many obvious facts are being ignored or discarded, and that SABRA offers the same solution to problems as those who do no research and are guided by their instincts.

For example, SABRA says that Natives should be trained to build their own houses in their own areas. So does the Nationalist Party. During last Session of Parliament, the Minister of Labour, Mr. Ben Schoeman, introduced a

Bill along these lines and the measure may be proceeded with during the present Session. The question is whether this Bill is drawn to provide for the training of Native building artisans, or to prevent Natives from intruding upon the preserves of the white worker. Mr. Schoeman, and other Cabinet Ministers, have advanced both reasons to different audiences.

Why does SABRA advocate the training of Native artisans? Do they advocate civilised rates of pay for such Natives? Perhaps the answer can be found in another resolution taken at the Conference. It declares that Native houses should be planned so as to conform as closely as possible to the traditions and culture of the Natives.

This can mean only that SABRA believes there must be no progress for the Native, that he must exist in primitive conditions.

Modern European civilisation has discovered the benefits of town planning and minimum standards for dwellings. To this end, South Africa has laws which prescribe lighting, sanitation, drainage, and ventilation of premises for human occupation. These laws were born of tragic experience in congested urban areas throughout the world. In the interests of public health and well-being they are strictly applied.

Native Urban Housing

SABRA's demand that Native urban housing should "conform to the traditions and culture of the Natives" is a demand for windowless huts and primitive kraals, without sanitation or modern conveniences. Such dwellings have served in rural areas, where the wide, open spaces have counteracted most of the bad effects of such places. It is hardly believable that SABRA's research scientists can advocate that any urban community, whatever their colour may be, should revert to conditions of semi-barbarism.

Does SABRA believe that the common pot is superior to separate eating utensils? Or that waterborne sewerage breaks down the "traditions and culture" of the Natives? It would be interesting to know the specific reasons for preferring houses of a tribal pattern for Natives, while applying strict laws relating to the construction of houses for the Europeans.

(To be continued next week.)

SABRA AND THE NATIVE INDUSTRIAL WORKER

[Continued From Last Week]

AT ITS RECENT CONFERENCE, THE SOUTH AFRICAN BUREAU OF RACIAL AFFAIRS PASSED THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:

"Recognising that the establishment of Native trade unions might be necessary in the Native Areas, the Bureau nevertheless is strongly opposed to the recognition of Native trade unions in European areas as a serious threat to sound relations between the Natives and Europeans in the Union and a possible cause for serious disturbances in the labour force of the country."

This is a remarkable decision for a responsible organisation to take, especially when that organisation professes to aim "at the scientific study of racial matters and the promotion of good relations between the various race groups in South Africa." It reads more like the official dogma of the Nationalist Party than the findings of serious research workers. In the absence of evidence or reasoning to substantiate this dogma, SABRA condemns itself. Further declarations of this nature will earn for SABRA the reputation of being just another "front" for prejudice and discrimination, operating under high-sounding aims and objects.

Why is Sabra Against Trade Unions?

It will be observed that the resolution says that "while Native trade unions might be necessary in Native areas, the Bureau is strongly opposed to the recognition of Native trade unions in European areas."

An alarming feature of SABRA's resolution is its reference to "serious threats" and "serious disturbances." SABRA should explain what they have in mind. These vague and sinister phrases are suggestive of the rabble-rouser rather than of the scientist. As a responsible organisation, SABRA should say why the recognition of Native trade unions "would be a serious threat to sound relations between the Natives and the Europeans in the Union."

It is obvious that legally recognised Native trade unions would be a threat to avaricious employers. It is obvious, too, that they would be a serious threat to the cheap-labour policy which has cost South Africa so dearly. On the other hand, they would not be a serious threat to sound and orderly industrial development; nor would they be a threat to the living standards of the European worker. On the contrary, they would open the gate to better living for everyone.

SABRA revealed some of the background to its thinking in another resolution, which called for "the establishment of an inter-departmental committee of Native Affairs, Agriculture, Justice and Economic Affairs, to co-ordinate and serve Native Labour needs of different industries." No mention is made of the Department of Labour, which should be the principal party to all matters affecting and relating to the employment of workers.

The pointed exclusion of the Department of Labour exposes an attitude towards the Native worker in conflict with economic conditions in South Africa today. This resolution postulates the permanent serfdom of the Native. It infers that Native workers are to be gathered and distributed, collected and shared like chattels, in order "to serve the needs of different industries." There is a complete absence of any reference to human needs.

Such an attitude is one of the causes of racial friction. If SABRA really means to make a serious contribution "for the promotion of good relations between the various race groups in South Africa," it must get away from these typically political declarations.

SABRA was expected to provide South Africa with scientific data and evidence supporting the policy of Apartheid. Instead, it appears to be busy dishing up prejudice under the guise of reason.

This follows the line of policy, advocated by the Nationalist Party and approved by SABRA, that there should be separate and different development and cultures for the races in South Africa. This resolution is an endeavour to apply that policy to industrial workers. But can it work? Only at the expense of the worker.

Obviously the scientists of SABRA have not found time to study the history of trade unionism, nor to examine its strides in recent years. If they had done so, they would know that repression of workers always leads to social upheavals.

To deny workers, whatever their race or colour, the right of banding themselves together in trade unions, is the surest way of creating a revolutionary spirit amongst them. Trade unions are organisations of workers, joined together to protect their interests, to bargain for higher wages and better conditions, for defence against exploitation, and to provide for certain benefits, and for a measure of social security.

If SABRA believes that such organisations "might be necessary in Native areas" but are a "serious threat" in European areas, they should give their reasons for that belief.

This is a simple matter of economics. In modern capitalist society the relationship between employer and employee is on a strictly business basis. The legal recognition of trade unions has become an accepted fact throughout the civilised world. Collective bargaining is preferred to class war. The tragic events of 1913, 1914 and 1922, involving European workers, are still fresh in our memories. They brought the downfall of the Smuts Government in 1924; they also brought the Industrial Conciliation Act, securing important legal rights for workers.

This legal machinery for dealing with industrial disputes is considered to be of great value in preserving peace and good relations between employers and European employees. Why does SABRA think that this machinery would be a serious threat if applied to the Natives? In what way does the employment of Native workers defy the normal economic forces affect-

Industrial Development

This question of Native trade unions has an important bearing upon industrial development in South Africa. It is useless to talk of incentive schemes, production drives and efficiency campaigns, and, at the same time, close the door of progress to 60 per cent. of the country's labour force, because they are Natives. The exclusion of the Native from the benefits of our Industrial Conciliation machinery must inevitably bar the way to co-operation and understanding. The refusal legally to recognise Native trade unions makes this exclusion absolute. More than that, it establishes a barrier between employers and their Native employees.

There are some short-sighted employers who hope to maintain control of their Native employees on a personal basis, in the confines of their own workshops. Such relationship may have been possible when South African industrial units were small; but with the coming of larger factories and greater numbers of Native workers in each workshop, this arrangement becomes unworkable. Progressive employers have learned to prefer dealing with labour problems through their Industrial Councils. They also know that collective bargaining ensures collective responsibility not only as between employer and employee, but also as between employer and employer.

Sound industrial development relies upon such labour relations. Collective bargaining has operated to the advantage of employers and the European worker. Why should it not be extended to the Native worker?

Sooner or later the Native worker will stake his claim for a bigger share in our wealth. That is inevitable. Now is the time to establish the legal means for employers and their Native employees to negotiate between themselves.

If this is not done, South Africa will see a repetition of the strikes, riots and upheavals that marked the European workers' struggles for a better life.

COST OF LIVING: LOUW FLEES FROM THE FACTS

THE rules of Parliament provide that "no member shall speak twice to the same question." There are occasions, however, when a member may speak on a motion, and again on an amendment to that motion. This is what Mr. Eric Louw, Minister of Economic Affairs, was able to do on the occasion of the

United Party motion of censure on the Government.

He made the first reply for the Government, immediately Mr. Strauss had stated the case for the Opposition. He spoke again as Seconder to the Prime Minister's amendment. Both his speeches remained unfinished after taking the full time of forty minutes each.

After Mr. Louw's first forty-minute oration, the members refused to agree to an extension of time because Mr. Louw appeared to be concentrating upon attacking the Leader of the Opposition, rather than dealing with the affairs of State.

When he spoke the second time, again for forty minutes, he still failed to get to grips with economic affairs. In the hopes that Mr. Louw would eventually get round to dealing realistically with the problem of living costs, the House offered him more time. But even Mr. Louw thought that eighty minutes was enough and he resumed his seat.

As he sat down, Mr. Alex. Hepple, the member for Rosettenville, rose from the Labour benches, and said:

"This afternoon this House witnessed the spectacle of the Minister of Economic Affairs making a second attempt to deal with the affairs of his Department and failing just as miserably as on the first occasion. He promised to make a statement on Import Control, but it was left unsaid.

"This House works against many limitations, and often members on all sides are shut out of debates. Later on, the Government will impose the guillotine. Yet the Minister of Economic Affairs makes two forty-minute speeches in this one debate. He is making a mockery of this House. We have become used to the way in which he tries to defend his lack of action and his

FACTS

failure as a Minister. He is prepared to write off the whole of the community in a few words. He comes to this House and makes one of his clever speeches, in which he twists and turns around the subject. He apparently is quite unaware of the existence of the ordinary man; he is unaware of the existence of those who are endeavouring to make ends meet, who struggle to make their shrinking wages and salaries meet the rising cost of commodities.

"The Prime Minister's amendment to the motion talks of 'the gratitude and appreciation of this House for the fact that the Government has restored the financial and economic position of the Union, and for the courageous and, in the circumstances, successful efforts to counter the rising production and living costs.'

"This statement is an absolute contradiction of the facts. The plain fact, if we are guided by the Retail Index, is that prices have advanced eleven points in the last twelve months.

"At the beginning of 1950, the Prime Minister declared in his New Year message: '... the tide has turned in our favour and further ahead a return to normal conditions and greater prosperity is already coming into view, a well-being in which all sections and interests will share.'

"That was shortly after devaluation. When the Prime Minister spoke, the official Cost-of-Living Index figure stood at 154.2. At the end of 1950, the year in which, according to the Prime Minister, we would all get a bigger share of prosperity, this Index figure had risen to 165.2, which is eleven points higher. Surely the Government realises that a rise of eleven points in commodity prices means an equal reduction in the real wages and salaries of the people?

Surely they realise that the people of South Africa were worse off at the end of 1950 than at the beginning?"

Snags In Native Building Workers' Bill

WILL NATIVE ARTISANS SOLVE NATIVE HOUSING SHORTAGE?

SINCE 1945 there has been talk of training Natives to build their own houses, as a step towards solving the Native housing problem. Now, after six years, Parliament is debating the Native Building Workers' Bill, which provides for the training and registration of Native building workers and the regulation of their employment.

With a few changes, this is the same Bill which the Minister of Labour introduced in Parliament on February 22, 1950, but which was not proceeded with. On that occasion the Minister said:—

"This Bill has a dual purpose. In the first place it aims at the protection of European artisans in the European areas against the undermining of their standards of living by cheap Native labour. In the second place it provides that Natives shall be entitled to build their own houses on an economic basis in their own areas."

Cheap Native Labour

According to the Government (and the previous United Party Government), as well as the host of other so-called experts, it is ridiculous to try to build houses for Natives earning a few shillings a week by using skilled European labour costing a few shillings an hour. It is therefore expected that

if cheaper Native labour can be used, the cost of Native housing will be substantially reduced.

This argument presumes that the Native artisan will produce as much as the European, but will work for lower wages. Otherwise, there could be no lowering of costs.

It is at this point that there is much disagreement and confusion. On the grounds that the requirements of Native housing do not demand the same degree of skill as that for other projects, the Bill provides for a maximum period of training of four years. At the discretion of the Minister it may be considerably less.

In practice, this means that not only will the Native building worker earn less, but his skill will be less. If his skill is to be less, surely his lower output will offset his lower wages, and so defeat the avowed object of reducing costs? If, with a shorter training period, a poorly-educated Native can match the output of the fully trained European, there must be something radically wrong with the European apprentice or the methods of training him.

Two Classes of Artisan

The Bill aims at creating two classes of building artisan. In addition to the existing class, there will come into being a cheaper class. Is it possible, even in South Africa, to have two classes of skilled labour, one to provide the needs of the Natives, and another to provide the needs of the rest of the community, the former earning a third of the wages earned by the latter?

The existence of the cheaper Native labour force must be a constant temptation to employers. Despite the legal prohibitions against their employment in European areas, a reason is sure to be found in the years to come to permit their use elsewhere. By constant agitation, they may be used to bring down the standards of the European artisan.

The question is not one entirely of colour. Fundamentally, it is a question of wage standards. The first point of infiltration is provided in the Bill itself, which will not apply to the platteland. Immediately upon the passing of the Act all Native building workers and handymen working in European areas in the towns will be excluded from such places. There is no provision for alternative employment, but there will be nothing to prevent them from taking up employment on farms or in the rural areas.

Nor will there be anything to prevent Native building workers who may be trained under this Bill, from eventually drifting to rural employment, rather than working in their own areas.

How Many Artisans?

There are at present something like 25,000 European building artisans and apprentices in the Union. The Minister of Labour has not yet stated how many Native building workers he proposes to train. What will be the basis of his computation? Will it be calculated upon a ratio of European to Native? Or will the number of Native trainees be related to the number of dwellings needed to house the Native community? The Bill leaves this important matter in the air. As this question is tied up with the Native housing problem, let us have a look at that aspect.

BY
ALEX. HEPPLER, M.P.

Native Housing Need

The Government declares that the Native Building Workers' Bill is in accord with its policy of apartheid and will equip the Native to develop in his own areas. If the Bill is not to remain purely an apartheid measure, the Government must declare its Native Housing policy. It must state quite clearly its immediate programme, as well as its long-term plan to house the urban and rural Native communities.

Some idea of the acute shortage of Native houses in the urban areas is given by the official estimates. These show that Johannesburg needs a minimum number of 57,000 houses immediately; Pretoria, 11,500; Brakpan, 1,100. In other towns the need is as great.

These figures make no provision for population increases and slum clearance; nor do they provide for the re-housing of Native communities which will be moved under the Group Areas Act.

In 1946, Major P. van der Bijl, who was then Minister of Native Affairs, put the total number of Native houses required in the urban areas at 300,000. The Johannesburg City Council has been able to erect only 5,802 Native houses in five years. At this rate it would take the Union over 200 years to clear the present backlog.

This, briefly, is the background against which the training of Native building workers must be examined. It is essential that the Government should declare its Native Housing policy simultaneously with the presentation of the Native Building Workers' Bill.

(To be continued next week)

Snag In Native Building Workers' Bill

WILL NATIVE ARTISANS SOLVE NATIVE HOUSING SHORTAGE?

THE Native Building Workers' Bill has received a mixed reception in Parliament. The Native Representatives rejected it peremptorily. They said that it aimed at nothing more than the further application of the Nationalist policy of Apartheid, and a means to exclude all Native building artisans and handymen from spheres where they had been earning a living for many years.

They denounced the Bill as just one more restriction upon the Native people. They doubted whether many Natives would be trained once the Bill became law, and argued that existing legislation was quite sufficient to permit the training and utilisation of Native building workers.

The United Party took a cautious and delaying line. They said:—

"We as a Party approve of the principle of training, and the regulation of the employment of Native building workers to build houses for Natives in Native areas. We also stand for the principle of maintaining the standard of living and employment of the European worker and our policy is that neither his standard of living nor his employment should be jeopardised."

They then asked for the Bill to go to a Select Committee "to carefully consider certain provisions in the Bill."

Labour Party Amendment

The Labour Party expressed its attitude in an amendment, which called for certain safeguards to protect both the European and the Native worker. It asked for:—

1. The prohibition of profit-making out of this cheap Native labour by private employers.
2. The inclusion of Native building workers under existing industrial labour laws, particularly the Industrial Conciliation Act.
3. Guaranteed alternative employment for all those displaced as a result of the application of this Act.

As a means of placing these Native building workers beyond the grasp of the private employers, the Labour Party suggested that only the State, the Provincial and Divisional Councils, the local authorities and the National Housing and Planning Commission should be permitted to employ them.

In practice, it will be the local authorities who will carry the main burden of Native Housing and they should have no difficulty, therefore, in assuming the responsibility of employing the Native building workers. All arguments favouring the private employment of these specially trained Natives on a profit basis must be resisted.

Even the United Party came to that conclusion when they were in power. Speaking in the Senate on May 3, 1946, Dr. H. Gluckman, then Minister of Health, said:—

"Sub-economic housing is a form of housing that must be divorced entirely from normal methods and normal policy. Means must be sought to produce dwellings where the subsidy to bridge the gap between sub-economic and economic will be reduced to the utmost. A State Building Organisation would tend in this direction, particularly where Natives are to be housed. Natives can be trained to build houses for themselves... materials can be produced by Natives or acquired at their source at the minimum cost so as to ensure dwellings being produced at the minimum cost with a consequent reduction in subsidy. Private enterprise can never produce these houses for the lower income groups and its activities need not therefore be curtailed by a State Building Organisation... Such a building and training organisation is being contemplated..."

Struggle Will Continue

There is no apparent reason why the National Housing and Planning Commission should not establish the machinery to train Native building workers, and then undertake the building of houses for Natives, in collaboration with the Provinces and municipalities or other public authorities. At no time during the debate on the Native Building Workers' Bill did the Government make a statement on its plans to house the Native community. The Minister of Labour insisted that it was impossible for him to say how many trainees would be enrolled until he was able to discover how many Native building workers were needed. The latter could be assessed only after the Bill had become law, when it would be possible to register all Natives who are at present engaged as painters, bricklayers, handymen, carpenters, etc., by householders, property owners and estate agents in the towns throughout the Union. These would be trade-tested and removed from all these areas where they might come into competition with the European artisan.

In persisting in exposing the Native building workers to the ruthless effects of the profit system, the Government displays its lack of understanding of economic problems. Does the Government believe that Native workers will be any different from other workers? Despite all the law, this or any other Government may devise, workers will continue to struggle for higher wages and better conditions. Sooner or later they note the fact that their employees are making a profit out of their labour, and begin to demand a fairer share. So it will be with the Native building worker. If he works for the private contractor, he will soon compare his wages and conditions with that of the European as well as with the profits of his employer.

Wage Fixation

This draws attention to the peculiar provisions in the Bill for the fixation of wages, hours of work, and conditions for Native building workers. Instead of following the customary method as applied to the European building artisan, it is provided that the Minister, may, after consultation with the Minister of Native Affairs, the Wage Board, and the Native Building Workers' Advisory Board fix the rates of pay, working hours and conditions of employment."

The Minister of Labour has said that, in the case of disputes, Measure No. 142 will apply, as does to all other Native industrial workers; he has also said that should the Industrial Legislation Commission make special recommendations regarding Native workers and Native trade unions, will incorporate such changes in an amending Bill at some future date. European trade unions should take note of the special machinery created in this law, it is an important departure from normal practices. In place of tried and tested Industrial Conciliation Act, these skilled building workers (on the grounds that they are not white) will be autocratically controlled by one man, the Minister of Labour. He alone decides what are fair wages and conditions, and, should the workers disagree, they have no channel through which to put forward their point of view.

It is advantageous to employ to have a large army of domestic workers; it is even better to have them firmly and legally disciplined to the autocracy of bureaucrats. Such a state of affairs, however, holds no advantages for the white worker. On the contrary, it constitutes a grave threat to his own position. The existence of standards of legal rights, one for the white worker and another for the black worker, must lead to many abuses. If the European artisan places any value on collective bargaining, it is dangerous for him to agree to the exclusion of the Native from its benefits. There can be only one rule for all workers—equal rights before the law.

Minister's Powers

As with so much other legislation these days, the Bill gives the Minister unlimited powers. He will decide how many Natives will be trained, and for how long, and with whom; he will decide upon their wages and conditions, where they will work, and many other things. There will be an Advisory Board, but its powers are restricted to

making recommendations to the Minister, who can ignore its views completely. Except for an official of the Native Affairs Department, the Native building workers themselves are not represented on this Board. The Government has resisted all appeals that the workers themselves should have some say in their affairs. During the debate, the Minister of Labour expressed his amazement at a Labour Party proposal that if the Natives could not be represented directly on the Advisory Board, they should be allowed to nominate a European trade unionist to represent them. On the grounds that white South Africa cannot countenance mixed Boards, the Minister has excluded the very people who should have the most say.

It has not even been thought wise to create a separate Board of Natives only. This action of completely isolating the Native building workers will have serious repercussions.

What Will Come Of It?

This Act has got off to a bad start. Everything now remains in the hands of the Minister. When the Budget is presented we shall see what amount has been provided for the training of the first batch of Native building workers. Trainees at Zwelitsha cost approximately £200 each to train. Perhaps the Government will now make an accurate survey of Native housing requirements throughout the Union and make that the basis of its training scheme. Let us hope that the Native Representatives are wrong and that the Government will apply this Act in the spirit of advancing the opportunities of the Natives and of getting Native houses built. If that is done, the European artisan need have no fears about competition from Native building workers; his only danger lies in the fact that such workers are placed beyond the protection of existing industrial legislation.

Let us hope, too, that the Native Representatives are wrong in believing that this Act merely aims at taking the bread out of the mouth of the thousands of Natives who at the present time are earning a living by doing jobbing work, such as repairing and renovating buildings in the towns. Finally, let us hope that this labour will not be used to make bigger profits for the building contractors.

THE PRIMARY PRODUCER

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Telegraphic Address:
"PRIMPROD."

12th March, 1951.

SWC/ADB.

Mr. Alex Hepple, M.P.,
House of Assembly,
CAPE TOWN.

Dear Sir,

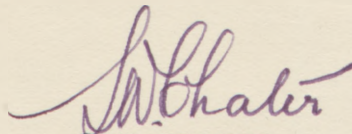
Reading through your letter of the 5th instant in conjunction with our leading article of February 23, I am at a loss to understand why you have written to me, as our article merely brings the arguments of the S.A.A.U. against a Food Ministry up-to-date. In so far as the Labour Party advocates measures for the reduction of the margin between what the producer receives and what the consumer pays, it is only doing what the S.A.A.U. has done for the past twenty years. The opinion of the organised farmers of this country has been and still is, that a Food Ministry is superfluous without rationing and rationing is impossible in a country such as ours.

It would seem that the two last sentences of our article may have caused you to write to us. We are sorry we had no space in which to elaborate them. If, however, you will refer to the S.A.A.U. evidence before the Industrial Legislation Commission you will see what we mean. In that evidence, the need for a general recognition of the importance of giving a days' work for a days' pay was stressed. It was pointed out that more pay for less work plus all sorts of privileges obtained through wage determinations only raised the costs of farmers and consequently the cost of foodstuffs. Whereas workers have gone on strike and have succeeded in getting higher wages, they have usually done so at the expense of others since all wage increases go into costs - unless they are accompanied by an increase in output per working hour. While the S.A.A.U. has consistently urged farmers to increase output even when discouraged by prices, I have yet to learn that any trade union or the Trades and Labour Council has urged workers to produce more per hour in return for increased wages.

Perhaps we...../

Perhaps we can meet and discuss the matter further. Although I am no socialist, my father was a Labour member of the House of Commons until last year and I am still on the side of the farmer and worker.

Yours sincerely,


S:W.CHATER.

EDITOR.

A FOOD MINISTRY AGAIN

*Primary
Produced
23/2/57*

THE last time a Food Ministry was advocated, the Union was suffering from more or less severe food shortages due to factors beyond the control of the Government or the producers. During the war there was a shortage of labour and a shortage of nearly all the means of production. Now a Food Ministry has again been advocated and, peculiarly enough, at a time when the Union is better off for food supplies than for many a year. But for beef and mutton, there is a goodly supply of all the essential foodstuffs at prices which compare favourably with lands much better equipped for food production than is South Africa. During the past war, the cry was for rationing, and a Food Ministry was proposed because it was thought that an independent State department was necessary for securing equitable distribution of available supplies. In spite of the report of Sir Henry French, the Government of the day realised that rationing in a country such as South Africa was impracticable owing to the immense diversity of races, standards of living and food habits. Rationing would have created one enormous black market in foodstuffs. To-day there is no question of rationing except in the case of meat, and even here the shortage is more due to the reluctance of the public to eat pig meats, which are in abundant supply. Thus if a Food Ministry is advocated to-day, it cannot be for rationing purposes, and it certainly is not needed for the handling of surpluses, a number of which are already beginning to appear.

There is a fear that there might not be enough foodstuffs available in time of war, but surely this is a production problem and as such one for the Department of Agriculture. Of course, it is quite possible that war might bring with it an acute shortage of the means of production, but here again it is not a matter for a Ministry of Food but one for the Minister of Economic Affairs, who has already stated that the matter has his attention. The S.A.A.U. is also very perturbed over this question of a probable shortage of farm requirements. Far from acting as a pressure group, as the Labour members of Parliament would have us believe, it has already expressed its concern to the State departments dealing with this problem, and this in spite of existing surpluses. While our Labour friends have been spending their energies talking about a Food Ministry, the so-called pressure group, the S.A. Agricultural Union, has been busy obtaining assurances that the food supplies of the country will be safeguarded against a possible war. It has gone even further than is generally known: it is taking steps to bring up the question of supplies of farm requirements at the international level if this should prove necessary. We can assure Mr. Christie and his friends that the organised farmers of South Africa are no pressure group. If they are, then the trades unions and the Trades and Labour Council are something very much worse; for whereas the S.A. Agricultural Union has learned to place the national interest first, the trades unions have yet to show that they have done so.

The Editor,
The Primary Producer,
P. O. Box 647,
CAPE TOWN.

Dear Sir,

Your Editorial in the current issue of "The Primary Producer" strikes a strange note. Having wrongly assumed that the Labour Party's demand in Parliament for a Ministry of Food was an attack upon the S. A. Agricultural Union, you proceeded to abuse the Labour Party, the trades unions and the Trades & Labour Council.

If you consult ^{our} pamphlet which you should have on your files (it is entitled "A Land and Agriculture Policy for South Africa" and was issued a few years back) you will see that the Labour Party advocates a policy very similar to that approved by the S. A. A. U. at its various conferences. Furthermore, if you will read the Hansard speeches of Mr. J. Christie, M. P. and myself on ~~that~~ the debate you will see that we pleaded the cause of the farmer no less than that of the consumer. In talking of "pressure groups", this is what Mr. Christie said:-

" We know that farmers throughout the world are an active pressure group. That can be understood because they have many difficulties, but there is another side to it, and that is the consumers' side. We require a Ministry of Food... to hold the balance between the two; not to supersede or become superior to the Ministry of Agriculture... but to co-operate with the Minister of Agriculture"

Under a capitalist economy, where the rule of the survival of the fittest is paramount, all organised groups are pressure groups. In the nature of things even the trade unions must be pressure groups, no less than monopolists, manufacturers' associations, and other groups who are joined together to further their own interests. In this sense, Mr. Christie was right when he said that farmers were a pressure group.

You conclude your Editorial by saying:-

".... the organised farmers of South Africa are no pressure group. If they are, then the trades unions and the Trades and Labour Council are something much worse; for whereas the S. A. Agricultural Union has learned to place the national interest first, the trades unions have yet to show that they have done so."

This is a serious accusation to make against organised labour. Perhaps you had a particular reason for making it. In fairness to those whom you have accused you should state that reason. As far as the Labour Party is concerned, we stand by the policy of "maximum prices for the producers with minimum prices to the consumers", and believe that this can be achieved only when steps have been taken to implement the recommendations of the Reconstruction Committee of the Department of Agriculture.

I trust that you will give this reply the publicity which was given to your Editorial.

Sincerely Yours,

ALEX. HEPPLER, M. P.

HOPE FOR

HARRASSED TENANTS

Labour's Fight Brings Strong Government Warning To Racketeering Landlords

THE statement by the Minister of Social Welfare, Dr. Karl Bremer, last Friday, when replying to the Labour Party motion in Parliament, is a ray of hope for harassed tenants throughout the Union. His declaration:—

"... the question of amending the Rents Act will be seriously considered and there will be no long delay. . . . Every property owner who from to-day makes one more attempt to put up the rent of his property is putting a nail into his own coffin—or rather he is making a hole in the bottom of his moneybag"—

will be comforting to all those presently engaged in resisting unfair demands from their landlords.

Tenants everywhere should be grateful to the Labour Party for its unremitting efforts to save them from the disasters of the 1950 Rents Act. This timely warning by the Government did not come of its own. Not only did the Labour Party maintain a campaign against the several weaknesses in the Rents Act, but it has also insisted upon early action to remedy those weaknesses.

Labour Was Right

When the Rents Act was before Parliament in 1949 and 1950 the Labour Party took a firm stand against many of its provisions. Throughout many tiring hours of debate the Labour members urged and pleaded for amendments to protect the interests of the tenants.

They warned the Government that once the Bill became law, unscrupulous landlords would take full advantage of its generous and wide latitude of interpretation in order to further their own ends. The statement by Dr. Bremer shows that the Labour Party was right. He openly states:

"Increases in rents by threats from landlords have become an extremely serious matter . . . It is now coming to light . . . that many property owners are using various and sometimes devious devices to raise rents . . ."

He also referred to the advantage being taken to evict tenants and threatened action in that regard, too.

Tenants' Plight

The serious plight of tenants to-day is further proof of the soundness of Labour Party arguments of a year ago. The facts are partly revealed by Dr. Bremer's statement. They are partly revealed, too, in the reply I received last week to a question I asked in Parliament at the beginning of the Session. It shows that since the Rents Act came into force on July 17, 1950, until December 31, 1950, no fewer than 12,500 tenants of dwellings were given notice to quit. During the same period 1,672 tenants of business premises were given notice.

I say that the facts are "partly revealed" because these figures do not disclose the thousands of cases where tenants have decided to "pay up and look pleasant" rather than let their landlord give them notice.

In thousands of cases tenants have taken the hint from their landlords and refrained from objecting to higher rents, or have agreed to new arrangements, and so saved themselves from receiving notice to

evict on the grounds of "reconstruction or rebuilding," or "occupation required by lessor, or his parents or his children."

The Warning a First Step Only

Tenants will be grateful to the Labour Party for winning this promise of action from the Government. The Minister of Social Welfare must be congratulated upon his quick realisation of the seriousness of the situation. It now remains to be seen if his warning will have a salutary effect upon racketeering landlords. We hope so. But in this harsh and money-grabbing world, who can blame us if we are sceptical? All the same, any relief for tenants is welcome.

For those suffering under the constant threat of losing their homes or being driven out of their small shops, the Minister's warning gives new hope. But only an amendment to the Act during the present session of Parliament will stop the abuses which are now taking place. Greedy landlords will not be thwarted by mere threats.

Amending Legislation Needed Now

To deal with this matter effectively, an amending Bill should be brought before Parliament without delay. Such amending legislation should not only protect those who might suffer in the future, but should also give relief to those who have already suffered under the 1950 Rents Act. The many thousands who have received a raw deal at the hands of their landlords should also receive consideration.

I have suggested on many occasions that legislation amending the 1950 Act should be retrospective to July 17, 1950, the date on which it came into force.

Those landlords who were quick to take advantage of the Act should not be allowed to get away with the swag, and their victims should be provided with legal means of recompense.

Dr. Bremer's warning to landlords must be accepted as a first step. The Labour Party will continue to fight in the cause of the tenant and will not be satisfied until the law is such that tenants get a square deal.

BY

ALEX. HEPPLER, M.P.

EVEN THE CRUMBS

RATIONED

The People Get Little

POUND WORTH
3/6
LESS THAN
IN 1948

SPEAKING IN PARLIAMENT ON BEHALF OF THE LABOUR PARTY, MR. A. HEPPLE, M.P., CRITICISED MR. HAVENGA'S BUDGET FOR 1951-1952 AS BEING ANOTHER "RICH MAN'S BUDGET."

Wherever rich men gather, this Budget has been welcomed with open arms. In 1948 the Labour Party described the first Budget of the Nationalist Government as a "rich man's budget." This year's budget has even more title to that name. The 1948 Budget at least threw a few crumbs to the poor. This year even the crumbs have been severely rationed.

The Budget must be viewed in the light of the difference between the value of the £ in 1948 and the value of the £ today. When we do that we see that virtually nothing has been given to the people, whose pound now buys 3s. 6d. less than it did in 1948. While their earnings become worth less by the day, the Government does nothing to assist them to meet the ever-increasing cost of living.

RISING PRICES

The Minister of Finance has referred to the steadily rising Retail Price Index, the Government dismissing the matter by saying that we are suffering from imported inflation. I want to say that our inflation is not wholly imported. Much of it is of our own internal creation, and the Government is guilty of being party to these inflationary processes.

I have said that this is a rich man's budget. This is borne out by another fact. There has been little change in taxation since 1948, which is all very nice for the rich. On the other hand the Price Index has risen from 141.8 in January, 1948, to 166.4 in February, 1951, which is a matter of 24.6 points, and very depressing for the poor. But even this stony-hearted Government could not bring itself to turn completely away from the poor, and so we have a slight increase in the amount for food subsidies, a bonus for pensioners, and overdue increases in cost-of-living allowances to civil servants. The only thing that is saving the Government is the high level of employment. Because of that high level of employment the National Income is rising and families have more breadwinners to help pay for the necessities of life.

This Budget of £182,000,000 is a record Budget for South Africa. To anyone outside it gives the impression of prosperity, wealth and buoyant revenue. We know, however, that the majority of South Africans are hard put to it to make ends meet. Considerable numbers are shifting into a state of genteel poverty. Today it is so easy to be poverty-stricken on £50 a month, with the £ becoming worth less and less each day.

STEPS TO COMBAT INFLATION

What steps has the Government taken, or will take to curb the inflationary conditions which exist today?

While the Government itself reduces expenditure, it takes no practical steps to ensure that private enterprise does not dissipate what the Government may save. While the Government cuts its spending and suspends many essential projects, it allows private enterprise to use labour and essential materials for whatever purpose. The position today is that materials in short supply and valuable labour are being diverted into the building not of homes for the people, but luxury flats, private swimming baths, country clubs and mansions. Everywhere we see essential materials being used in non-essential and luxury projects.

The Minister — perhaps because he speaks for a rich man's party — does not want to do anything which might avert the disaster facing the wageearner and the salaried man today. He merely asks the well-to-do not to abuse their possessions. Does he really believe these people will take notice of such a request? Will the rich follow his advice and use their profits for capital formation? Of course not! Surplus money will go where it can make most profit. It will go to capital formation only when there is no other outlet which is more profitable.

We live in a capitalist society, under a profit-making system, and pleas and gentlemanly gestures are not going to thwart these gentlemen or deter them from the normal course of profit-making.

TAX CAPITAL PROFITS

The Minister of Finance did not seize his opportunity this year to take more from the rich. I am sure the praise this Budget has evoked in rich circles cannot alone attract the Minister. There is also the praise of the mass of the people — the 85% of our population who are getting further and further in the mire as a result of present-day economic conditions.

As an orthodox financier, our Minister shies at any suggestion that he should tax capital profits, or that he should peg land prices. But would he consider compulsory borrowing from the rich on a short-term basis?

Unless profits are to be used for capital to extend or promote essential undertakings, the Government should take such money off the market, and so prevent the rich from aggravating the inflationary conditions which already exist.

To prevent such money pushing up land prices and making farming uneconomic, there should be a pegging of land prices, and a tax on unimproved land, and land held out of use.

FOOD SUBSIDIES

If South Africa's £ had remained at the same value as it was in 1948 there might be some virtue in the small increases in food subsidies, this year. While these subsidies, however small, are gratefully accepted, I would like to point out that there are two angles to subsidies on domestically produced food.

In times of shortages, like the present, the subsidies operate in the interests of the consumer. In times of plenty, or over-production, they operate in the interests of the farmer.

When the time of plenty comes again, the Government cannot abolish or reduce these subsidies; they will be necessary to maintain farm prices and to guarantee the farmer a fair return for his produce.

In such circumstances these subsidies will be entirely in the interests of the farmer.

This is a matter which must be appreciated from the long-term view, remembering that these subsidies concern our general economy.

THE LABOUR VIEW

Industrial Colour Bar In South Africa And Economic Apartheid

To give the Labour Party an opportunity of putting its views before the public "The Natal Mercury" places this space at its disposal once a month. "The Natal Mercury" does not necessarily associate itself with the views expressed. This is the 14th article.

BY ALEX. HEPPLER, M.P.

PROMINENT in recent Nationalist Party propaganda has been the question of the so-called "Industrial Colour Bar." The Nationalists have attacked the United Party and, to a lesser extent, the Labour Party, accusing them of trying to break down that bar.

The signs are that the Nationalists intend to play this up as one of their vote-catching devices at the next election. They will say, as they have been saying in Parliament, that but for the Nationalist Party White workers would lose their jobs to Natives, Coloureds and Indians. Perhaps now, before the political emotions of election time confuse the facts, is the best time to examine the "Colour bar" in industry and see how it affects European and non-European workers, their employers and South African economy generally.

What Is Colour Bar?

BROADLY speaking, the industrial Colour bar refers to the exclusion of the non-European (especially Native) worker from the fields of skilled work, normally the preserve of the European worker. This bar found its origin in the early days of industrial development in South Africa, when the European artisan came into conflict with employers who were anxious to make use of the large resources of Native labour. Not only were the Natives docile and willing to learn, but no doubt would have been quick to accept much lower wages than those paid to the European.

This conflict became a major political issue and the defeat of the Smuts Government in 1922 was followed by the Mines and Works Act in 1926, which specifically excluded Natives from certain trades in the mining industry.

A Sentinel

WHILE this type of legal Colour bar has not been extended to other trades, the Act of 1926 has stood for over a quarter of a century as a sentinel for "Europeans only" in craft industries. This is reflected in the fact that while the Apprenticeship Act makes no mention of race or colour, the signing of contracts of apprenticeship by Natives is virtually unknown. In the first place the educational standards are beyond the reach of the average Native, and secondly, no employer would dare engage a Native apprentice for fear of arousing the hostility of his European employees.

Yet during that same period many new kinds of secondary industry have been established in South Africa and hundreds of new factories have sprung up in the main centres. From their very beginning most of these factories used non-European labour. In consequence the European preserves comprise a lesser percentage of all industry than they did 25 years ago.

Non-European In Industry

THE composition of South Africa's industrial labour force is roughly 52 per cent. Native, 31 per cent. European, 13 per cent. Coloured and 4 per cent. Asiatic. It is significant that the rate of non-European influx into industry is more than double that of the European. In the 10 years between 1937/8 and 1947/8, European employment in industry rose from 143,760 to 210,438, while non-European employment rose from 204,760 to 401,678.

No statistics are available to show how many of these workers are skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled, but it is well known that large numbers of non-Europeans are skilled and semi-skilled operatives in many industries. Some large industries provide specialised training for their Native workers, who have acquired a high degree of proficiency. A considerable number of factories are manned almost entirely by Natives. With the breaking down of crafts into several operations and the coming of mass production methods, non-Europeans have found many new opportunities and their exclusion from the skilled crafts has not prevented them from becoming our largest labour force in industry.

Labour Party Attitude

AS the Labour Party and the trades unions see the problem, the Colour bar is in fact a "cheap labour bar." The Labour Party is opposed to the introduction of cheap labour into industry. It is in favour of increasing the productivity and skill of all workers, with higher wages in accordance with this increased efficiency.

The gap between skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers must be narrowed down, even under Capitalism, but at the expense of the profit-makers and not of the workers. The Labour Party believes that the non-European worker is essential to our industry but, like every other worker, must be protected against exploitation. It therefore demands that there shall be "equal pay for equal work." In other words, the rate must be paid for the job and not according to the colour of the workman's skin.

There cannot be two rates of pay for the same job of work—a cheap rate for the non-European and a bigger rate for the European. Such an arrangement would always operate against the European because under private enterprise it is bad business to pay one man £2 a day to do a job that another will do for £2 a week. Our vast industrial development offers opportunities for all workers, irrespective of race, but care must be taken that they are not based upon a "cheap Black labour" policy. The only effective way to ensure the economic progress of the Native is to pay him decent wages.

United Party View

PROVOKED by the recent accusations of the Nationalists, the leader of the United Party, Mr. J. G. N. Strauss, M.P., has said, "The United Party is in favour of raising the productive capacity of the non-European in industry, with the co-operation of European employees and employers, but is not in favour of the abolition of the industrial Colour bar."

Nationalists And The Bar

THE Nationalist Party believes that there should be two rates of pay for the same job—the non-European to receive less than the European. They argue that the non-European does not possess the same civilised standard as the European and therefore can exist on a much smaller income than the European. This may not be good economics but it is powerful propaganda. It helps to whip up antagonisms and prejudices and abandons logic. On the one hand the Nationalists demand that the non-European shall be cheaply paid, and on the other they complain that because he is cheaply paid he is a threat to the European.

In The Dark

FACED with the serious problems of industrial efficiency and the need for greater production, South Africa remains in the dark as to the future pattern of development under Nationalist policy. They have officially declared: "The State will exercise control over the development of our industries in general by means of a Central Licensing Board. In issuing licences the Board will keep in view the principle of separation between European and non-European... if it should be considered possible and desirable certain stated industries or fields of employment may be reserved for certain stated groups."

It is interesting to conjecture the many situations which would arise in the application of such a policy.

Implications

ON the basis of Nationalist policy of "equal pay for equal work," some industries would be operated by "cheap Black labour" and others by so-called expensive "White labour." There would be a rush by manufacturers to have their factories declared "Black preserves." From an economic standpoint the implications of a quota system are enormous, for it must be remembered that it is not only a question of colour; it is also a question of wage rates. It is a policy which strikes at the entire cost structure. In addition, it will weigh heavily against the European workers that they are organised in strong, legally protected trades unions, while the Native trades unions have no legal recognition or protection.

Political Trap

THE people of South Africa must not fall into a political trap. The full implications of the industrial Colour bar must be fully understood. Dr. Malan recently boasted that, with the exception of "political and economic apartheid," all the demands of his 1939 Petition to Parliament had been fulfilled by this Government. He said that the removal of the Coloured voters from the common roll was the implementation of "political apartheid." There remains only "economic apartheid." Its meaning has never been explained.

Scientific planning and orderly development of industry demand a clear understanding of Government policy. When the Nationalists shout about the industrial Colour bar, they must be asked to explain themselves. Do they intend to apply the Colour bar to all industries? If not, to which specific industries? Will Europeans who replace Natives under their quota system receive higher rates of pay? Will Natives who replace Europeans receive lower rates of pay? These are but a few of the many questions that the Nationalists must answer before notice can be taken of their propaganda about the Colour bar.

Drift From Democracy: 1951 Session And Its Background

By ALEX. HEPPLER, M.P.

[To give the Labour Party an opportunity of putting its views before the public "The Natal Mercury" places this space at its disposal once a month. "The Natal Mercury" does not necessarily associate itself with the views expressed. This is the 16th article.]

A RECORD number of laws were enacted during the 1951 Parliamentary session. Most of them were routine measures that could have been piloted by any Government.

Some of them were designed to implement Nationalist policy. Outstanding in this respect were the Separate Representation of Voters Act and the Suppression of Communism Amendment Act, while such Bills as the Bantu Authorities Bill and the Native Building Workers' Bill aimed at furthering certain aspects of their Native policy.

The Nationalists describe this as a "most historic session" and everyone will agree, although with sadness in their hearts.

Cost of Living

IT should be recorded that when Parliament assembled in January the Retail Price Index stood at 165.6 and when Parliament rose in June the figure had climbed to 170.4.

Apart from some vague boastings of subsidies on foodstuffs, the Government managed to steer its way through its heavy legislative programme without entangling itself in serious discussion on ways and means to ease the burden of rising prices, which presses so heavily upon the people.

Ideological legislation, with its crushing cost upon the public purse, takes precedence over bread-and-butter law-making. While the £ buys less every day, our Minister of Finance threatens new taxes upon the poorer section of the community. He says that "the time is past when it was possible to find the revenue required for meeting expenditure only from the well-to-do-classes."

Not only are the struggling wage and salary earners of South Africa to be hindered and harassed by unnecessary laws but they are to be made to pay the heavy cost of administering these laws.

Positive Signs

AT this time last year I wrote that the 1950 Parliamentary session "revealed positive signs of a movement away from traditional democratic practice towards autocracy and authoritarianism."

The session which has just concluded shows a continuation of this drift from democracy. Some of the laws passed could not be held up as examples of the workings of democratic government; they are more typical of the intolerance of despotism. Seen as a whole, the laws of recent years disclose an unhealthy resemblance to the social regimentation of the Corporate State.

Nationalists become angry and indignant when one suggests that they are treading the path of Fascism. Perhaps some of them do not realise where their legislative policy is leading; others may deceive themselves that they are acting in the best interests of South Africa; too many of them have too little faith in democracy.

It was Dr. Malan himself who asked in 1941, "Is the time not ripe that we should mould our national life on a different basis and break away from democracy?"

He has never assured the nation that this doubt has been removed from his mind.

Mandate From People

FROM the Nationalist viewpoint, they are implementing the mandate which they received from the electorate in 1948. Speaking in the Senate on June 19, shortly before the end of the session, Dr. Malan said:—

"We went to the people and the result was that there was a change in Government in 1948, and we could carry out, as far as we have carried it out—and we are not far from the end, the greatest part is already on the Statute Book—the policy for which the people returned us to power."

This policy is summarised in the Petition of 1939, to which Dr. Malan and his colleagues often refer. It asks for (i) the prohibition of mixed marriages, (ii) punishment for miscegenation, (iii) residential apartheid, and (iv) economic and political segregation of Europeans and non-Europeans. It is significant that, apart from the vague reference to "economic apartheid," the Petition makes no demand for better living standards.

Real Handicaps

THERE can be no doubt that the Nationalists inspired and organised this petition. Obviously those responsible for its drafting were completely indifferent to the real handicaps and sufferings of the mass of people, otherwise they could not have forgotten to ask for some of the material necessities of life, such as decent housing, decent wages and social security.

However, for the reckless Nationalist politicians the petition provided a good basis for propaganda. They could tell the poor and wretched that their ills were due to other racial groups; the hungry could be told to look at the well-fed "Coolies," the ragged and lowly paid could be told to look at the well-dressed "Kaffirs," and the slum dwellers could

be shown the mansions of the "uitlanders" and "un-national elements."

The policy "for which the people returned the Nationalists to power" contained all the essentials for vote-catching and political misrepresentation. It is the background to the ideological legislation which has received the major attention of the Government. There is the wider background, too, which must not be forgotten. It is the economic policy of the Nationalist Party.

Capitalism, Socialism or Fascism?

MANY years ago the Nationalists were faced with the choice of turning to the Right or the Left. They sought the tributes and favours of the rich farmers and landowners and they needed the votes of the by-woner and the Poor White; they feared Socialism and hated the liberalism and freedom of capitalist democracy. So they evolved a policy which they describe as "neither capitalist nor Communist."

"Under the Capitalist system profit is the dominant motivating force, leading to the exploitation of the economically weaker groups and entities—especially the workers... The Nationalist Party recognises the right of private property and the claim of private initiative. In addition, however, it protects any one section against exploitation by another by a system of effective central supervision."

Rule Of The Elite

IN simple language this means the rule of the "elite." It differs only in degree from National-Socialism. The "effective central supervision" (described elsewhere in their policy as the Central Economic Council) will be the real rulers of the country; such supervision was exercised by Hitler's "National Economic Chamber" and Mussolini's "Central Corporative Committee."

In rejecting Capitalism and Socialism the Nationalists have chosen "controlled capitalism" which is a polite term for Fascism. However indignant they may become when this is pointed out to them, events are proving this to be a correct evaluation. This is the policy which compels the Government to demand wide and despotic powers. Without such powers they could not satisfy the demands of prejudice and discrimination; without such powers they would be unable to fulfil their objectives.

Suppression Of Communism

WITH the Western world ranged against Communism and with the threat of war with the Communist countries, laws to ensure the safety and security of the State find wide support. For the Nationalists, however, the so-called Suppression of Communism Act provides a means of assuming dictatorial powers over the lives of the people of South Africa.

The social and economic background to their legislation demands far-reaching powers which will enable them to translate their ideological attitudes into action. Incapable of writing all their prejudices into intelligent legislation they wish to reserve to themselves the right to apply laws as they think fit.

The amendments made this year to the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 confer upon the Government sufficient power to enable them to destroy all those who cross their path. By means of this law they can emasculate the trades unions and workers' organisations; they can brand and remove militant workers from the leadership of their fellows; they can remove democratically elected members of Parliament. There is security only for those who bow and cringe to the dictates of the Nationalists. There is sanctity and prestige for those who defame and slander their fellow men.

The Constitution

THE Separate Representation of Voters Bill was introduced as a measure of "political apartheid." In the course of debate it was discovered that it went deeper than that. The Minister of the Interior and some of his colleagues asserted that the South Africa Act was not the work of South Africans. They have thrown a new light upon its interpretation and its value.

The introduction of four members to represent Coloured people will make Parliament a strange gathering of special interests.

The Nationalists are trying to turn back the clock. In their refusal to accept the facts of modern society they are involving themselves in a mass of contradictions. Their confusion is carrying South Africa into dangerous situations. The only way to prevent a tragic end to their policies is for the people firmly to oppose them at every turn, without compromise or appeasement.

It is folly to fear for the future. The present is dangerous enough to demand the strongest and most courageous resistance for all those who love South Africa.

SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICS IN 5711-(3)

"Drifting From Democratic Practice To Despotic State"

THE political issues of this year differ only from issues of previous years in that they are starker, more acute and more frightening than ever before. With the change of Government in 1948, there began a programme of legislation designed to achieve political objectives which will change the whole pattern of society in South Africa. For this reason political issues of the current year cannot be isolated from those of the previous couple of years. They form part of one legislative programme. Looking back over the past three years, one sees the desperate haste of the Government to give effect to its policy of "political and economic Apartheid" and to lay the foundations for a long period of political power. The more important issue of the economic well-being of the mass of the people has been relegated to give priority to measures of a provocative and ideological nature.

Living Standards

Political issues are fundamentally economic issues. The raising of living standards of the poor, the elimination of poverty amongst Europeans and non-Europeans, the provision of decent homes, the creation of opportunities for all, are minimum requirements of any government. To make a better life for all the people in the land is the professed aim of all political parties. Indeed, a great deal of lip-service is paid to this ideal. Yet years go by, generations pass, and the lot of the people remains a constant and wearying struggle for mere existence.

At the present time most homes are beset with the problem of making ends meet. The unceasing rise in prices is making a new army of poor in South Africa. Incomes have failed to keep pace with living costs. Industry and Commerce talk of "increasing buyer resistance" — a sweet way of saying that the people can no longer afford to buy. Drastic action is needed if South Africa is to be saved from economic disaster. Is this Government able and willing to take such action?

Unnecessary Legislation

The Nationalist Party, like any other political party, is determined to translate its policies into the laws of the land. Whether such policies are in the best interest of the country depends upon one's political outlook, or perhaps upon the economic benefits one gains from

By
ALEX HEPPLER, M.P.



MR. ALEX HEPPLER,
who is one of the Labour Party's
chief Parliamentary spokesmen.

such policies.

The Labour Party believes that much of the legislation enacted during the past three years is vindictive, unnecessary and of such a nature as to engender racial ill-feeling. Its effects will infiltrate into every sphere of human activity, reducing efficiency, raising production costs and eventually lowering living standards. The hostility of the non-Europeans is becoming more evident and it is distressing to see the revival and aggravation of old antagonisms within the European group.

An examination of recent laws reveals that South Africa is quickly drifting away from traditional democratic practice and following the path that leads to the despotic state. Many of our laws bear an unhealthy resemblance to the social regimentation of fascism. Other laws could scarcely be held up as models of democratic lawmaking. Powers are being vested in officials, Ministers and the Cabinet to such an extent that these people are virtual dictators. Parliament is steadily losing its sovereign power. All this is done on the excuse of "emergencies" and "special circumstances." It is a device that Napoleon found extremely useful and one that has been used by many mediocre politicians to curb intelligent critics.

South Africa and UNO

South Africa is a member of the United Nations, often finding herself in conflict with other members. She made reservations in her acceptance of the Covenant of Human Rights on the grounds of "the heterogeneous nature of the communities, traditions, customs and circumstances" existing in South Africa. During the last session of Parliament, the Union went beyond that reservation. In the Suppression of Communism Amendment Act the Union violated sections of the Covenant of Human Rights that had nothing to do with racial matters. The original Act was made retrospective, thereby violating Article II (2) of the Covenant, which lays down that "No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence . . . which did not constitute a penal offence . . . at the time when it was committed."

By excluding the rule of law and by granting immunity to defamers and slanderers, we further dishonoured our signature to the Covenant of Human Rights. It is this flagrant contempt for our responsibilities as members of the United Nations that creates much of the suspicion against South Africa. It is causing us to lose the leadership on the African Continent.

Too many politicians refuse to recognize that there are others beside the white man inhabiting Africa. In mid-1949, according to the United Nations Demographic Yearbook, the total population of Africa was 198,000,000. Of this total, the Union had a population of 12,320,000, made up of 2,620,000 whites, 8,347,000 Natives, 1,030,000 Coloureds and 323,000 Asiatics. This means that the people of the Union constitute but 6% of the population of Africa, while the whites alone constitute a mere 1½%. It is necessary to quote these figures as a reminder that we should see our social and economic problems in a clearer perspective. The rapid advance of the non-European peoples in other parts of the world has confounded the politicians of other countries. Let South Africa learn before it is too late. If we do not want to array against us the 98% non-whites of Africa we must exercise the highest degree of wise statesmanship. New attitudes are demanded to old problems, while new problems are shattering old attitudes.

Reprinted from "The Natal Mercury" 14th August 1951

THE LABOUR VIEW

Rising Prices Stealing Wages And Salaries Of The Workers

By ALEX. HEPPLER, M.P.

[To give the Labour Party an opportunity of putting its views before the public "The Natal Mercury" places this space at its disposal once a month. "The Natal Mercury" does not necessarily associate itself with the views expressed. This is the 17th article.]

WAGE and salary earners, pensioners and all those with fixed incomes are slowly but surely being robbed by the continued rise in commodity prices. Hardest hit are the poor. Every week new price increases are announced.

Much is said and written about the cost-of-living and many suggestions are offered as to how prices can be reduced. But nowhere is there any sign of firm steps by the Government to deal realistically with this most serious problem. Mr. Eric Louw, the Minister of Economic Affairs, has been pleased to make statements from time to time, reporting on Government action against rising prices. Shortly after taking office (8/7/48) he said:—

"The only alternative (to Redcol) is to reduce profit margins and to tighten up price control."

Ridiculous Reductions

IN reply to a question I put to him on January 30, 1951, the Minister gave a list of commodities on which profit margins had been reduced. The list comprised 14 items, such as agricultural implements, motor vehicles, bicycles, coffee, tea, soft goods, piece goods, electrical appliances, etc. In most cases the reductions were ridiculous in relation to the profits allowed.

Other statements have been made by the Minister of Economic Affairs, such as:—

"My plan (to reduce the cost-of-living) is working at this very moment . . . It is being run with success." (27/8/48—Hansard Col. 1082).

"I say we have succeeded in arresting the rise in the cost-of-living and we have done that in spite of the increase in the price of overseas goods and in spite of the effects of devaluation." (24/3/50—Hansard Col. 3634).

"Most price increases in the Union are the direct effect of rising prices overseas . . . The Union's price index is among the lowest in the world." (Speech at Muizenberg 16/10/50).

Desperate Plight

IN spite of these and other statements, the situation has got completely out of hand and the plight of the people is becoming desperate. They have to live with the facts, and facts are harsh and relentless. Money melts into nothing. Housewives are becoming irritable, on edge and wrinkled in their ceaseless struggle to stretch the family income.

In 1938 a family could be passing rich on £40 per month. Such an income today places a family dangerously near the poverty line. Large numbers of Europeans earn less than that; few non-Europeans earn anything near it.

Work Harder

WHEN introducing his Budget this year, Mr. Havenga, the Minister of Finance, made a popular appeal. He said:

"Perhaps the most important contribution that any citizen of this country can make in order to check inflation is by expecting as little charity as possible from the State and by throwing in his full weight in order to increase the productivity of our country. That applies to every one of us, rich or poor, wage earner or entrepreneur."

The reduction of production costs would be a contribution to cheaper prices. But it is only a fraction of what is needed. In any case, how would this proposal work out in practice? After the wage earner has agreed to work harder, refrain from asking for higher wages or cost-of-living allowances and take no charity from the State, what of the employer and the financier? Will they also work harder, increase efficiency, accept lower profits and cheaper interest rates? If they did, they would be contradicting the principles of "free enterprise" and the profit system.

No Sentiment

BY its very nature, capitalism has no room for sentiment. A board of Directors which informed its shareholders that dividends had been sacrificed in the national interest would be most unpopular; the shareholders would demand some return on their investment and if it were not soon forthcoming, they would get rid of their shares and seek more profitable investments.

For this reason high moral appeals by the Government are useless. Only Government action can fairly apply the principle advanced by Mr. Havenga, so that there can be an honest contribution from big business, small business, organised labour and unorganised labour, as well as professional workers and the Government itself.

Commodity Prices

SINCE prices began to advance in 1939, there has not been a fair sharing of the burden of inflation. Price increases have always been several jumps ahead of cost-of-

living allowances. Apart from the general list of commodities which have increased in price, there are several concealed factors which add to the burden of living costs. Where goods are in short supply, housewives have to face the "take it or leave it" attitude.

The constant scarcity of meat, for example, causes housewives to accept lower grades at higher prices, or to take expensive cuts where cheaper would be preferred, rather than have no meat on the table. Young couples embarking upon matrimony today cannot hope to get one of the cheaper houses or flats under Rent Control; they are forced to take the newer and expensive flats at rentals quite out of proportion to their incomes.

Cost-Of-Living Allowances

COST-OF-LIVING allowances are designed to offset rising prices. These allowances are determined in various ways, generally being related to the Retail Price Index. In some industries the allowance is fixed in Industrial Council Agreements, being calculated upon a stated Index figure (e.g. 160.0) with a proviso that variations of each 5.0 points shall be compensated by a five per cent. adjustment in the allowance.

Other agreements and wage awards, however, merely provide for the payment of allowances at the rates specified in proclamations under War Measure 43 of 1942. These rates apply to most employees in the Union.

An examination of these rates discloses that they fall far short of what they should be, in order to restore the purchasing power of the £ to 1938 levels.

The Devalued £

IF a worker earned 100s. in 1938, when the Retail Price Index stood at 100, he was able to buy 100 units for his money. With the June Index standing at 171.6 he requires 171.6s. to buy the same volume of goods. His cost-of-living allowances, therefore, should be 71.6s. on a wage of 100s. in order to place him in the same financial position as he enjoyed in 1938. But in fact he is getting very much less than that.

The cost-of-living allowances were last revised in April, 1951, being related to the February Index of 166.4. Basing our calculations on this Index of 166.4, we are able to see the extent to which a worker loses on these allowances.

Weekly Wage	Gazetted Allowance	Allowance should be
30/-	11/6	21/6
60/-	21/6	43/-
80/-	29/-	57/3
120/-	38/-	86/-
130/-	40/-	93/-

Index Forced Up

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Pegged Allowances

EMPLOYEES who operate under special arrangements with their employers for the payment of cost-of-living allowances are fighting a losing battle. Hardly have allowances been adjusted than the Index takes another upward leap. Civil servants, whose allowances were pegged to the February Index of 166.4 have already lost ground because the Index had risen to 171.6 by June. What will it be when allowances are next revised?

Why Doesn't Government Act?

IN its three years of power, the Nationalist Government has tackled this serious problem in a half-hearted way. Despite repeated demands from the wage and salary earners, the Government has allowed inflation to get out of hand.

The Minister of Finance has dismissed the matter by saying that political Parties which talk of reducing the cost-of-living are trying a political stunt. If that is true of other Parties, it is not true of the Labour Party.

Drastic measures are needed and the Labour Party would not hesitate to take such measures. By means of steeply graded taxation, strict price control, complete rent control, limitation of profits, ceilings on incomes and extensive subsidisation, much of the burden could be more fairly shared.

At the present time most of the burden is being carried by those who are paid inadequate cost-of-living allowances.

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48/51
 RISING PRICES ARE STEALING WORKERS' WAGES. Dupl

Matai
 Mercury
 14/8/1951
 MORE FACTS ABOUT THE COST-OF-LIVING.

By Alex. Hepple, M. P.

Wage and salary earners, pensioners and all those with fixed incomes are slowly but surely being robbed by the continued rise in commodity prices. Hardest hit are the poor. Every week new price increases are announced.

Much is said and written about the Cost-of-Living and many suggestions are offered as to how prices can be reduced. But nowhere is there any sign of firm ^{steps} ~~action~~ by the Government to deal realistically with this most serious problem. Mr. Eric Louw, the Minister of Economic Affairs, has been pleased to make statements ~~free~~ ^{to time} from time, reporting on Government action against rising prices. Shortly after taking office (8/7/48) he said:-

"The only alternative (to Redcol) is to reduce profit margins and to tighten up price control"

In reply to a question I put to him on the 30th. January 1951, the Minister gave a list of commodities on which profit margins had been reduced. The list comprised fourteen items, such as Agricultural implements, motor vehicles, bicycles, coffee, tea, soft goods, piece goods, electrical appliances, etc. In most cases the reductions were ridiculous in relation to the profits allowed.

Other statements have been made by the Minister of Economic affairs, such as :-

"My plan (to reduce the cost-of-living) is working at this very moment..... It is being run with success" (27/8/48 - Hansard Col. 1082)

"I say we have succeeded in arresting the rise in the Cost-of-living and we have done that in spite of the increase in the price of overseas goods and in spite of the effects of devaluation" (24/3/50 - Hansard Col. 3634)

"Most price increases in the Union are the direct effect of rising prices overseas.... The Union's price index is amongst the lowest in the world."

(Speech at Muizenberg 16/10/50)

- In spite -

RISING PRICES ARE STEALING WORKERS' WAGES. (continued)

In spite of these and other statements, the situation has got completely out of hand and the plight of the people is becoming desperate. They have to live with the facts, and facts are harsh and relentless. Money melts into nothing. Housewives are becoming irritable, ~~xxxxx~~ ^{on edge} and wrinkled in their ceaseless struggle to stretch the family income.

In 1938 a family could be passing rich on £40 per month. Such an income to-day places a family dangerously near the poverty line. Large numbers of Europeans earn less than that; few Non-Europeans earn ~~at~~ anything near it.

WORK HARDER. When introducing his Budget this year, Mr. Havenga, the Minister of Finance, made a popular appeal: He said,

"Perhaps the most important contribution that any citizen of this country can make in order to check inflation is by expecting as little charity as possible from the State and by throwing in his full weight in order to increase the productivity of our country. That applies to every one of us, rich or poor, wage earner or entrepreneur. "

The reduction of production costs would be a contribution to cheaper prices. But it is only a fraction of ~~the~~ what is needed. In any case, how would this proposal work out in practice? After the wage earner has agreed to work harder, refrain from asking for higher wages or cost-of-living allowances and take no charity from the State, what of the employer and the financier? Will they also work harder, increase efficiency, accept lower profits and cheaper interest rates? ~~Even~~ If they did, they would be contradicting the principles of "free enterprise" and the profit system. By its very nature, capitalism has no room for sentiment. A board of Directors which informed its shareholders that dividends had been sacrificed in the national interest would be most unpopular; the shareholders would demand some return on their investment and if it were not soon forthcoming, they would get rid of their shares and seek more profitable investments.

RISING PRICES ARE STEALING WORKERS' WAGES. (continued)

For this reason high moral appeals by the Government are useless. Only Government action can fairly apply the principle advanced by Mr. Havenga, so that there can be an honest contribution from big business, small business, organised labour and unorganised labour, as well as professional workers and the Government itself.

COMMODITY PRICES. Since prices began to advance in 1939, there has not been a fair sharing of the burden of inflation. Price increases have always been several jumps ahead of cost-of-living allowances. Apart from the general list of commodities which have increased in price, there are several concealed factors which add to the burden of living costs. Where goods are in short supply, housewives have to face the "take it or leave it" attitude. The constant scarcity of meat, for example, causes housewives to accept lower grades at higher prices, or to take expensive cuts where cheaper would be preferred, rather than have no meat on the table. Young couples embarking upon matrimony to-day cannot hope to get one of the cheaper houses or flats under Rent Control; they are forced to take the newer and expensive flats at rentals quite out of proportion to their incomes.

COST-OF-LIVING ALLOWANCES. Cost-of-living allowances are designed to offset rising prices. These allowances are determined in various ways, generally being related to the Retail Price Index. In some industries the allowance is fixed in Industrial Council Agreements, being calculated upon a stated Index figure (e.g. 160.0) with a proviso that variations of each 5.0 points shall be compensated by a five percent adjustment in the allowance. Other agreements and wage awards, however, merely provide for the payment of allowances at the rates specified in proclamations under War Measure 43 of 1942. These rates apply to most employees in the Union. An examination of these rates discloses that they fall far short of what they should be, in order to restore the purchasing power of the £ to 1938 levels.

THE DEVALUED £. If a worker earned 100/- in 1938, when the Retail Price Index stood at 100, he was able to buy 100 units

RISING PRICES ARE STEALING WORKERS' WAGES. (continued)

for his money. With the June Index standing at 171.6 he requires 171.6/- to buy the same volume of goods. His cost-of-living allowance, therefore, should be 71.6/- on a wage of 100/- in order to place him in the same financial position as he enjoyed in 1938. But in fact he is getting very much less than that. The cost-of-living allowances were last revised in April 1951, being related to the February Index of 166.4. Basing our calculations on this Index of 166.4, we are able to see the extent to which a worker suffers losses on these allowances.

<u>Weekly Wage.</u>	<u>Gazetted Allowance.</u>	<u>Allowance should be.</u>
30/-	11/6	21/6
60/-	21/6	43/-
80/-	29/-	57/3
120/-	38/-	86/-
130/-	40/-	93/-

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RISING PRICES ARE STEALING WORKERS' WAGES. (continued)

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E N D.

Johannesburg,
6/3/51.

WHOSE VICTORY IS LABOUR'S DEFEAT? ASKS ALEX HEPPLER

FORWARD
9
11
51

U.P. Can Play Into Nats.' Hands

EVERY one of Labour's 17 candidates in the Johannesburg Municipal elections was defeated. In some quarters this has caused jubilation. Considering the frightful trend in political affairs in South Africa, this is astounding.

Understandably, the Nationalists are delighted. Dr. Ross, speaking for the Nationalist Party, acclaims Labour's defeat as proof that South Africa has room for two parties only. He says that there is no place for any group with Leftist leanings. In this he is at one with Senator Tucker of the United Party, who declares: "the results show that S.A. is opposed to extremism . . . the fact that several Labour candidates who are regarded as being extreme Left Wing were defeated by large majorities, shows the view of the people." Apart from the fact that it was Labour's "moderates" who suffered the worst defeats, Senator Tucker's allegations about extremism would be more in keeping if they were directed at the Nationalists.

Two-Party System

This is not the first time that the claim has been made for "two parties only" in South Africa. Of course, both the U.P. and the Nats. would like that. It would strengthen their own positions; it would leave the public no alternative, compelling them to be "for" or "against" on every issue, irrespective of the merits of the case. But both major parties are indulging in wishful thinking if they believe that Labour can be eliminated from the political scene in South Africa. Labour has a following which cannot be wrested away, either by the Nats. or the U.P.

Labour's Following

An examination of the polling figures shows that in the seventeen wards where Labour fought, they secured almost 30 per cent. of the votes cast. Under Proportional Representation, Labour would have won not less than five of these 17 seats. This is in spite of the fact that in four wards the Labour candidates did little or no work and operated with practically no organisation.

Had these four wards been properly canvassed and normally campaigned, the Labour vote would have been considerably higher. The significance of the voting figures cannot be overlooked.

Why Labour Lost

A dozen and one minor reasons are advanced for Labour's failure at the polls. The customary post-mortems help to assess the strength and weakness of our organisation and provide valuable knowledge for the future. But it is obvious that there was a general apathy and nervousness amongst those who would normally have supported the Labour candidates. Generally, the campaign was based upon the record of the U.P. in municipal government, although in some wards purely local issues predominated.

The miserable record of the U.P.

in the Johannesburg City Council, with their dictatorial majority, internal dissension and rival factions, was not considered by the electorate. Their proposals to reduce the wages of the transport workers, their banning of the Torch Commando float procession, their restrictions upon free speech in the City, their raising bus and tram fares twice in the past four years, and their failure to deal with the housing question, were also not taken into account. Even the dubbing of Labour candidates as "communist" and "Nationalist" had less effect than usual.

It was obvious that the unceasing propaganda for the defeat of the Nats. at the next general election (conducted by the Labour Party as well as the U.P.) had created in the public mind the idea that the only way to beat the Nats. was to vote U.P.

Skilfully using the cry that "the U.P. is the only party fighting the Nats," the U.P. was able to confuse the issues before the municipal electorate. Local government affairs, and the record of the U.P. in that sphere, were submerged by a desire to show the Nats. the strength of the opposition.

In face of this, the Labour vote of 30 per cent. in the seventeen wards is additionally significant. Despite the diversion of the public's attention from local to national issues, this large body of voters supported the Labour Party against the United Party.

A Nationalist Victory

In cold fact, these elections were a victory for the Nats. While the three Labour councillors were eliminated, three more Nat. councillors were elected. Nationalist representation in the Johannesburg City Council has been almost doubled.

The first signs of this victory were seen when the United Party allowed the leader of the Nationalists, Dr. Ross, and two of his colleagues unopposed returns. Previously the U.P. had declared that every Nat. "must and will be fought." The Labour Party believed this promise and carefully abstained from putting up candidates where three-cornered contests might result.

After the hysterical rejoicing at Labour's defeat dies down in certain quarters, the realisation will come that the U.P.'s "smashing victory" is nothing less than a Nationalist victory, with the disappearance of three Labour councillors and their replacement by three Nats. This event will have serious repercussions in the national political field. No wonder the Nats. are happy with the result of the elections, and welcome the defeat of Labour at the hands of the U.P.

Those who pretend that there is no room in South Africa for a Labour Party know that they are talking rubbish. Neither of the major parties has sufficient appeal to the workers. Controlled and financed as they are by landowners, financiers, industrialists and other wealthy interests, they are unable and generally unwilling to understand and advance the cause of that majority which comprises the wage — and salary — earning classes.

While racial issues predominate, the political weather favours one or other of the major parties. Yet, even now, Labour has shown that there is a significant group strong enough to upset either of them. The Labour vote in the municipal elections can be taken as a fair reflection of its support in all the industrial areas of the Union. While in itself not enough to win seats for Labour, this vote is significant and growing.

Economic considerations must inevitably become of major importance to the electorate. When that time comes — and it is not far off — the true strength of Labour appeal will be revealed.

Sham Workers' Party

The Nationalists, who boast that "the workers and middle classes look to the Nationalists to serve their interests" are already feeling the rumblings of discontent among the workers. They know that even the crafty manoeuvring of their political organisers is failing to strengthen their following among the workers. For this reason they are still toying with their old idea of starting a new kind of "Labour" or "Workers' Party." Before such a party has any hope of success, the Labour Party must be eliminated. The Nat. "Workers' Party" could very easily follow the path of the National Socialist German Workers' Party, better known as the Nazi Party.

The Labour policy of the Nats. shows a strong desire for controlled workers' organisations.

On the other hand, the United Party well know that it can never gain the support of a wide section of the workers. The constant sneers and criticisms levelled at workers by the U.P. press and U.P. spokesmen keep workers suspicious of U.P. intentions. Such things as the recent proposal of the U.P. City Council to reduce wages and worsen conditions of some of their workers, are carefully noted and remembered.

Labour Will Triumph

It is to be regretted that the anti-Nationalist forces are weakened by division. Yet it seems that once again the lesson has to be learned that Labour has a part to play in this country.

Individuals may be defeated, but the Party remains. Its following demands that the Labour Party should continue to fight. The voice of Labour cannot be stilled, either by political enemies or political opportunists. Come what may, Labour supporters will not be denied the opportunity to vote for Labour men.

THE LABOUR VIEW

A New Year Message Full Of Promise For Future

*Natal Mercury
7/1/52*

To give the Labour Party an opportunity of putting its views before the public "The Natal Mercury" places this space at its disposal once a month. "The Natal Mercury" does not necessarily associate itself with the views expressed. This is the 22nd article.

By ALEX HEPPLÉ, M.P.

AT this time of the year it is usual to be of good cheer and to look hopefully forward to the future. It is the occasion for national leaders to issue their New Year messages, ringing out the "old" and ringing in the "new," thanking the nation for tolerating past stupidities and begging them to take further doses.

With surprising regularity the people take their medicine. However far back we delve into history, we find kings, statesmen and political leaders promising their people that the future will be better than the past.

Real prosperity has been "just around the corner" for so long that civilisation must have got into the lane without a turning.

Scarcity Economics

LIVING generations know only of crises upon crises, uncertainty, confusion and fear. When there are plenty of goods available, the people have no money; and when they have the money there is a shortage of goods. People have got past wondering when they will enjoy the time and the place and the loved one together.

In the exhausting struggle for existence the average citizen leaves the solution of the nation's economic problems to the politicians, or at best to the economists. As far as he is concerned, the average citizen concentrates upon earning a living and worrying if he will ever buy as much as it used to. His income is higher than it was in 1939, yet he is worse off. Nevertheless, he stubbornly clings to the evils of scarcity economics and fears to seek salvation along new paths. And so, in a spirit of false and desperate optimism, he laps up the promises of better times ahead, merely to meet disappointment time after time.

Elusive Prosperity

TODAY there are virtually no unemployed; wages are higher than ever before; industry and commerce are making big profits; agricultural production and profits are up; there is large-scale industrial development. Yet, in spite of these outward appearances of prosperity, South Africans are an unhappy and worried people. They are unhappy because they are losing the battle against rising living costs; they are worried because they see no hope for the future.

In his New Year's message for 1950, Dr. Malan said: "The tide has turned in our favour, and farther ahead, the return of normal conditions and greater prosperity is already coming into view—a well-being in which all sections and interests will have their fair share."

That greater prosperity has failed to materialise. The Nationalists will tell you it is because of devaluation, the war in Korea and the mounting expenditure on rearmament overseas. They carefully avoid examining the effect of their own actions upon the lives of the people. Domestic events have played an important part in depressing the people of South Africa.

Rising Cost of Nat. Rule

THE Nationalists have created an atmosphere of fear, suspicion and doubt.

They have frightened desirable immigrants away and discouraged thousands of good people from settling in the Union. They have caused an exodus of large numbers of good South Africans to the Rhodesias.

With their Grievances Commission they have disrupted discipline and efficiency in the Railway service.

Much of their social legislation has brought unhappiness into untold thousands of homes.

Their education policy has snatched away the parents' right to choose the medium of their children's instruction.

They have assailed the constitution and taken away the voting rights of the Coloured people.

They have abrogated the rule of law in the pretence of outlawing Communism.

The full force and effect of these and other acts have not yet been felt. Their cost in money will be incalculable; their cost in human suffering infinite.

Runaway Inflation

IN the economic field a dangerous situation is developing. The Government have surrendered to runaway inflation. Wage and salary earners are facing a bitter future. Despite assurances that profit margins are being watched and that consumers will be protected, the Government have failed utterly to come to grips with the situation. Incomes are falling rapidly in arrears of prices.

The Minister of Economic Affairs appears to concentrate his energies upon boasts of past achievements and vague promises for the future. Government spokesmen join in the cry for increased production, greater saving and fewer demands for social services from the workers. Nowhere, except from the Labour Party, is heard the cry for a pruning of profits, and drastic measures to curb the mad scramble for money-making.

Government's Dilemma

THE Government face the same dilemma as other pro-Capitalist governments.

While they are anxious to solve the economic problem of the nation, they fear to take the necessary steps, because in so doing they would be moving towards Socialism.

They could move towards National Socialism (the Corporate State) which is more likely in the case of our Nationalist Government. The latter step would preserve capitalism and dragoon the workers. In the meantime the Nationalists content themselves with imposing controls and regulations and hoping for the best. They scorn the honest co-operation of the public and prefer rigid, if unintelligent regulation, which disturbs and annoys industry and commerce and often fails to achieve the true benefits of control.

This raises the question of commercial morality. Those who shout loudest for a "free market" are the quickest to stifle free competition. They aim at establishing monopolies, the elimination of their competitors and the setting up of price rings. They cast aside morality as casually as they would a cigarette end.

The current black market in steel illustrates this. It has become so widespread that the Minister of Economic Affairs has taken the extreme and extraordinary step of inviting individuals to write him secretly to inform against black marketeers. It would seem that normally honest businessmen are guilty of participating in these anti-social activities. Their argument is that "Everybody's doing it and if I don't, I'll soon be out of business. My customers aren't interested in my morals; they want me to deliver the goods."

This is one of the growing evils of the profit system for which no pro-capitalist Government has a cure.

On the other hand, they have a quick cure for the current economic problem of inflation. At a recent forum of economists in London it was stated that "a certain amount of unemployment is necessary as a first step to lowering wages and restricting the flow of money." Human factors are treated as of no importance; man is the slave of the machine; profits count before people. Such an attitude suggests that there is no hope for the common man.

The Way Out

BUT there is hope. There is another way. It is through planned democratic Socialist society. Sooner or later the people have to choose between the insecurity and unhappiness of capitalism on the one hand and the security and happiness of Socialism on the other. Socialism is the only form of society that can measure up to modern conditions. Planned society will ensure a fair deal for all; that production will be for use and not for profit; that scarce commodities will be fairly shared; that surpluses will not bankrupt the farmer and the producer; that there will be equality of opportunity for all.

Contained in the programme of the Labour Party are plans for the orderly development of South African society. Due regard is taken of the interests and aspirations of all sections of our community, Agriculture, industry, housing, education, Native affairs and other aspects of society, are all dealt with in a sincere and progressive way.

The Labour Party does not offer quick cures for all the evils which have grown out of decades of capitalist exploitation. It does not offer glowing New Year messages that will fade like will o' the wisps. The Labour Party says that the future lies in the hands of the people. They can embark upon the road to security and happiness if they choose to follow the Party of the people.

The Labour Party, established in South Africa two years before Union, is the only political Party that has retained its identity throughout the years. Today, it is the "Third Party." Because of its character, it is the only Party which can offer the people of South Africa a real alternative. Despite its ups and downs, its disappointments and defeats, the Labour Party is the only Party which can face the future with confidence. The world is moving towards Socialism.

Fake Labour Parties

THERE are people who are anxious to see the end of the Labour Party. It would suit the two major Parties if they could remove the Labour alternative from the political scene. That would compel the electorate to be either "Nationalist" or "United Party" without thought or consideration for policies. Emotional and irrelevant issues could stampede the voters to the polls.

But the Labour Party cannot be eliminated. Even the Nationalists realise that. As discontent grows among urban workers who placed their faith in a Nationalist Government, preparations are being made for a Nationalist "Labour Party," with all the power and finance of the Nationalists behind it. The success of such a Party depends upon the smashing of the Labour Party and the dividing of the trade unions.

Before us are years of crisis. They are years which can decide the fate of democracy in Africa. Opportunist politics can lead us into disaster. In the Labour programme is written a faith for the future, hope for all sections of the people and a better life for everyone. What better promise for the New Year could there be than that?

Forward 1/2/52

POLITICAL PROSPECTS FOR 1952

Article 1/2/52

By ALEX HEPPLER, M.P.



MR. HEPPLER

SOUTH AFRICA is entering upon an eventful year. Normally, the prospect would be a happy one, for this year we celebrate the tercentenary of the landing of Jan van Riebeeck at Cape Town. The coming months will be occupied with these celebrations and should be a happy diversion from the fearful realities of existence in this inflationary year of 1952.

THE THREAT OF WAR. The threat of World War Three continues to exist. The world press blows hot and cold with alternating headlines such as "war danger recedes" and "tension increasing"; but ominously, stock-piling continues and re-armament programmes are stepped up by all countries.

THE THREAT OF PEACE. Recently a United Nations Economic Committee warned its members against the increasing danger of a world-wide depression "when Western re-armament comes to an end or begins to level off." There now seems to be a fear that peace may break out in Korea and cause a slackening in the spending on armaments, precipitating an industrial crisis throughout the world.

THE STERLING CRISIS. The recurring crisis in the Sterling Bloc is upon us once again. South Africa, like other Commonwealth countries will have to take strong measures to save sterling from disaster. This may mean further import restrictions and other control measures for South Africa.

RACE RELATIONS. In addition to the serious economic problems and international difficulties which beset the Union, there is the problem of race relations. Hovering over the coming Tercentenary Celebrations is the cloud of non-European hostility, evidenced by the threat of counter-demonstrations and defiance of certain laws contained in a note sent by the African National Congress to the Prime Minister.

THE COST OF LIVING. Despite full employment, poverty is stalking the workers of South Africa. With grim and ruthless regularity, living costs move upwards, ever upwards. The December Retail Price Index soared to 179.5. On the other hand, workers have received no corresponding increase in wages or cost-of-living allowances.

It seems a far cry to those days when it was fashionable to talk of the "century of the common man." Nowadays the common man is berated because he doesn't produce enough. The worker is fighting a losing battle and he senses it even if he doesn't understand why.

THE GENERAL ELECTION. In the face of these important factors, South Africa moves towards the General Election of 1953. This election is important because it will give the country's answer to five years of Nationalist rule. The full force and effect of Nationalist legislation has still not been felt by the people, because few of these laws are as yet fully operative. Their impact upon the individual has yet to be experienced. Such laws as the Population Registration Act, the Group Areas Act, the Separate Representation of Voters Act, the Native Building Workers Act, the Suppression of Communism Act, are still in their initial stages of operation.

Uncertainty, racial tensions, the threat of war and the ever rising cost of living are demoralising everyone. The stepping stones through the coming year are slippery and dangerous, yet the fierce and reckless political propaganda necessary to condition and mislead the electorate is swinging into motion.

In the insanity of electioneering, the major problems facing South Africa and the world may be forgotten for a while. But when the shouting dies down, these problems will still be there, probably more stark and frightening than ever before.

BACK TO THE DAYS OF THE MINING CAMP

Forward 14/3/52 *Articles 14*
A Comment On The Native Laws Amendment Bill

BY ALEX HEPPLER, M.P.



Mr. A. Hepple has many clauses, amending four Acts, the principal one being the Native Labour Regulation Act of 1911.

The 1911 Act was applicable to Native labourers employed in the Mines. It contained many penal offences, devised to rigidly control and discipline young tribal Natives under contract to work in the mines, and established a severe code empowering Inspectors of Native Labour to impose summary judgment upon offenders.

Spreading The Code

Towards the end of the 1949 Session of Parliament, an apparently innocuous amending Act was passed (Act No. 56 of 1949). Stripped of its legal phraseology and obscurity, this Act extended the definition of "Native Labourer" to include all Native workers. As a result, not only Native mine-workers, but all Natives employed in industry were brought under the special penal provisions of the old Native Labour Regulation Act of 1911.

The Bill now before Parliament is the next step to place Native workers in commerce and industry outside the scope of normal labour laws and employer-employee relations.

THE Native Laws Amendment Bill, which has been debated at great length in Parliament, deals with many matters of a divergent nature. It contains some far-reaching provisions for the control and direction of Native labour. The Bill

Putting The Clock Back

The passing of this Bill will create hosts of new problems in the industrial field. The Nationalist Government, has adopted the outworn and discredited legislation of 1911 as the ideal method of making the best use of South Africa's labour resources in 1952. In 1911 mining was the only industry of nificant. To-day, secondary industry employs more than 400,000 Native workers, while mining employs less than 300,000.

This startling change conveys nothing to the Nationalists. The effect of the 1949 Act and the present Bill is to apply the rigorous laws of our mining camp days and its compounds to a highly developed industrial society. The Government apparently believes that the labour code that was used in the mine compounds for migrant, tribal Natives is eminently suitable for the detribalised urbanised Native factory worker. This conflicts with the facts produced by our experience.

What Facts Show

The Social and Economic Planning Council condemned the system of migratory labour in 1946 as "morally, socially and economically wrong." The Fagan Commission in 1948 declared:—

"A policy based upon the proposition that the Natives in the towns are all Native migrants or can be kept in the stage of temporary migrants . . . would be a false policy, if for no other reason than because the proposition itself in the course of time has been proved to be false."

Last year, the Industrial Legislation Commission commented:

"It would appear extremely difficult to the Commission to justify an extension of the disadvantages and evils attendant upon the employment of migrant labour to all trades and industries. Moreover, there would be

no guarantee that the workers would return to the same industries, and their previous training would, therefore, be lost. The complaint has already been made that the employment of Native labour is uneconomical, because the efficiency of these workers is low; this complaint would be aggravated if all Native labour were migratory."

Promoting Inefficiency

Under this Bill, no distinction is made between skilled and semi-skilled workers on the one hand and raw, untrained labourers on the other. All Native workers are lumped together and classified as "workseekers," whether they have received any training or not.

In consequence, a Native engaged in repetitive work on a machine in a factory, might find that because of a surplus of labour in the area where he has worked and lived for many years, he must accept employment as a street-cleaner in an area far away, merely because such a vacancy exists. He must leave his home and his family, in addition to forfeiting his valuable experience.

Or a Native who has acquired a degree of skill as a mechanic's assistant in a garage might find, on leaving his employment, that he must accept work as a farm labourer in another district.

Slave Labour Law

A Government which puts the clock back by adopting the outmoded legislation of forty years ago and applying it to two-thirds of its industrial force, cannot be taken seriously when it talks about the need for increased production and greater efficiency in industry.

This truly can be described as a slave labour law. It is in conflict with the normal accepted standards for the relationship between employer and employee. It will retard progress, mar efficiency and cause unnecessary friction.

Articles A#

p 100

*no trace of
article*

ALEX. HEPPLE, M. P.

2nd. April 1952.

Mr. Weston,
c/o Sunday Express,
Main Street,
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Mr. Weston,

Herewith statement on the Constitutional crisis
as promised.

I have not seen anywhere a report on the prospects
of a full-scale debate on this issue when Parliament re-assembles,
although many people are asking me about it. Perhaps you would
like to include a reference on this aspect in your story?

When the Budget debate is resumed on the 16th.
April (the day after the resumption of Parliament) Mr. Strauss
will continue his argument on the matter and a general debate is
expected to follow. However, as only four or five days have
been allotted to the whole of the debate on Mr. Havenga's Motion
"That the House go into Committee of Supply", it is doubtful if
more than two days will be devoted to the Constitutional crisis,
because a reasonable amount of time must be left for criticism
of the Budget itself. In addition, there will be the demand
for time from many members who look forward to the Budget debate
as their one opportunity to raise all kinds of matters.

It would seem, therefore, that argument under
the Budget will be only a preliminary skirmish to the full-scale
debate which must take place when the Government introduces its
Bill against the Courts.

Sincerely Yours,

rds

*Prepared for
Sunday Express
at their request but not published
(see letter attached)*

NOT PUBLISHED

2/4/62

CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS.

STATEMENT BY Mr. ALEX. HEPPLER, M. P. (Senior Vice-Chairman
of the S. A. Labour Party).

When the Appellate Court's decision on the Separate Representation of Voters case was announced, the Labour Party welcomed it as an affirmation of the principle that the rights of the citizen depend upon the Courts upholding the rule of law against all who seek to breach it, however powerful they be.

The Labour Party warned the Government that any attempt to attack or sidetrack the decision of the Appellate Court would be bitterly resented and strenuously resisted by all liberty-loving South Africans.

Since then the Government has announced its intention to introduce legislation, retrospective to December 1931, establishing that the Courts will not have the testing rights of Acts of Parliament. In other words, the Government seeks to evade the Court's decision and persists in its attempts to violate the entrenched clauses of our Constitution.

In a joint statement, the four Provincial leaders of the Nationalist Party have declared that "the fight will be fought to the end; no compromise is possible". It must be obvious to everyone that this statement, while making generous use of high-sounding phrases, such as "the struggle for freedom" and "the voice of the people", obscures the real issue. That issue is a simple one. It is the obligation upon all South African Governments to obtain a two-thirds majority of both Houses sitting together if they want to change the entrenched clauses of the South Africa Act, upon which the Union was founded.

The Nationalist statement declares that "It is the viewpoint of the Nationalist Party - and it is the only fully democratic viewpoint - that the will of the people is ^{sovereign} ~~xxxxxxx~~ and must fully express itself in Parliament which represents it". They fail to explain how the Constitutional demand for a two-thirds majority makes the will of the people less sovereign. There

STATEMENT BY Mr. A. HEPPLE, M. P. (continued)

were many sound and proper reasons which prompted the insertion of this safeguard into the South Africa Act, and ever since Union prominent Nationalists have been amongst the stoutest defenders of the entrenched clauses. Leading members of the present Government, before the passing of the Status Act of 1934, pledged their good faith not to alter the entrenched clauses of the ~~South Africa Act~~ South Africa Act without a two-thirds majority. Has this pledge no place in their so-called "struggle for freedom"?

The Nationalist Party could have followed the obvious democratic course of going to the electorate and asking for that two-thirds majority. Instead, they have chosen the undemocratic and less honourable path of seeking to legislate against the Courts. Their reference to the Bench as "a few judges appointed and paid by the State" has a sinister ring. The Nationalists intend to obtain permanent political power by passing another law by a simple majority.

The determination of the Nationalists to override the Constitution and the rule of law must be resisted with equal determination. Otherwise democratic government in South Africa will be a step nearer extinction.

E N .D.

Johannesburg
2/4/52.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE WEEK: EVENTS IN PARLIAMENT

FORWARD
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USUALLY the week in Parliament fades disconsolately to a close late on Friday afternoon in some desultory debate over a branch railway line or an irrigation scheme in a remote corner of the country. A handful of members occupy the benches, most of them nervously hoping to catch the Speaker's eye.

This may be one of their rare opportunities to take part in a debate and plead a case that will be an aid to popularity in their constituencies. If they are Government members, it is an occasion when they escape being shut out by their garrulous, over-dominating Ministers and front benchers. Other members drift in and out of the Chamber as if to see what the chances are of an early end to the debate, so that they can turn their backs upon a week that has been anxious and tiring.

NO BREAD AND BUTTER

In its more fortunate and responsible moments the House on a Friday afternoon might have before it a Labour Party motion on the cost-of-living or some other serious economic problem. But even the Labour Party motion failed to attract the usual attention this year. At one stage the Labour Party had to move an adjournment of the debate because not a single Cabinet Minister was in his place. Not even the Government appeared to believe or care that the rising cost of living was causing increasing poverty throughout the country. Against such apathy the Labour Party was beating the air.

BUDGET AND THE CONSTITUTION

Now private members days are gone for the rest of the session. Since the Easter recess, Government business claims all the time of the House. On the first Friday after the resumption the House sat into the night to finish the Budget debate. Most of the speeches were devoted to the Constitutional crisis. Four Opposition speakers, Mushet, Moore, Oppenheimer and Hepple dealt with the Budget itself. Not a single member of the Government had a word to say

about it. While they used many hours of the rationed time in making propaganda speeches, not a minute could be found by any Nationalist member to comment upon the taxes upon the few pleasures of the poor—cold drinks, sweets, beer and cigarettes. Nor did one of them think it necessary to say anything about the reduction in the Primary Income Tax rebate, which makes thousands of the near-poor liable to Income Tax.

HAVENGA'S DILEMMA

This week began with the Minister of Finance, Mr. Havenga, replying to the Budget Debate. He spoke on two things—the criticism of his Budget and his attitude on the Constitutional issue. In neither was he convincing. Despite his vehemence and gesticulations he was obviously ill at ease.

For the third year in succession, Mr. Havenga completely ignored the Labour Party. Perhaps their accurate analysis of his budgeting, especially in so far as it affects the man in the street, embarrasses him; perhaps if he came to answer Labour's arguments he would find himself entangled in the contradictions of the Nationalist policy of "we stand for the rich and poor alike." He seems to prefer to devote most of his time to carefully answering Mr. Harry Oppenheimer, M.P., for whom he shows obvious respect.

MORE LAWS

After the Minister's reply to the Budget debate, Parliament quickly put seven new laws through their concluding stages.

One of these was the Criminal Sentences Bill, under which the Courts will be compelled to impose floggings for certain crimes. The Opposition voted against the third reading, but the Bill was passed.

Mr. Alex Hepple, M.P., will be writing this Cape Town commentary for "Forward" each week. Whenever opinions are expressed they are those of a writer and are not to be read as opinions of this Journal.

Henceforth, tens of thousands of floggings will be inflicted upon wrongdoers in South African prisons.

Will this allow potential victims to sleep any more soundly in their beds at night? Will it make prospective criminals hesitate before committing crimes?

The Labour Party asked the Minister, Mr. C. R. Swart, if he would repeal this savage law if he found, after reasonable time, that it failed to reduce crimes. "Blackie" sat sternly silent and refused to answer.

HIGH COURT OF PARLIAMENT

The big moment of the week was the motion for "leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the establishment of a High Court of Parliament and matters incidental thereto." Dr. Donges, the Minister of the Interior, who was caught off-side on the last occasion, carried the ball for the Government. He took the unusual course of telling the House quite a lot about the Bill. The more he talked, the more the Opposition was amazed.

It soon became obvious that there will be many long and bitter days of debate before this High Court of Parliament Bill passes through its Third Reading. For two days the House argued the motion for leave to introduce the Bill and the date for the Second Reading Debate, which may be at its height by the time this appears in print.

TORCH COMMANDO AND EX-INTERNEES

The House then returned to the Committee of Supply. Before long it found itself involved in a heated argument about the Torch Commando. Charges and challenges were hurled across the floor and tempers rose to a dangerous pitch. Even in the lobbies there were angry exchanges. Elsewhere in Cape Town the Torch Commando was holding a conference—quietly unaware that in the Assembly they were causing the fur to fly.

While the Blikfakkels were under fire in the Assembly, Dr. Donges was telling a startled Senate in his most dulcet and wooing manner his Government's plans to compensate civil servants who had been interned during the war.

This creation of a new army of "war veterans" was a further instalment in the "step by step" policy of the Nationalist Government.

And so Friday, instead of being a time of peaceful ending to a busy week, was now a House of sound and fury. The desultory air of the normal Friday afternoon had been replaced by bitter and noisy controversy. On this note members parted for the week-end.

Alex Hepple's Column:

TENSION IN THE HOUSE FOCUSSED ON EVENTS UPSETTING THE COUNTRY

By ALEX HEPPLÉ, M.P.



WITH the going of April and the coming of May, Cape Town has been a city of foreboding this week. A cold north-west wind has brought the first drenching rains of the winter, lashing and driving into the deepest corners of the city.

Hurrying Members have dashed, dripping wet, into the cosy warmth of Parliament. Despite this cosy warmth, Parliament was about the most unpleasant place in Cape Town. Ominous clouds were gathering here, too. The tension of the developing struggle over the Constitution was beginning to show a marked effect upon Members. The Government's growing anger and impatience were engendering a deep hostility and stubbornness in the Opposition.

At every opportunity, debates in the House turned to the disturbing events that were taking place in the country and in Parliament as a result of the Government's proposal to set up its own High Court of Parliament.

● Mysterious Silence of Dr. Malan

The week began with a continuation of the debate on the Prime Minister's Vote in the Estimates. For two days the Opposition fired criticisms and questions at Dr. Malan. They asked why special forces of police were being drafted into Cape Town; they asked why the galleries and the lobbies of Parliament were crowded with plain-clothes detectives; they asked if the Government was planning to ban the Torch Commando; they asked what the Prime Minister meant when he said, "Now I have got you where I want you!" They asked many other questions.

Some of them asked for explanation of the Prime Minister's propaganda speeches outside, such as that asked by Mr. John Christie, leader of the Labour Party.

He asked what Dr. Malan meant when he told a meeting at Klaver that "All six members of the Labour Party in the House of Assembly are liberalistic — some of them came very close to Communism." This was as libellous as calling a man a near-criminal, as the law stands to-day.

To these and other questions the Prime Minister remained silent and unmoved.

● Sphinx or Schemer?

Was the Prime Minister testing himself in the role of a Sphinx? Was he sulking? Was he scheming the best way to thwart the Opposition? Or, more likely, had he decided to treat the Opposition with contempt? Having maintained

this silence to the bitter end, Dr. Malan shuffled out of the House, content in the thought that his own Vote was now approved, even though he had not said a word in defence or explanation of his stewardship.

This attitude was a warning to all who opposed his will in his "step by step" programme for a Christian-Nationalist State. He was in no mood to reason. The entrenched clauses were the dead hand of the past.

● Cloak and Dagger

After the Prime Minister's Vote, the Minister of Justice, Mr. C. R. Swart, took his place. Having failed with the P.M. the Opposition tried their luck with the Minister of Justice. After much questioning, he told the House that he had very secret information which he could not be expected to reveal. He assured a surprised House that he had acted in the interests of public safety and good order.

Pressed further, he held up some newspaper cuttings and read out some of the "threats" that had been made, and he hinted mysteriously that he knew more than he cared to tell. The "threats" he quoted included speeches by members of the Torch Commando and leaders of the African National Congress.

No one seemed to believe that these "threats" were being translated into "immediate plans." The Torch Commando promptly denied that they were plotting violence and described the charge as utter nonsense; the African National Congress was busy in Bloemfontein, trying to get money and volunteers and deciding when to start its campaign "for the defiance of unjust laws."

As the week passed without incident anywhere in the Union, the mystery of the sudden movement of police deepened.

● Big Brother is Watching You

The serious-looking men sitting about the lobbies last week, intently reading newspapers, could not be mistaken for Members of Parliament. They sat still for too long. These were the detectives. They dutifully remained at their posts throughout the long wearying hours of each sitting, pretending to be oblivious of everyone, yet furtively watching—what? Were some members plotting to emulate Guy Fawkes? Were there assassins in our midst.

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Although Members joked about the presence of detectives, they wondered what had happened to South African democracy that was now to operate under the protection of the police. If the coming debate on the High Court of Parliament Bill was to be conducted under police surveillance, Members could justly complain that there was intimidation and a state of fear. While normal precautions against the occasional fanatic must be expected, the special drafting of police and C.I.D. men to Parliament is creating a state of emergency — hardly the atmosphere for the calm consideration and analysis of a Bill to make M.P.s Judges of a Superior Court.

● Die Volk Daar Buite

Of course, one can imagine the enthusiasm in a platteland dorp as residents wave good-bye to the local constable as he leaves for Cape Town to guard the local M.P.

This is good propaganda to build up emotion and feverish Nationalism, among "Die Volk daar buite." Such political antics are probably designed to build up morale for the next election. As far as democratic government is concerned they add nothing to our credit.

● War Measures

The war ended seven years ago, yet South Africa still operates under certain War Measures. This year again the Government has come to extend some of them for a further one or two years. Throughout this week the Government has sandwiched the War Measures Continuation Bill in between the Committee of Supply. Each time the Labour Party opposed the Bill.

Among other things it deals with the settlement of disputes between Native employees and their employers, for which a Bill was recently drafted and circulated amongst employers and European trade unions. The Bill also extends for a further two years the prohibition of gatherings of more than twenty persons on mining ground. The purpose is to prevent Native mineworkers from freely meeting and organising to bargain for better wages and conditions.

In the midst of the fight to defend the Constitution the Labour Party reminded Parliament that there were other rights and freedoms that needed to be defended.

Nevertheless, the Bill was passed, and so another unnecessary War Measure was retained, to aggravate worsening race relations.

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