

22.6.11

Statement Issued to the Press 2/8/1938

CAPE TOWN.

As the elected representatives of the Native People in Parliament we wish to place on record our considered opinion with regard to the series of events leading to the recent Cabinet crisis. The point at issue in that crisis has been on what principles the nomination of Senators under section 24 of the South Africa Act should be made. This section requires that certain Senators should be nominated "on the ground mainly of their thorough acquaintance, by reason of their official experience or otherwise, with the reasonable wants and wishes of the Coloured races in South Africa." We feel strongly that such nominations should be made primarily and in good faith on the grounds stated in the Constitution and not with the object mainly of serving any other purpose. We do not feel that the nomination which led to the cabinet crisis was made in the spirit of the Constitution. In our opinion the cause of good government no less than that of the people whom we represent has suffered; and we desire to endorse the protest already made in the Senate against the nomination in question.

We regard the obligation of the Government to make conscientious nominations under section 24 of the Constitution - an obligation which unfortunately has not always been fulfilled in the past - as in no way impaired by the new type of representation in the Senate and in the House of Assembly. At no time during the passing of the Representation of Natives Act, 1936, did the view obtain any support that this new form of representation should in any way affect the existing system of nominated Senatorships.

It should be made clear that our concern for the proper application of Section 24 antedates by some months the present crisis. At our first meeting at Pretoria in December, 1937, and on subsequent occasions prior to the present Session,

We.....

we discussed this matter and decided to approach the Prime Minister on the dissolution of the present Senate, to urge upon him the observance of Section 24 in letter and in spirit.

(Sgd.) Margaret Ballinger.

Edgar H. Brookes.

G. K. Hemming.

J. D. Rheinallt Jones.

C. H. Malcomess.

Donald B. Molteno.

W. T. Welsh.

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