

THE FALSE PROPHETS.

certain If it were not so tragic it would be laughable the way European politicians and labour leaders have been arguing among themselves on what should be done for, or to the African Workers. The so called "Native Problem" is a recognised, indeed the only major political pawn in South Africa and our local politicians have been playing football with the African standard of living for generations. When however leading European Trade Unionists begin generalising on the African proletariat then we must examine and expose these utterances for what they are.

Some weeks ago, the all-white mineworkers Union under the unfortunate leadership of Mr. Ellis declared war on their African fellow miners by initiating a conference between themselves and the Rhodesian Mineworkers for the express purpose of finding ways and means to keep the African miners from advancing economically and politically. This was a plain fascist tactic by fascist organisation and deserves to be treated as such. It fits into the apartheid pattern of the Nationalist party of which Ellis is a member.

What deserves closer study is the attitude of the centralist labour leaders like Mr. T.C. Rutherford and politicians like Sir Roy Welensky. Both these men have recently appealed for more opportunities for Africans to enter Trades and for closer economic integration. The reason Mr. Rutherford gave for this general attitude is interesting. Closer economic integration he said recently in Rhodesia would ensure that militant political action on the part of the African workers would be stifled. Fewer jobs -- greater political consciousness; more-- jobs less politics. Trade Unionism, he maintains, is a safeguard against national liberation.

What sophistry! as if you can separate industrial organisation for political development. The fight for the vote, better housing, education, freedom of movement, all these things are intensified when the Africans have a strong Trade Union movement and well do. The Nats realise it even if Mr. Rutherford does not. We doubt whether Mr. Rutherford is sincere in what he says since it was he who dissolved the African Printing and Allied Workers Union at the behest of the labour Department, and it was he who accepted an even lower rate for labourers in the printing industry in the last agreement. In any case the African worker will reject any economic advance on condition of "good" political behaviour. Rutherford and Welensky and their ilk could bear this in mind for future reference.

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TREASON TRIAL, 1956 1961

PUBLISHER:

Publisher:- Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand

Location:- Johannesburg

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