

FIGHTING TALK

Vol. 12 No. 1

Price 6d.

Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper.

JANUARY, 1956

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on the

**INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION
BILL**

OUR NEW AGE

COMMENT

AS each day makes more clear the fact that Britain has bitten off more than she can chew in Cyprus, a note of panic bordering on hysteria begins to enter the news reports of the British press.

LAST DITCH DISASTER

"No amount of secret diplomacy... can disguise the fact that the only real way out is for Britain to retreat from her present stand." So cables the *Rand Daily Mail's* correspondent in Nicosia. But sober sanity, and the realisation that Cyprus has been lost to imperialism for ever, finds no echo in the administrative and military policies of the British ruling class. Cyprus was conquered by force of arms. It has been held by force of arms. And today the attempt is being made to prevent its liberation by force of arms. British imperialism prepares for another, last-ditch stand against the people of the Empire. All the classic panoply of imperialism is here. There is martial law, and military occupation by British troops. There is the system of collective fines on whole villages, including the confiscation of livestock, homes and property, for every desperate act of retribution against the oppressors. These were the weapons which conquered and subdued an empire a century ago.

But this is the year 1956. The colonial people have learnt the science of the struggle for liberty. And the weapons of the past are proving ineffective against the movements of the present. Against their oppressors, the people of Cyprus presented a national united front in which all classes, groups and parties of the island joined to conduct a peaceful, political campaign. When that campaign became irresistible by other methods, the British Government answered it with a military dictatorship. The United Front held, despite every attempt to buy off sections of it with constitutional plans for a share in the spoils of exploitation. From political agitation, the people have moved to mass civil disobedience, marked by a unity and discipline which comes only from profound consciousness of the aims of the struggle. Where military and semi-military action has become necessary against the military dictatorship, it has been taken with discipline and courage, inspired by a great revolutionary spirit and tradition. There has been no sporadic, individual terror. There has been no sectarian running in advance of the people, which could have cut the Communists and the left wing off from Archbishop Makarios and the middle class. Against such a movement as this, all the arsenal of imperialism is proving itself impotent. Its last-ditch is becoming a grave of its own digging.

THERE was a time in India, Burma and the rest of the "brightest jewels of the Crown" when masses of ordinary people would pour into the streets to see the fanfare, elephants, uniforms and brass-bands that announced that Royalty was once again on parade. Every flicker of every Royal eyelash became headline news for press and radio. But the scene has shifted. Never have there been such crowds of welcome,

counted in millions in Bombay and Calcutta, as have turned out to see two ordinary men in ordinary, workday suits—Soviet visitors Krushchev and Bulganin. Statesmen in London and Washington who once swelled with pride at the Royal scene, turn pale, angry, afraid. Frenziedly they "warn" the Indian people against being misled; they "discover" the sinister intentions of the visitors; they "debunk" everything that the visitors have to say. To no avail. There has been no visit of foreigners in history more full of meaning for our times than this. For Krushchev and Bulganin come to India, not as Royalty demanding homage, but as ambassadors to the ordinary people of goodwill and friendship from a great nation abroad. In itself this is something new and great, marking the new world age where the struggle between war and peace is being determined by the ordinary people. In addition, their tumultuous welcome speaks of the tremendous warm, fraternal feelings that exist amongst the people of India for the people and the Government of the Soviet Union. Despite all the snarling in the Anglo-American press, pulpits and parliaments, the Indian people have come to know and love the people of the Soviet Union, not as individuals, but as protagonists of peace, of national independence and of social progress. "India", Nehru declares, "does not stand in any camp". But the people have had their say. Clearly, today, the people of India stand in the camp of peace and of equality of nations, whose advance-guard is the Soviet Union.

TO the fear-ridden racialists who head South Africa's government, the very principle of international co-operation through the United Nations is gall and ana-

THROWN OUT OF COURT

thema. Criticism of South Africa's policies by world opinion is bad enough, but continual censure by an international organisation which Louw and Donges have so often described as "dominated by Non-European nations"—why, that can really not be stomachable. Swart would surely like to deal with those "Non-European agitators" under the Suppression of Communism Act! Denied such satisfaction, South Africa has year after year tried rather feebly to defend her discriminatory policies, worn thin the arguments against U.N. concern with discrimination practised by individual governments, and even tried to convince the world—and herself—that all except South Africa are out of step. This year South Africa goose-stepped out of the United Nation sessions and impressed none but Nationalists and the United Party which, before the Strydom and Malan governments, tried the same tactics and threatened the same policy of self-isolation from all the world.

As long as an exclusively White government whose very existence is based on discrimination, decides the way of this country, South Africa will continue to blot her world copybook. The deadlock will be broken here. The peoples' representative government will send a representative delegation to world forums and the days of unashamedly "justifying" racialism will be ended.

FIGHTING

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Vol. 12 No. 2

Price 6d.

FEBRUARY, 1956

TALK

The Senate Act

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THE FORGOTTEN MILLION OF THE PROTECTORATES

By Alan Doyle

★ ★ ★

EGYPT AND THE MIDDLE EAST

By Basil Davidson

★ ★ ★

ISRAEL'S ARMS CRISIS

★ ★ ★

Short Story: "TORNADO"

By D. A. Leonard

A MONTHLY JOURNAL FOR DEMOCRATS

CENTRAL NEWS AGENCY LTD.
BROOKLYN BRANCH

OF WAR AND PEACE

COMMENT

IT is becoming as clear as a pikestaff that the days of the affiliation of exclusively European sports bodies international organisations is drawing to a close. If the soccer probe ends—as now seems likely—with a decision in favour of the Non-European body, the S.A. Soccer Federation, it will be the first breach in a once impregnable wall. In its way such a breach is inevitable, either now or in the near future. Only the head-in-sand delusions of White South Africans, who dream of 2000 years of supremacy, prevents the recognition of its inevitability. This is a new age. The colonial peoples of many lands have liberated themselves from centuries of subjection. The lands of socialism have broken out of the encircling fence of un-touchability which once surrounded them. Together they have entered into and transformed all the former preserves of the self-titled “civilised” nations, the imperial nations, the controllers of international sport, trade and politics. South Africa’s white monopoly of the Springbok badge, once accepted and even approved of by the caste-bound administrators of the sporting world, becomes an anachronism in the new age, a running sore, a reminder of inferiority, a standing insult based on colour which can no longer be tolerated in the reconstituted councils of the world’s sport.

But the first breach in the wall does not spell victory. Colour-bar thinking is deeply ingrained in white South Africa, and does not vanish in the face of international criticism. A decision by the Federation of International Football Associations in favour of the South African Soccer Federation will not radically transform the situation. For though the Federation has no colour, it also has no European membership. Its affiliation therefore—so runs the argument accepted by European soccer officials and the daily press alike—will be a hollow victory; for the South African government will never permit a Non-European team to travel abroad wearing the green-and-gold; nor will it permit visiting White teams to compete against Non-Europeans at home. As things now stand, it is argued, nominal affiliations of the Federation will mean real exclusion of South African teams from international contests.

And as things now stand there is some substance to the argument. But things must not be left to stand as they now do. Even a decision from the international sports bodies favourable to Non-European sportsmen is but the stepping-stone to victory, and not victory itself. That victory requires two further changes. It requires that truly national sports associations be built in which there are White and Non-White members on a basis of equality, and selected for Springbok badges on merit

alone. It requires also that the government be changed for one which really represents the people of all races, and which is based on the ideas of full race equality. Perhaps such changes are too much to ask of a soccer federation. But the road to the present breach has been paved not by sportsmen alone, but also by the efforts of the liberation movement, here and abroad, who have fought every stage of the way for the recognition of the equality of men of different races. This is not the end of the road. It is half time. There is a long way still to go before truly national teams, drawn from people of all races, carry the Springbok badge. It is that long-range goal which is set out in the Freedom Charter, and towards which sportsmen can only advance hand in hand with the liberation movement.

SOONER or later, truth will out. Even from the mouth of an American politician. In an unguarded moment of truthfulness, Mr. Dulles told the magazine *Life* that the path of American diplomacy as practised by himself consisted of bringing America constantly to the brink of war, without actually involving her in any shooting. The statement, which will have come as no surprise to most people outside the land of the Stars and Stripes, certainly raised a considerable furore inside it. Before the smoke had cleared, President Eisenhower rushed in to affirm that Mr. Dulles was America’s best Foreign Secretary ever! Vice-President Nixon, on the other hand, complained somewhat querulously that Mr. Dulles had been “indiscreet”. Overnight, for all the undecided, the truth stood revealed. Peace, spoken of so often and so loud by Mr. Dulles and the Government he represents, is not their policy. It is only discretion which makes them talk of peace while manoeuvring to keep their people and the world on the brink of war. This is something which will be remembered in the months ahead.

But in Mr. Dulles’ moment of truth, he still left much unsaid that needs to be said. If his diplomacy aims—as he says it does—to keep Americans just outside the shooting range, it is not so fussy when it comes to other people—as the men and women of Korea, China and Taiwan have reason to know. If his diplomacy is to bring America constantly to the brink of war, it is because this diplomacy has paid off record dividends to the multi-millionaire steel, chemical and armaments trusts which are the real power behind Eisenhower’s presidential throne. No doubt discretion leads Mr. Dulles to speak about his Government as “republican and democratic”. But, in fact, this is the authentic voice and character of imperialism, of the dying system which now preys on all mankind, and whose only art is the twin “art” of Mr. Dulles—war, and blackmail of war.

Bluffing, bribing, threatening; using agents and spies; speaking with honeyed tongues

these are part of the NAD technique to try to win African support for Apartheid

Out of The Dark Valleys

By HILDA WATTS

ANY government, no matter how despotic, needs support from some of the people if it is to maintain its rule. This was true of Hitler's fascist Germany; it is true of Strydom's Nationalist South Africa.

Without such support it becomes impossible to administer the laws. The complete and total opposition of the people to any of the government's measures would result in their becoming inoperable. It is not sufficient to have the support of a large section of the White electorate alone, nor simply the administrative machinery in the form of civil servants. There must be in addition a network of unpaid government agents among the mass of the people themselves, whose job it is to mislead and confuse the people, to confound united opposition to the government's policies, to re-direct the peoples' anger against the government into other channels, and to act as spies so that those who threaten to organise or unite the people against unpopular policies may be speedily removed, and others blackmailed by various means into silence.

Everyone knows how this was done in Nazi Germany. It is interesting to see the way in which the Nationalist government sets about the same task.

There are, first, the paid servants in the form of the Native Affairs Department, an organisation which today is undertaking a gigantic nation-wide window-dressing for apartheid; and which has a network of information officers up and down the country who are rooting among the African people to win support for apartheid, and to obtain Africans—big or small, chiefs or nonentities, who will give their open support.

Father—Chief—God !

At the head of this most active and complex organisation stands the benevolent father himself, Dr. Verwoerd. Since he is the biggest chief of all, and sets the tune for those beneath him, let us start our journey into the dark valleys of apartheid propaganda with this self-appointed saviour of the African people.

It is not too much to assert that Dr. Verwoerd, like his notorious German predecessor, believes that he is god. He has an obsession with himself as the father of the African people. The NAD issues an "informal" publication called "Bantoe-Bantu" and anyone who does not suffer from ulcers and has a well-controlled blood pressure may read this magazine.

The man Kharibe who wrote a poem in "Bantu" to Dr. Verwoerd, for instance, describes him as the "Shepherd of the black races, the defender of the Bantu . . . our rock, our mountain . . . our refuge, our shield, the Saviour who has rescued us at the time of need". He goes on:

"Glory unto thee, Dr. Verwoerd . . . thou hast answered our prayer . . .

*We now sit in the glory of thy good works,
We shall never forsake thy laws, for they bring
Plenty, wisdom and knowledge.*

*Dr. Verwoerd, thou art with us! Glory unto thee
our redeemer!"*

Now Mr. Kharibe has not thought this all out for himself. For Dr. Verwoerd has invented a new kind of gobbledy-gook, a language overflowing with flowery similes, in which he chooses to address the African people. One has the impression that Dr. Verwoerd believes that he is speaking in the idiom of the people, and his officials and underlings also try to emulate the great man.

Thus, in his speeches, he likens "agitators" to the rock pigeons who hide during the night and come out at day to prey on crops; he compared critical speakers at one of his indabas to water which flows down a river without benefitting anybody, in contrast to his own speech which was water caught in a dam, watering both men and beasts. Typical was his New Year wish for the Bantu, when he called for dawn in which the darkness of uncertainty and suspicion is chased out by the light of knowledge, faith and trust.

"Open your eyes and see the blessings of which you have already heard", he intones, "let the plough sink in the wet earth and make use of the warmth which will come. Let the cattle graze in the young green grass. Do not sleep and wait until the drought or the night comes again. It is dawn for the Bantu"

with such strange language and confused metaphors—(does he really believe this is African idiom, or think it poetic?)—the benign father speaks to his people. As he speaks, he holds out a holy grail which he assures the people is within their grasp. Dr. Verwoerd and his officials tell the Africans that apartheid means self-government, prosperity, the building of rich towns and industries in their own territories. A veil is drawn over the bitter sufferings in town and countryside, over the raids, assaults, jails, deportations, shanty towns; over the sack-cloth farm-labourers shanghaied from their homes. The NAD is already busy with the setting out of a number of "potential towns in Bantu areas", says Mr. de Wet Nel, Vice-Chairman of the Native Affairs Commission, and in those areas there will develop rich cities, where African professional and businessmen will have a free field.

"A Million Openings for the Bantu" is the title that Mr. F. J. de Villiers, Under-Secretary for Bantu Education, gives to his address on graduation day to Non-European students. He chides Africans for not having produced skilled workmen and professional men. "How many dentists have we produced?" he asks them. "I know of none. How many doctors? A mere handful. How many engineers or architects? I know of none. How many businessmen? Very few".

Useless to reply to Mr. de Villiers: "How many faculties exist at Universities for training African dentists? "We know of none". How many for doctors? "Very few . . ." for he maintains the fault lies with Africans themselves, but once apartheid has become a fact, he says, thousands of African doctors, dentists,

businessmen, etc., will find ample scope for training and skill in "Bantu" territories.

Thus the first way in which the NAD seeks to win Africans to Nationalist policies is by deliberate lying; by painting a picture of a future which is economically and practically an absolute impossibility—as anyone who stops to think for a moment will realise; by concealing a hopeless future with a mirage of deliberate deception.

In this NAD wonderland, realities take on strange new meanings. The extension of the hated pass laws to women, with all its cruel implications, becomes a favour or benefit that is being conferred by a kind-hearted government. The sordid site-and-service schemes are wonderful housing estates; truth stands on its head.

Bluffing—Threatening—Buying

Then come the unpaid government agents, the individuals who give their support to apartheid. Who are they, how does the NAD find them?

There are three methods used to obtain this support. The first is by bluffing and lying, as we have shown here. Don't Africans want to be educated in their own tongue? Of course they do: well, says the government, that's but one of the privileges Bantu Education confers on you. Don't you want to preserve your race purity? Ethnic grouping will achieve it. Don't you want to run your own country? Here is the Bantu Authorities Act.

Then there are those who are not bluffed, but are bought. Directly or indirectly, they obtain certain advantages for themselves. These bought men include agents like Bengu who set up the Bantu National Congress and posed as a liberator of the people—until he was proved to be a common criminal.

Not much higher on the scale are those who are not bought directly, but yield to threats to themselves, their position or family. Into this category come chiefs, civil servants, teachers, who give way under pressure. Mr. C. N. Young, Under-Secretary for Native Areas, warned that those chiefs "who are unwise and do not fall into line with the Bantu Authorities idea will in future have no tribe". Chiefs and headmen well know that their status depends on their acceptance and co-operation in carrying out government policies.

No man can lightly throw away his livelihood, and each thinks to himself, "What will become of my family?" It is not easy to have to sacrifice one's own children . . . *'yet these men poison the life-stream of our nation.* The choice must be made, and in the end those are happiest who, whatever the cost, have won the love and respect of their people; the future is theirs.

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Scurrying around among the teachers, chiefs, clerks and other civil servants, the NAD finds individuals whose fulsome praise of the mighty Verwoerd and the wonderful NAD assures them that they will never be without a job as long as the Nationalists reign.

Praising the government for its good deeds, for instance, is one K. H. Mtshiselwa, who says, "*Do we ever compare our privileges in the Reserves with those of town people?*"

"Is anything wrong with the Bantu Education Act?" asks G. W. C. Poho. "The scale weighs favourably heavier in favour of the Afrikaner's handling of a *deserving Bantu*".

"Bantu Education is real, it is dynamic, and all-round, it is the instrument for laying the good founda-

tions of the future of the Bantu children", says M. E. R. Mathiva, "Bantu education is the upliftment of the Bantu children . . . it stimulates the Bantu child to think . . . it is progressive", and he concludes: "Well done 'Fathers of the Bantu Education' and may God prolong your days so that you may help us with new ideals".

"I regard the Bantu Authorities Act as the best piece of legislation ever passed", declares Chief Pilane; while the Rev. Wilfred Roxa of the Bantu Methodist Church writes to express his sincere gratitude for what the government is doing for the Bantu people. "Here is wonderful government", he exclaims, ". . . real freedom in disguise". (What a disguise!)

J. R. Matle describes ethnic grouping as "God's answer to us Bantu . . . other men call these ethnic groupings 'Apartheid', I say 100 times no".

One writes to say that what the government is doing on apartheid will exactly benefit all races proportionally. Another says "Bantu" (the magazine) has opened our eyes and we are today able to see the road that will lead us to new heights". Another reverend gentleman cries that "Bantu" has enabled him to understand the government's policy", without it his ears would have been open to false information spread abroad by biased persons.

Dangerous Words

Perhaps *Fighting Talk* readers are astonished to read these samples of the support the government is obtaining from certain Africans. But a word of warning—we must not simply laugh at the picture of servile, crawling creatures that it presents. These people become the spies and agents of the government, reporting every teacher who does not seem enthusiastic enough about Bantu Education, every chief who may waver in his praise of the government. They form, with the type of dubious financial backing that Bengu had, vicious little organisations with no membership, but the means to print racial leaflets stirring up hate against the Indians, Jews and other groups. There is the shady Supreme Council; the Abantu-Batho Apartheid Association for the promotion of ethnic grouping; the Bantu Nationalist Party for the advancement of Nationalist policy; and so on.

Their propaganda does find a foothold. Some people become neutral, some confused and apathetic; some become afraid and keep silent; some have their rightful anger diverted into anti-Indian or anti-Semitic hatreds. Still others enter the peoples' organisations for the purpose of confusing and splitting them; these may pose as opponents of the government; they must be recognised by their deeds, not words.

Every country has known such people. Kastner sold thousands of his own people to torture and certain death. Quisling, Petain, "Lord Haw Haw"—there were plenty of them. Inevitably the people found them out, but what suffering and damage they caused first! They all called themselves "nationalists"—just like the government.

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"The history of the peoples of the world is an object lesson in separate development", writes the NAD in "Bantu". By what greater lie could they expose themselves! *The history of the peoples of the world is an object lesson in intermingling—ONLY THUS* has civilisation developed, by the constant intermingling of peoples and cultures. One reason for Africa's backwardness was this very fact, that for hundreds of years the African continent and her peoples were cut off from

the mainstream of the cultural development of the world; that African tribes, as Basil Davidson has written, in their southwards migrations, moved away from the cradles of early civilisation, so that their social evolution slowed up.

Civilisation is a great river that flows from nation to nation, fed by a thousand tributaries of different cultures and nationalities. The intention of the Nationalist government, through its many laws and acts, is to cut Africans off once more from the life-giving river, returning them to a backwater more foul and stagnant than ever in the past.

Couched in Verwoerdian language, the following little gem appears in "Bantu": "There are those who

refuse to believe that the Bantu can develop. Their tongues are often coated with honey and they are the vociferous ones who talk to you about suppression. Their voices echo from the dark valleys and are heard on the mountain tops . . . beware of these men with the honeyed tongues".

Yes, we know who are those "who refuse to believe that the Bantu can develop". The honeyed tongues of the kind father Verwoerd, his department, and the NAD's shady and servile supporters, cannot deceive the mass of the African people. From the dark valleys the people will surely arise, to scale the mountain tops of racial equality, justice, cultural advance and true humanity.

The Senate Act

A Milestone Forward or Back?

By P. ANTHONY

THE United Party has announced that it will challenge the validity of the Senate Act in the Courts. Its challenge will presumably be based on the argument that the Act represents an indirect infringement of the entrenched clauses of the Constitution and is therefore as invalid as the direct infringements of 1951 and 1952. Against this, the Government will argue that Parliament has the right to alter its own composition and that the motives with which it does so are irrelevant.

It is difficult to prophesy the outcome of the legal proceedings. It is likely, however, that the Government will win. They have made new appointments to the Appeal Court specifically for this purpose and, from a purely legal point of view, they have some strong arguments on their side.

If the Government wins in the Courts, what then? It is safe to assume that the United Party, whatever brave words may be heard from them, will do nothing more about it. The United Party cannot oppose the Senate Act on grounds of democratic principle. They are indeed not believe in democratic principle. They are incapable of producing a plan for a new, effective and democratic Senate and they realise that no great enthusiasm can be aroused for a return to that resting place of tired party hacks, the old Senate. Most important of all, the United Party is afraid to arouse strong public feeling on any issue whatsoever. The U.P., therefore, will write some pious generalities about the Senate into its programme and then subside into impotence.

No Positive Policy

It is because the European public realise this, even if only half-consciously, that such movements as the Black Sash have come into being. Like the Torch Commando, the Black Sash movement has mobilised the great mass of semi-articulate opinion which demands some kind of active and firm opposition to the Nationalists. But, like the Torch Commando, the Black Sash have failed to find positive demands round which to organise its supporters

into an effective force. It is a negative, amorphous movement whose leaders deliberately avoid the adoption of any positive policy for fear of splitting their organisation. It is anti-Senate Act but pro-nothing in particular. It presents no coherent alternative to the drift from democracy. Such a movement can have only a short term role to play and it will not be long before it begins to decline.

Undemocratic Constitution

The Senate Act cannot effectively be opposed unless it, and the alternative to it, are placed in their proper context. The Senate Act is no isolated piece of villainy by an isolated group of swindlers. It is part of the inevitable heritage of South African bogus democracy. Its seeds were planted in the nineteenth century, when the Cape Parliament deliberately raised its franchise qualifications in order to reduce the numbers of Non-European voters. Ever since then, South Africa has lived under a shoddy compromise between democracy and dictatorship. What has been compromised once can always be compromised again. So we find Governments continually tinkering with the compromise, shifting it usually a little further towards dictatorship, now and then a little further towards democracy. The South African constitution has always been a thing of expediency and power politics, never a thing of principle or logic. In such a set-up a Senate Act had to come sooner or later.

New Principles Needed

The remedy, therefore, for this Senate Act and for future crimes of the same kind, is not to return to the status quo of 1953, or 1948, or 1935, or 1909. It is to create a new constitution, worthy of being defended, capable of supplying the forces for its own defence, founded on principle—a democratic constitution.

If this truth can be put across to the worried, deluded members of the United Party and the Black Sash movement the Senate Act will be remembered not as a milestone in the progress of fascism but as a step towards its destruction.

The High Commission Territories and South Africa

THE FORGOTTEN MILLION

By ALAN DOYLE

EVERY now and then, whenever there is a suitable opportunity, South African Prime Ministers like to issue a public demand for Britain to hand over Basutoland, Bechuanaland Protectorate and Swaziland to the Union. This always pleases both the platteland and the Chamber of Mines, and to please both these difficult customers is the highest ambition of South African Prime Ministers.

The platteland is always afraid that the British Government may commit some blunder in the territories and allow their inhabitants some genuine democratic rights, which would foster aspirations and discontents among Union Africans. Moreover, although the Nationalist leaders have become the most ardent defenders of British imperialism, it satisfies a profound emotion among their followers when, as here, they find an issue on which they can appear to be standing up to Downing Street.

As for the Chamber of Mines—its recruiting companies draw up to 70,000 labourers a year from the three territories.

Union's Argument

What is the Union Government's argument for incorporation?

It says that the three territories are economically integrated and practically surrounded by the Union; that the Union cannot "tolerate" foreign bodies in its midst—in this respect Dr. Malan's arguments in 1954 sounded ominously like Hitler's over Sudetenland.

There is also a "legal" argument. The South Africa Act—the South African Constitution, which was originally an Act of the BRITISH Parliament (1909)—provides for conditions under which the territories *may* be transferred to the Union. This, claim the Union's spokesmen, amounts to an undertaking to transfer. (They conveniently forget to mention that the previous clause of the Act provides for conditions under which Rhodesia and Nyasaland may be transferred to the Union).

The Nationalist Government has hinted at threats of economic retaliation to enforce its demand. But the outcry from Free State farmers when an attempt was made to restrict entry from Basutoland, and the rapid withdrawal of that attempt, suggests that the threat is unlikely to be applied, for it would hit the Union's exploiting classes harder than anyone else.

Britain's Reply

When the South African Prime Minister demands that the three territories be handed over forthwith, the British Prime Minister rises, amidst cheers in the House of Commons. To the delight of both the Tory imperial-

ists and the Labour Party liberals, he proclaims that Britain will not fail in its sacred trust of retaining the Government of the territories. "There can be no question of Her Majesty's Government agreeing at the present time to transfer", declared Mr. Churchill in April 1954. He repeats the pledges made at the time of Union—no transfer without (a) consulting the peoples of the territories, (b) giving the U.K. Parliament an opportunity to express its views.

In these days when, as in Cyprus, Malaya, Kenya, Sudan and quite a number of other places, the local inhabitants are demanding with crude vigour that Britain should relinquish its sacred trust and get out of their countries, it is extremely gratifying for a British Prime Minister to be able to point to at least one corner of the globe where this is not so. For, though they have little reason to be satisfied with the administration of retired British army officers under which they at present suffer, there is no doubt that the people of the territories are unanimously opposed to incorporation into the Union under the Nationalists or any other all-White Government.

Thus the little drama is very satisfactory to both Prime Ministers. The man in the Cape Town Parliament wins support from all Parties as he makes strong demands, backed with threats, for the territories. The man in the Westminster Parliament is applauded Right and Left as he rebuts the demands and makes solemn pledges. (Actually the pledges are as empty as the threats. A promise to consult people before transfer is effected in meaningless. He does not promise to be bound by the people's decision. We in South Africa, after years of such "consultation" with Advisory Boards, etc., know exactly what it is worth!)

The Forgotten Million

Throughout these proceedings the assumption is made that the future of the three countries is a matter to be settled between Westminster and Cape Town. And the further assumption is made that the only possible alternative is whether they should be governed by White men from England or White men from South Africa.

These assumptions overlook the fact that there are over a million people living in the High Commission territories and that these are the people most concerned with the questions under discussion. It is true that these peoples have as yet not fully entered into the debate. But it is also true that when they do they will have the last word. The days are past when the fate of any group of people, however small, could be settled by threats,

(Continued on page 7)

READERS'
COMMENT

THE LIBERAL PARTY

Sir,

One can sympathise with Claude Franks' ire in his article published in your last issue, but one cannot permit that sympathy to obscure how neatly he avoids answering some of Peter Meyer's most substantial criticisms of the Liberal Party (November issue). Much of Meyer's article was, in my opinion, carping and perhaps a little petty. But where his comments had substance, they deserved better treatment than they received. For example:

Mrs. Ballinger: "We (Liberals) are the only party in South Africa which really knows where it proposes to go."

Meyer (November): "There is, of course, the Freedom Charter, Mrs. Ballinger".

Franks (January): "And a very good reply it might be, too, if the Freedom Charter were a political party".

Really! This is schoolboy repartee of the very lowest order. There *is* the Freedom Charter. It *has* been accepted as the political objective of what is certainly the widest political alliance in the country today. It *is not*, as Mr. Franks so condescendingly points out, a political party, but a creed. But let Mr. Franks forget the debating points. Where does the Liberal Party stand in relation to the Charter? Do those who uphold the Charter also ". . . really know where they propose to go?" And are they going the same way as the Liberal Party? This is the substance of the issue raised by Peter Meyer. Just because his journalistic punch-line obscures it a little is no reason for Mr. Franks to wriggle round it. Some plain Liberal talk on this problem would make better reading.

Before reading Peter Meyer, I too had come across the Liberal Party booklet, and had read it. Like Meyer, I was somewhat taken aback by the statement that the aspirations of the Non-European peoples "have the profound sympathy of the Liberal Party".

Meyer comments: "Have you ever read anything more detached, more aloof?" Mr. Franks' defence is no defence. Meyer, he says in his rejoinder, "criticises the Liberal Party for saying it *supports* the Non-European people . . ." (My emphasis LB). "What rubbish!" May I add,

what mis-quotation! In fact, the booklet "The Policies of the Liberal Party" rams home the point more clearly than did Meyer. I quote from the booklet:

"The Party will co-operate actively with other (political) parties on issues upon which there is agreement.

"The Party welcomes exchanges of views and information with those (non-party political) bodies sharing its objectives and ideals.

"In their aspirations . . . the Non-European peoples have the profound sympathy of the Liberal Party.

(My emphasis throughout.—L.B.). Read like that, as they appear in the booklet, one after another, the last statement is, as Meyer says, "aloof, detached", or perhaps downright condescending.

It will, no doubt, be argued by Mr. Franks that further on the booklet expresses the "sincere desire of the Liberal Party to co-operate" with the Congresses in their struggle. But even this lacks the firm assurance given to the South African Political Parties that: "The Party will co-operate actively".

Either Mr. Meyer is right, and the Liberal Party is detached and aloof from the struggles of the Non-European people. Or the Liberal Party is being particularly mealy-mouthed in its statement of policy on the question, in the hope that what they have to say won't stick too firmly in the gizzards of non-Liberal or illiberal Europeans. Some straight explanations from Mr. Franks, shorn of debating points, would be in order.

Yours faithfully,

L. BERNSTEIN.

Sir,

I think Claude Franks has made his points fairly against Peter Meyer's criticism, which I feel was strongly based and arrived at, perhaps over hastily due to bias which I can fully appreciate and understand, but do not commend.

Yet the grounds for criticism remain, and are not dismissed nor disarmed by Claude Franks' reply, how-

ever just. For it is clear that if the Liberals demand universal franchise for South Africa, that is not a liberal policy but a radical one; and it becomes obvious that in claiming to favour a liberal policy they are merely seeking to gain a wider support among the Europeans than would be possible were they to proclaim their belief in a radical change, which is in fact a revolutionary one. In a word, they are committed to a policy of expediency which is frankly opportunist.

Now it is obvious that a party which relies to any degree upon such support and succeeds to any extent in gaining it, will be rendered thereby impotent. A call for universal franchise would be tantamount to political suicide, and self-preservation would compel them to evade, to temporise and to dissemble.

"Oh the brave music of a distant drum", said Omar of old. And because the challenge that awaits them is not at the moment one which they will have to consider immediately it may be that one could not substantiate a charge of dishonesty; but one may predict with certainty that the time must come when it will be possible both to make and substantiate it.

"Know thyself"—that is the supreme wisdom. It is not given to everyone to be endowed with the temperament necessary to face and endure the bitterness of the political struggle and to face frankly the naked brutality that has come into being. But if the Liberals would see themselves in that light, they would be able to realise that they would be contributing more to the ends they seek by retiring from the field and giving moral and financial aid to those who are better equipped for the fight.

As it is they merely befool the issues and bemuse those whose environment makes it difficult to see the picture.

Clearly, I make my criticism in no hostile spirit, for I appreciate the dilemma of those who are sickened at the stark inhumanity of life in South Africa, yet are temperamentally unable to escape from their frustrations, yet must find at the same time a means of coming to terms with their conscience.

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Vol. 12 No. 3

Price 6d.

MARCH, 1956

TALK

FAMINE IN THE RESERVES

★ ★ ★

U.S. NEGROES FIGHT SEGREGATION

★ ★ ★

TRADE UNIONS AGAINST THE I.C. BILL

★ ★ ★

KRUSCHOV ON SOVIET POLICY

A MONTHLY JOURNAL FOR DEMOCRATS

TAKING UP THE FIGHT

COMMENT

THERE is nothing new in the thought that the Nationalists have as thorough a contempt for democratic government as had their mentors of the Third German Reich. But there is something new in the cool and studied displays of contempt for Parliament and its processes which are now becoming commonplace.

RIPE FOR PICKING

Only last month, a curt instruction to the school of Christ the King to close its doors "forthwith" to some six hundred children was to be strongly challenged in the House. With studied insolence, the responsible minister, Dr. Verwoerd, absented himself, and left a bumbling colleague to deliver, parrotwise, a few inadequate replies, and a few less adequate requests for "notice of that question". The newly hand-picked Senate reduced itself to the level of a backveld branch of the Nationalist Party, by earnestly debating and passing a series of resolutions "applauding" the Government, "praising" the cabinet ministers, "thanking" the Prime Minister. And during the joint House of Assembly-Senate session on the South Africa Act Amendment Bill, the Speaker took it upon himself to reduce this most momentous gathering to the level of a boys' prep school, where no one dare open his mouth to question, interject or object, without being summarily ordered out to cool his ardour in the draughts of the corridor.

There is more than usual Nationalist idiocy in all this. It is the logical end of their pattern that they should, deliberately, set out to bring Parliament into public contempt, and so lay the last vestiges of democratic government open for plucking. All their endeavours move to this end—the removal of voters from the roll, the removal of the testing rights of the courts, the steady extension of rule by cabinet decree without recourse to Parliament. They have brought in their ja-brothers to fatten the Senate for the kill. But the Parliamentary opposition is content to twiddle its thumbs and argue legal case-histories about the Statute of Westminster. Tacitly they are accepting the process, and fitting themselves, neatly into the stooge's niche, foil for the Nationalists devices. Both sides in Parliament are preparing Parliament's own destruction. And the only firm upholder of the democratic processes of Government is to be found outside of Parliament, in the Congress movement whose aims are proclaimed in the Freedom Charter: "The people shall govern".

WHEN the leading trade unions of the White workers destroyed the Trades and Labour Council and formed the new Trade Union Council, the air was thick with promises. The new body would unite all trade unionists in a powerful, single, camp.

THE RAW REALITY

The new body would fight tooth and nail against the Industrial Conciliation Amendment Bill. Or so it was said. Today we have the reality. The TUC has not united the workers. It has excluded the Non-European workers as a concession to the most race and colour prejudiced White workers.

And the TUC has not fought the Industrial Conciliation Amendment Bill. Politely, cap in hand, the TUC petitioned the Government. "If you first try out your policy of reserving certain jobs for certain races", they murmured, "and if you prove to us that your policy works, why then we will, of course be prepared to accept all of your new Bill". The Government accepted the assurance that in principle the TUC had no opposition to offer, and then kicked them firmly in the teeth. The TUC, born in compromise, born to throw the Non-European workers to the Nationalists wolves, ended in compromise, ended by throwing the workers to the Nationalist wolves.

It is a hard furrow that the non-colour bar, militant S.A. Congress of Trade Unions ploughs, but in the long run, all the workers will come to see that the compromising promises of the TUC end in the raw reality of Nationalist triumphs. That day they will turn to SACTU, to the united struggle of Black workers and White for the rights of working men.

NO one could treat seriously Mr. Louw's reasons for closing the Soviet Consulate. It was a scratch collection of all the slimiest, unsubstantiated allegations made over the years at Nationalist Party Conferences, by rabble-rousers who are more at home in the field of smear and slander than diplomacy.

DIPLOMATIC COLD WAR

But the timing of the decision to break off what has always been a one-sided relationship—Soviet representation here, but no South African representative in Moscow—the timing is worth consideration. It has been suggested that the move was a sort of "bread-and-circuses" affair, designed to distract public attention from the dirty work being done in Parliament. Maybe so. But there is more to it than that.

The Nationalist Government has become the most die-hard representative of the most die-hard imperialists. Faithfully it has echoed and bolstered every move of the most reactionary, war-mongers of the imperialist world. When the order goes out from Washington for strenuous reaction, no one can be more anti-Communist than the Nationalist Government. When Wall Street orders aggressive military pacts, no one beats the drums more loudly for an African "Defence" Pact than Eric Louw. And when Dulles orders a counter-offensive against Geneva peaceful-co-existence spirit, no one reacts more promptly in his petty way than the South African Nationalist Cabinet minister. The closing of the Soviet Consulate is part of a wide conspiracy to undermine the advance of the spirit of peaceful co-existence. It is part of a plot to retrieve the cold war from the doldrums into which it had threatened to fall. And it is a reminder that the battle for peace is not yet won. It has still to be fought for, every inch of the way, against the Dulles, Eisenhowers, MacMillans and Louws. And part of that fight is the fight for friendly diplomatic relations between nations. South Africa, whose Government has isolated her from India, China and the USSR, is as good a place as any to take up that fight.

FIGHTING

Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper

Vol. 12 No. 4

Price 6d.

APRIL, 1956

TALK

Michael Harmel

on

SABRA'S POLICY

for Africa

...

THE WOMEN'S ANTI-PASS CAMPAIGN

By Helen Joseph

...

**"Can Congress Be Neutral
In The Cold War?"**

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

...

THE MOZART BI-CENTENARY

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BOOKS

A MONTHLY JOURNAL FOR DEMOCRATS

NOUGHT FOR COMFORT

COMMENT

WHILE press and radio have blazoned Mr. Louw's budget concessions to the mining magnates, industrialists and over-£1,800-a-year taxpayers, a veil of silence has been drawn over the almost simultaneous Government decision once again to raise the rents of municipal houses in African townships.

BUDGET FOR VULTURES

Here, in these twin deeds, is revealed the real character of the Nationalist Government. For despite all its plat-form demagogy about the "Afrikaner volk" and "South Africa first", the Nationalist Party has become the voice and instrument of Afrikaner capitalism—farming, industrial and commercial. Its interest in the Afrikaner worker is confined to whipping up his racial passions, so that he dips his hand regularly in his pocket for the "Strydfonds", and regularly, every five years, votes "Nasionaal". For him, no budget concessions.

But its interest—if that is the word—in the Non-European people, is the interest of the vulture. Here is the prey on which South African capitalism batters and feeds; and none more voracious in their appetites than the Nationalist Government. For the Non-European people, greater burdens rather than concessions. For the famine-stricken Transkei, no relief. For the underpaid town worker, rent increases. For the unemployed African, no unemployment insurance. For the African children, a "ceiling" on expenditure on education. For the Indian merchants, Group Areas eviction on to the barren veld. For the trade unionist, arrest and prosecution for strike action. For the African building contractor and handyman, a prohibition on work in European areas. For the Non-European Railway workers, only "temporary" posts. For the African farmer, a compulsory culling of cattle. For the pass or permit offender, convict labour on European-owned farms.

It is customary for Ministers of Finance to congratulate themselves on their own skill when announcing lowered taxation in the budget speech. No one praises himself more fulsomely and admiringly than Mr. Louw. But even in his speech, the uneasy conscience shows; for nowhere, in all his words in Parliament, is there a single phrase to reveal the inhumanity and vicious victimisation of the Non-European peoples which makes tax concessions for the rich. Perhaps understandably. For bloodsucking has always been a nasty business, and none more successful at it than the present Nationalist cabinet.

TWENTY years ago in March, the African voters were formally removed from the common roll, and placed on their own, separate, voters roll, with the right to "elect" their own—Europeans only—representatives to Parliament.

YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

The anniversary of Hertzog's Native Representation Act was solemnly celebrated by Strydom's Separate Representation of Voters Act, introduced for the second time, to do exactly that to the Coloured voters. It is worth noting that, at the same time, the air is heavy with Nationalist undertakings to abolish Parliamentary representation of Africans entirely, notwithstanding Hertzog's "undertakings" on the subject. Talk as the

Nationalists will about "the interests of the Coloureds", there is a logic about this process of preserving White supremacy by separating the Non-Whites. In the end, there will be no representation for anyone except the jobbers. Twenty years might seem like a long time; but events—as everyone knows—move faster these days. If the European opposition parties, no less than the Coloured voters, don't look round soon, the breath of the executioner will be blowing down their own necks.

UNIVERSITY professors, traditionally, live in ivory towers. To this rule the members of the Tomlinson Commission are no exception. For while, in the country outside, there is doubt on all sides whether the crazy structure erected by the Nationalists will hang together for another five years, in the rarified atmosphere of the Commission's ivory tower, there is planning for apartheid in the year 2,000 A.D.

FROM IVORY TOWERS

A current story describes Dr. Verwoerd, in a moment of strain during an interview, bursting into tears and shouting aloud: "It's all breaking down!" There is, perhaps, more prophetic vision in this, than in the cloud-cuckoo-land dreamings of the Tomlinson Commission.

There was a time when the United Party—in typical self-deception—sought to embarrass the Government by demanding the publication of the report. They have got their way; and though it surprises them, it will surprise no one else that they have been hoist by their own petard. For the Tomlinson Commission of venerable professors have taken over holus-bolus all the ideas and theories of the Nationalist Party, and accepted them as unimpeachable truth. The Commission is convinced that "the only solution is the separate development of European and Bantu." And from there on—like Nationalist stump-orators—the stops are out. Africans must be cleared from the Western Cape "to protect the Coloureds." The protectorates must be incorporated in Strydom's empire. The old, familiar Strydom tune.

Of the whole galaxy of university pundits, there is only one who dares to disagree. Professor Bisschop, dissenting, says: "The segregation formula must be fully investigated and tested out. If . . . it is found unpractical, and I greatly fear that it will be . . . progressive integration with its economic and political consequences will have to be accepted."

From the tone of the phrase, one almost expects the words "however distasteful they may be" to be added on. If the Tomlinson report is the intellectual "justification" for Nationalist race-theory, the Bisschop disclaimer could well serve as an epitaph on the self-styled "liberalism" which once had its home in the United Party.

THIS is not a review! Apparently so much has already been written by way of reviews in almost all the leading papers of the country that readers of *Fighting Talk* who can read Afrikaans will already have seen it. At any rate we are told on good authority that it is selling by thousands, and an English translation is promised shortly. Personally if I had been asked by a publisher whether an English edition would justify publication, I would have said "no", at any rate so far as South Africa is concerned. People who are really anxious to know what is going on in the minds of Afrikaans-speaking churchmen can usually read Afrikaans enough to digest this slight, and easily read book. But we must not forget the overseas reading public: in fact there seems to be a tendency in certain world Church organizations to think that the salvation of South Africa hinges on the conversion of the Dutch Reformed Church. Those who know the realities of the situation are fully aware that there is no such simplification of our situation.

Nevertheless it is all to the good that a man who holds a key position in the Dutch Reformed Church

plained why the British press had got so upset about the great welcome the Russian leaders had received in India during their recent visit.

We talked of other things, of problems of political strategy and of the slowness of the British working class in understanding the meaning of empire ("In Hyde Park even now if you say anything derogatory of the British navy, the crowd becomes hostile!")

Reluctantly I at last called a taxi and took our guest back to his office. He mentioned that he was shortly going to Moscow for a conference.

"They will be glad to honour you there," I remarked.

"Do you think so?" he replied.

"Yes," I assured him. "Your words have reached much further than you know".

"It is very kind of you to say that", he said shyly. Then a minute later he had quickly taken leave of us, jumped out of the cab and disappeared among the people thronging the pavement.

I shall always remember that lunch and our quiet, thoughtful guest of honour. Palme Dutt is a great man. No wonder *Labour Monthly* is banned in Strijdom's South Africa.

Talking Out of Turn . . .

Some Thoughts on Prof. Keet's book

By the Rev. A. W. Blaxall

(Prof. Keet is on the staff of the oldest theological college in the D.R.C., at Stellenbosch, in which position large numbers of young ministers have come under his influence) should have the courage to make his views known in such a public manner. That he has held these views for a long time is no secret, which raises the question as to why he has taken so long to seize his courage with both hands and declare himself through the pages of a book.

If I may hazard an answer to that question I would say that for many years the good dominee has been in the same position as many brethren of his profession in all the churches. There is the fear of "talking out of turn"; the inner hope that secretly it may be possible to wield more influence, and change peoples' hearts and minds rather than by public utterance. Now at last as Prof. Keet says in his introduction, the stage has been reached in the Union when it becomes a duty for every man who believes he has something to say to say it. In other words, we have reached a crisis position in South Africa when nothing matters but to speak the truth without fear of the consequences.

I am reminded of an incident that happened to me more than a score of years ago in that very same seminary at Stellenbosch where Prof. Keet teaches. I had been invited to listen to a distinguished overseas theologian who was to address staff and students. He did so, speaking with great vigour, not hiding his impressions that a serious position was building up in South Africa (and that was about 1935!) After the lecture I was asked for tea at the principal's house. I had an opportunity to chat with the dominee with whom the visitor was staying in Cape Town, so I naturally enquired how he enjoyed having such a guest. Quite frankly he told me that he had himself said to Dr. . . . "The one thing that I envy you for, doctor, is the fact that so many Non-Whites come here to talk with you. I have always longed to get closer to them at that level, but I have had to think of the consequences with my

Kerkraad." "And what did he say to that?" I queried. With a twinkle in his eye Dr. . . . said "He replied at once: 'Damn the consequences'". In those far-away days that was all interesting and amusing. Today it is tragic.

It is difficult to repress thoughts such as these. If Professor Keet has held for many years the radical views he now writes in *Suid-Afrika—Waarheen?*, and if a steady stream of candidates for the ministry has been under his influence, are there none of them anywhere who were changed in their hearts and minds? We understand from those who attended the two inter-church conferences, in Pretoria in 1953 and the Witwatersrand University in 1954, that there were at any rate a few younger men who spoke openly concerning the fundamental unity of the human race: *but always in generalised terms*. Never, to the best of my knowledge, has a voice been lifted on any specific issue, however great the suffering caused by enforced racial discrimination. I am aware that if friends of the Dutch Reformed Church read these words some of them will say to me: "But how do you know what we do? Perhaps we are working behind the scenes". To such friends I would say with all charity: the time is getting late; if you have worked like leaven there should by now be some rising in the dough, but we do not see it.

I wrote above that there is a tendency in some quarters to think that a change of heart on racial questions among members of the Dutch Reformed Church could alter the whole national policy and practice. Does this infer that all the other churches are already solidly convinced that all is not well with us, and that as a people we are out of step with the rest of the Christian world?

Anyone who imagines such a thing is living in a fool's paradise.

Two years ago, on the eve of a biennial meeting of the Christian Council of South Africa (a body coordinating 23 churches and missions) I wrote an article in this magazine on the challenges which would confront that meeting when they were

faced with two reports from committees of their own. The one report was to be on Bantu Education, the other on Threats to Religious Liberty. It is natural to assume that those reports were carefully considered, and that certain actions were planned, although no such news reached the press. Two years have again passed, so presumably the Council is due to meet again. Will they receive further reports? When will the public be taken into confidence and told what the Christian part of the national conscience really feels?

This much can be said—the root of the trouble lies in the fact that negotiation and consultation is inevitably a slow process. Advanced elements are held back by fear of hardening the views of less progressive, while those who are conservative by nature are for ever haunted by “fear of the consequences”. And in the meanwhile the masses of the people suffer, and the forces which work for social change refuse to be held back. As Professor Keet implies: If ever there was a time for courageous speaking and writing it is NOW. The churches by virtue of the fact that they are composed of individuals, cannot live in a state of eternal tension; the time must come when apparently irreconcilable forces must be made plain so that all people of good-will can decide for themselves where truth and justice are to be found, and what really are the principles of righteousness.

When Dr. D. F. Malan was first appointed Prime Minister he said, in his first national broadcast, that he hoped he would have behind him the Churches of the land. Within a few days, Mrs. Kathleen Bliss, an internationally known Christian writer, wrote that by that very appeal Dr. Malan linked himself up with the whole world for there is no such thing as national churches. The Church is a universal body, however much it be fragmented, and any section which attempts to step aside from the stream of universal conviction will either have to adjust itself, or die.

A few days ago I was driving through an African township in the western areas of the Reef. My companion was an overseas church leader of distinction and what he said to me was, in effect, that the reason for overseas concern about South Africa is the love that one part of the universal church has for the other.

There are people, both inside and

BOOKS

THERE could be good reason for the recent spate of novels about Africa. For the whole continent—Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Kenya, the Gold Coast, the Central African Federation and the Union of South Africa—seethes with the spirit and turmoil of change, of conflict and awakening. From such material a Zola or a Gorki would create masterpieces to shake the literate world. But as each new publishing season pours on to the market another dozen novels with Africa as the background, it becomes apparent that the reality of Africa is passing most novelists by. No doubt, the publishers' easy acceptance of steamy jungles, lush with mysterious tropic witch-craft and black ritual, has opened a lucrative groove, into which contemporary novelists are sliding, easily and comfortably. Wasn't this, after all, the formula of Stuart Cloete's best selling “Congo Song,” which finally reaped the golden harvest of a pocket-book edition?

But in part, the explanation lies also in the post-war shrinkage of Empire. The type and paper now expended on “mysterious Africa” was once lavished on tales of tiger hunting, ruby-laden maharanees of indescribable beauty, and strange oriental visionaries on the banks of the Ganges. But history has shifted the scene. The mem-sahib and the sporting colonel have departed from Nehru's India, and the colourless, unromantic Soviet engineers have moved in to build new steel-works. The glamour of technicolour has gone. But there is still Africa! Or so it seems.

Many have tried to take up from where Stuart Cloete left off. The supreme exponent is probably Johanna Moosdorf, whose “Flight to Africa” was published last year in English translation from the German. The

out of South Africa, who seem to see a large section of the people, even Christians, intent on committing a sort of hari-kari, and they long to save them from such unnecessary suffering and waste of life. Perhaps it is for such reasons that *Suid-Afrika*—*Waarheen?* when translated into “Whither South Africa?” will be avidly read by thousands.

OVERTONES OF

hero shuttles back and forth between the tropical forests of Central Africa and the Soviet-occupied zone of Berlin. This allows for everything that adds up to Hollywood film rights, women's magazine serials and pocket-book editions with lurid covers—for the lust and savagery of darkest Africa, as well as the Dulles slant on the cold war. Faintly echoing the Cloete pattern, the seedy, White remittance men and administrators philosophise over the riddle of their own souls and actions, like first-year psychology students at a university. There is, of course, a Woman—not a character so much as a symbol—who apparently perceives something of the awesome mystery of black Africa by gazing vacantly into space before—appropriately—drinking poison. There are also, inevitably, the bewitching African damsels who flit from bed to bed; and there is voodoo, ritual dancing and weird and ghostly rites. “Primitive Africa”, says the dust-jacket, “with its modes of life unknown to the West, its witchcraft, its sorcery, has taken possession of the handful of White men.” It is a well-worn and typical note. But overriding it all is the recurrent theme of violence which is the hallmark of so many of the African novels of today.

The note of crude force and violence is echoed against a less romantic background in Dan Jacobson's first novel, “The Trap,” published last year. Unlike Johanna Moosdorf, Jacobson takes his theme from the reality of life in South Africa. A European and an African join forces to steal sheep from a Karoo farm. When the conspiracy is about to be revealed, the European turns police informer, the police fasten on the African scapegoat, and the European goes free. The fatal “White man's justice” of South Africa is meted out. Farmer and Judas beat the handcuffed prisoner, while the police sergeant stands by, waiting to slam the doors of the prison van. This slim tale is less than a novel. It is a short story of some promise. Nowhere does the writer succeed in getting under the skin of his characters, discovering their motivations and their thoughts. Nowhere does he succeed in making his reader feel that here, in this tale, is revealed something significant about the life

VIOLENCE

and the people of South Africa. In the end, "The Trap" is the merest incident, a fragment of something that happens, but somehow without meaning, like a street-brawl seen from the window of a passing tram.

One would expect a writer of Basil Davidson's experience and exceptionally acute perception for what is significant and true, to come more closely to grips with reality. His latest novel, just released by Jonathan Cape, "The Rapids," manages to steer well clear of the well-worn theme of "mysterious Africa, its witchcraft, its sorcery."

Instead, it takes its theme from life. The setting, somewhere in West Africa, could be anywhere where the African people are beginning, for the first time, to organise themselves for the protection and advance of their rights. Into those stirrings are drawn two men, one Black, one White; ordinary men in many ways, in their outlook and their history, and yet extraordinary in their way, at the moment of crisis, they throw off the set patterns of "master and man-servant" which are the heart of social relationships in Africa, and emerge as men in their own right. Extraordinary; and yet not unique. For Africa has many such men today, and their numbers are growing.

Sabalu is not unique. Different, yes, because he has learnt something of the art of political organisation from his work on the copper mines, and from a European called Simon. "He was an engineer . . . he spoke for us." "And what became of that man, O Sabalu?" "They put him in prison. And then sent him to Europe." Sabalu is the solid, responsible heart of the new Congress movement. And Captain Stanton is the solid, conservative pioneer, who has cut himself adrift from the British Isles. His home is Africa; and along with a knowledge of its native tongues, he has imbibed all of White Africa's prejudices, and intolerance. But still, somewhere deep beneath the surface, there is honesty and humanity, which finally move him into strange new paths. Against a background of European agitation there rises a wave of African anger; a peaceful Congress march to present a petition to the Governor ends, as so many peaceful African demonstra-

tions do, in violence and blood. But out of the midst of conflict emerge two men of new stature — a Black man confident, unafraid, conscious that a people have been set in motion, and can never again be stilled. And a White man, who has seen with startling clarity, that the only future for himself in Africa is with the marching millions of the native people.

This, the story of the new men of Africa emerging in violence from the patterns of colonialism, is a story well and convincingly told. But it deserves to be better told than this. For Davidson, the novelist, writes with a less acute and thrilling pen than Davidson, the observer in "Report on Southern Africa." His minor characters are devoid of flesh and blood, props to the story but not part of it. And some of the minor situations are

as mechanically contrived as a "deus-ex-machina."

But these, perhaps, are minor flaws. "The Rapids" deals with the reality of life. And thus, despite its flaws, it stands amongst the most significant African novels of recent years. It is a good book; perhaps the only good recent novel with such a background. But the great novels about the great events of Africa remain to be written. It is this thought that lends interest to Harry Bloom's "Episode in the Transvaal", to be reviewed in this column next month.

"The Trap," by Dan Jacobson. Published by Heidenfeld and Nicholson. Price 8/6.

"The Rapids," by Basil Davidson. Published by Jonathan Cape. Price 13/6.

L. BERNSTEIN

THE ARAB WORLD

BRITAIN has paid £1 million a month for years for the purpose of keeping and controlling an army in Jordan. The expulsion of General Glubb means that at last the people of Jordan have realized how unnecessary it was for their country to remain a puppet state under British control. This is yet another welcome sign of the awakening of the Arab world and of its desire to attain independence.

In a new Penguin book, *The Arabs*, by Edward Atiyah, the whole historical background is described against which one can understand the great significance of recent events. The contempt that White men have long had for Brown or Black people has prevented a proper appreciation of the place of the Arabs in history. Now the rivalry between the socialist and the capitalist countries has made both sides compete for the friendship of 50 million Arabs in the Middle East. In this situation the British have begun to be more respectful to a culture they have neglected in the past. But it is the old story of too little and too late. The Arabs are suspicious of their old masters. They are moving, slowly if clumsily, towards the idea of a federation of Moslem states. British domination of Jordan was an obstacle to closer union between Jordan and Iraq, Syria, and the Lebanon. Nor do the men who rule Jordan need British financial support any longer. They can get money from Saudi Arabia which is rolling in dollars, thanks to the plentiful oil she sells to the United States.

Mr. Atiyah wrote the last chapter of his

book before recent events took place. These events show that he is probably mistaken in his hope and belief that the Arab states will continue to rely on the West. Himself a Christian Arab, the author has underestimated the fierce passion for independent status and dignity, something that colonialism can never really concede.

"The Arabs," by Edward Atiyah. A Penguin Book.

J.

Indonesia

THE Afro-Asian conference at Bandung, just a year ago, was sponsored by Indonesia. How that country reached her present position and policy of "positive neutrality" in foreign affairs is a story as impressive as India's achievement but it is much less widely known and appreciated.

For that reason this new book is welcome. In *The Republic of Indonesia* Dorothy Woodman has mastered her subject and knows all the relevant materials. What is more, she spares no one in her desire to tell the truth, certainly not the Dutch whose blind stupidity led them steadily to final disaster when they lost their greatest colony. Nor the British whose last-minute attempt to help the Dutch is properly exposed. In her last chapter the author asks whether the present rulers of Indonesia realize that the victory of Asian nationalism is not the end but must be the prelude to social change.

"The Republic of Indonesia," by Dorothy Woodman. (Cresset Press.)

J.

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Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper

Vol. 12 No. 5

Price 6d.

MAY 1956.

TALK

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on his

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on

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BOOKS

A MONTHLY JOURNAL FOR DEMOCRATS

COMMENT

A WEEK UNDER STRIJDOM

THE Cabinet Ministers had a busy week-end last month answering Father Huddleston's scathing attack on them in London's Albert Hall and on the British television network. Soapboxes, hastily pressed into service, enabled Eric Louw and Mr. Strijdom to tell the backveld and the world that no-one — but no-one — is more democratic, enlightened and humanitarian than the present South African Government. Having laboured, they returned to Parliament to prove the point.

WEEK'S WORK

Dr. Donges introduced a Bill to give himself powers to deport from South Africa any non-South African without prior trial, hearing or reasons given. Dr. Verwoerd introduced a Bill to empower any urban local authority to banish from the area — without prior trial, hearing or reasons given — any African whose presence it considers is "detrimental to the maintenance of peace and order." Dr. Donges moved a Bill to remove Coloured voters from the common parliamentary voting roll, and to abolish the right of Coloured men to stand for election to the Cape Provincial Council. Dr. Verwoerd moved a Bill to enable him — without trial, hearing or reasons given — to close down any private school for African children, whenever he considers it necessary. Dr. Donges introduced a Bill to enable the Group Areas Board to proclaim the African townships of Lady Selborne and Claremont in Pretoria "White" group areas, and move all Africans out.

Even by South African standards it was quite a week. But the Nationalist M.P.s sweated it out, uncomplaining, even though their plan to raise their own salaries had been scuttled a few weeks before by United Party opposition. A tough week of Nationalist struggle for Western democracy and the salvation of the White man. In all the dark week, only one ray of light — felt by them no less than us, even though for different reasons. Parliament — be thankful for small mercies — only sits for some six months a year.

"POLICE Fire on Rioters. Boy loses eye." These were the morning headlines in the Johannesburg press after a short night's clash between Africans and police in Johannesburg last month. But by evening, a senior police officer had put the whole thing back into its proper, South African, perspective. "It was only an incident," he told the press.

Another incident. The week before there had been an 'incident.' There had been a boycott of the kitchens at a Germiston African men's hostel, a protest at the poor quality of the food, which had gone on for weeks. And then, an 'incident.' Police opened fire, 4 Dead, 6 injured. At Port Elizabeth, a church congregation singing in the Easter procession in the African township where all meetings had been totally banned. There was an 'incident.' Police opened fire. 1 Dead, several injured. In Welkom,

MINOR INCIDENT

at dead of night, there was a house-to-house raid for home-brewed liquor, on the first night that a new prohibition on home-brewing came into operation. There was an 'incident.' Police opened fire. 1 Dead, 4 injured. And in Johannesburg? There was a swoop for tax-defaulters. Police sealed off the entrances to a municipal beer hall, and demanded tax receipts. Beer mugs and stones were thrown. An 'incident.' 27 injured. At Bergville, a police party went out on a twenty-year-old routine of searching out and destroying dagga fields. A bugle blows, an 'impi' gathers, armed with knobkerries. An incident. 5 Dead, many injured.

Terror breeds terror, and killing provokes killing. Nowhere is this truth more patent than in South Africa. The dead and injured, Black and White, bear testimony to it. A cabinet minister encourages his police to shoot without hesitation when trouble looms. The lesson sinks in everywhere throughout the land — might is right. Seek not the path of peace! It is no longer possible to probe each separate violent clash and ask: 'Who struck the first blow?' Violence calls forth violence, and brutality breeds brutality. They feed on the air of Nationalist-ridden South Africa, where the sten gun has become part of the tax-collectors' armoury, and the lash has become the mainstay of the administration of 'justice.' Where the police cross the path of the African people, there is the raw material of public violence. 'Who started first?' The question is no longer relevant. The seeds have been sown and the harvest is coming in, borne along by the use of force and the threat of force that keeps a hated minority government in its place of power.

There will be trials, and there will be verdicts. But they will change nothing while the conditions that bring forth terror remain themselves unchanged. A call has been made for a Commission of Inquiry. But the solution is not a matter of searching; it is on record, found by the people themselves from the wells of their own bitter experience. It is in the Freedom Charter: The People Shall Govern; "All apartheid laws and practices shall be set aside; the police force and army shall be the helpers and protectors of the people."

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Collection Number: A3299

Collection Name: Hilda and Rusty BERNSTEIN Papers, 1931-2006

PUBLISHER:

Publisher: **Historical Papers Research Archive**

Collection Funder: **Bernstein family**

Location: **Johannesburg**

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