

By-election campaign swings into top gear

PROGS. FACE ACID TEST

(Sunday Tribune Reporter)

JOHANNESBURG, Saturday.

A CLEAR pointer as to whether the Progressive Party has increased or even maintained its appeal to the electorate, so strikingly demonstrated by near-successes at the last general election, will emerge on Wednesday when polling takes place in two hard-fought Provincial Council by-elections.

These are in Parktown and Johannesburg North, where the Progressive and United Parties are opposing each other.

Although they are provincial elections, the significance of the results makes them two of the most vital elections held in South Africa.

Neither party is seeking to conceal the importance it attaches to the results. This is indicated by the high-calibre candidates put forward and the intensive campaigns usually lacking in provincial elections.

"If the Progressive Party wins the seats it will be the beginning of the end for the United Party in these parts," Mr. John Cope, former Progressive M.P. for Parktown, told me.

The United Party candidates are Mr. Patrick Lewis (Parktown) and Mr. Ockert van der Merwe (Johannesburg North). Opposing them will be Progressive candidates Mr. Harry Brigish in Parktown and Mr. Dick Harvey in Johannesburg North.

The United Party retained Parktown in the general election by the slender margin of 85 votes and Johannesburg North by 872 votes.

The election campaign will reach its peak in the next few days when Mr. Douglas Mitchell, Natal leader of the United Party, Mr. Marais Steyn, United Party Chairman on the Witwatersrand, and Dr. Jan Steytler, Progressive Party leader, will speak at meetings.

The Progressive Party is optimistic about its chances. Mr. John Cope, after admitting that there had been some move away

from the Progressives after the general election, said: "The pendulum has swung the other way now."

"I am prepared to stick my neck out and say that I expect the Progressive Party to win Parktown by about 500 votes. I also think we are within range of taking Johannesburg North."

United Party forecasts are more cautious but no less adamant, Mr. Patrick Lewis said:

"I think the United Party is getting greater support in this by-election than in the general election. There is a new keenness and better organisation. My public meetings and meetings at houses have been well-attended and successful."

Mr. Ockert van der Merwe told me he expected to win the Johannesburg North seat comfortably. "Many people who voted Progressive at the last election have had second thoughts," he said.

FOOTNOTE: Immediately after the elections, emphasis swings to Natal. Dr. Jan Steytler, leader of the party, addresses a public meeting in the Maritzburg City Hall on Friday evening. It will be his first major policy speech since Dr. Verwoerd's Transkei announcement. Next day he opens the Natal congress of the party in Maritzburg at which between 350 and 400 delegates are expected to attend. Mr. Harry Lawrence will also be present.

(News by R. N. Toms, 41 President Street, Johannesburg and M. B. Eloff, 25 Field Street, Durban.)

Indulging in wishful thinking

YOU have seen fit to accord much publicity and space, including a leading article, to the fact that Messrs. Strydom and Serfontein, ex-Nationalists, have left their second political home, the National Union Party, and have joined the Progressives.

May I suggest that all this publicity has presented a quite disproportionate picture to your readers?

Both these young men were paid employees of the National Union Party, and I should be surprised if they do not now occupy similar positions in the Progressive Party organisation. Their conversion to the Progressives may be of passing interest, but if you and the Progressive Party draw the inference that they are but the forerunners of many other ex-Nationalist recruits you are indulging in wishful thinking to a dangerous degree.

To test this, I would suggest to the Progressive Party that it contest a few by-elections in Nationalist-held seats instead of consistently attacking the United Party. I have no doubt that its candidates will suffer crushing defeats which will destroy their—and your—illusions! — J. L. HORAK, General Secretary, The United Party, Eloff Street, Johannesburg.

Manifesto is correct

I HAVE read Mr. Emdin's letter and he can accept my assurance that the statement in the manifesto is correct.

Unfortunately, however, present laws dealing with race classification preclude me from disclosing names.

It is common knowledge that in earlier years certain well-known non-European personalities were scholars at S.A.C.S.—C. H. BRIGISH, Marlborough House, cor. Eloff and Commissioner Streets, Johannesburg.

LITTLE ELECTION

FRESH TRENDS

THIS week's provincial by-elections in the Transvaal have an importance far beyond their local character. Not only are they a direct extension of the general election (which brought about these vacancies) but they come at a time when major shifts of opinion are under way in the electorate as a result of the intense pressures, internal and external, now bearing on our national situation. Long established political standpoints are bending and even collapsing under the strain, and fresh, exciting attitudes are emerging to give new vitality to our political thinking.

The significance of these by-elections — at Parktown, Johannesburg North and Springs — is fully understood by the political parties. Each has moved an army of workers into the contested areas and mounted an election effort outstripping even that of last October's campaign. The great increase in postal votes lodged indicates the intensity of the struggle, and attendances at public meetings, especially those of the Progressives, have been exceptional for contests of this kind.

THE SWING

In Parktown and Johannesburg North, where the Progressives did so well in October, the swing away from traditional, discriminatory race attitudes towards a modern, enlightened outlook has continued strongly since October and the Progressives have every chance of capturing both seats from the United Party. The postal vote figures, bearing in mind the built-in advantage the United Party enjoys, are very favourable for the Progressives.

There are many reasons for the persisting surge of support for the Progressives—disillusionment at the failure of the much-vaunted United Party-National Union pact, doubts about the United Party's race federation plan, the steady flow of defections from that party, and the fact that race discrimination is untenable in today's world, the warm response among non-Whites to the Progressives' good showing in the general election, and, above all, the intrinsic idealism and the election-winning élan that make Progressive efforts a crusade of burning convictions.

TACTICS

The Progressives have been attacked for not contesting Springs but the criticism is invalid. This is a young party fighting to establish itself in the face of stern resistance from the traditionalist parties. It is quite right to concentrate its efforts for the present at points where it can win most ground. Furthermore the United Party has always maintained — and this is virtually its main claim to support — that when Nationalists are confronted with the full implications of apartheid, they will turn away from it and come over to the United Party with its "moderate policy of White leadership for the foreseeable future." Correctly the Progressives have left the United Party free to justify this claim if it can at Springs on Wednesday.

All in these by-elections provide a valuable test of public opinion in this dawn of Bantustans. Has the Transkei announcement lost the Government any of its support? Which is the party best equipped to oppose the escapist philosophy of partition? Wednesday's voting will show.

—THE EDITOR.

Why Progs want a qualified franchise

RDM
12/2/62

DURING the course of this election campaign United Party speakers have seen fit to quote a speech made by Mr. Harry Oppenheimer in 1957, in which Mr. Oppenheimer said in Parliament: "South Africa cannot take the risk that if the Natives get political power into their hands they will not use it for the benefit of an exclusive black nationalism."

The United Party is singularly stupid in trying to use this against Mr. Oppenheimer and the Progressive Party. A little intelligent thought would show that it is precisely for the reasons given by Mr. Oppenheimer in 1957 that the Progressive Party today advocates a qualified franchise and not a universal franchise.

The party believes that a uni-

versal franchise would lead, as it has done elsewhere in Africa, to the rule of an irresponsible sectional nationalism and to the destruction of Western standards.

At the same time the party recognises that it is dangerous to deny rights to citizens on the grounds of race alone and that the only safety for the White minority lies in sharing these rights. It is for these reasons that the Progressive Party adopted the formula, well tried in South African history, of "equal rights for all civilised men, and equal opportunity for all men to become civilised."

Safeguards

At the same time as extending franchise rights, it intends to introduce the safeguards of a Bill of Rights and a Reformed Senate in a rigid constitution.

All of this is compatible with what Mr. Oppenheimer said when he was a member of the United Party, which party was unwilling to face the hard facts of living in a multi-racial country, and which now seeks to lay the responsibility on others for its own decay.—M. M. BORKUM, 6, The Mews, Rosebank, Johannesburg.

FOOTNOTE: As readers may recall, shortly before the last general election Mr. Oppenheimer said: "My judgment, for what it is worth, is if you are lucky enough to have the choice of voting between Progressive and United Party candidates — and if you have the honour, safety and prosperity of South Africa at heart — the best thing you can do is to vote Progressive."—**EDITOR.**

System once condemned by U.P. now

cornerstone of race federation

RDM
12/2/62

Separate rolls cause race tension

WITH Johannesburg's important provincial by-elections only two days ahead, the United Party is continuing to pin its faith on the race federation which failed so dismally last October.

Although the first stage of the policy contains some merit in so far as it would soften aspects of apartheid legislation the overall concept of a race federation has failed to fire public imagination for three main reasons:

- It is based on a system of separate (sometimes called communal) roll representation which the United Party itself condemned only nine years ago as tending to "aggravate rather than alleviate racial tensions."

- It does not break the parliamentary colour bar, so the Senate and House of Assembly will, until further notice, be for Whites only.

- It seems designed to provide a moral excuse to perpetuate White supremacy.

When in 1953 the Nationalist Government produced a Bill to remove Cape Coloureds from the common roll and place them on a separate roll, the United Party was forced into a declaration on the general principle of communal representation.

In a minority report the party's five members of the joint select

committee—Sir De Villiers Graaff, Mr. Douglas Mitchell, Mr. Gray Hughes, Senator D. Jackson and Mr. Harry Lawrence—condemned it out of hand. Here are extracts from their minority report:

- The almost universal experience of countries in which

auspicious circumstances separate rolls will divide and disunite."

During the Joint Sitting debate on the Bill top United Party members again voiced their disapproval of communal representation. Here is what some of them said:

The Leader of the Opposition (then Mr. J. G. N. Strauss): "We believe that there are grave difficulties in this whole system of separate representation as a system of political representation in this country."

Mr. Sidney Waterson (still United Party M.P. for Constantia): "I am quite certain that communal representation as a general principle does not fit into a parliamentary system, and will only land us in further difficulties."

A FAILURE

Sir De Villiers Graaff: "I wonder if Hon. Members on that side are aware that separate representation has already been tried out in many countries. I need hardly remind Hon. Members that there have been seven Royal Commissions which have reported on the success or otherwise of separate representation in different countries. I need hardly remind Hon. Members of the stern strictures with which they dealt with that separate representation... It has been a failure elsewhere. How can the Hon. Member with any confidence expect that it will be a success

Has not history and experience throughout the world shown that when you start with separate representation you end up with something like partition; something in the nature of a division of the state?"

Meanwhile many United Party members, including Mr. Patrick Lewis, candidate in Parktown for Wednesday's by-election, have been trying of late to create the impression that United Party policy is to allow non-Whites to occupy seats in Parliament. But Sir De Villiers Graaff made the position quite clear when he said during the censure motion debate three weeks ago:

"He (the African) must be represented by Whites and vote on a separate roll. We have been asked 'Why by Whites?' Other parliaments may decide otherwise if they wish to, but at the moment the policy of the party is that they must be represented by Whites."

MEANINGLESS

This reference to "other parliaments" is really meaningless because obviously no government can make a policy decision binding on future governments. The only point in the observation, therefore, is that it enables United Party speakers to angle their statements according to whether they are speaking in the platteland or in city constituencies.

Sir De Villiers did not commit himself at all on Indians, but said some Coloureds (only men and only those who live in the Cape) would be on the White roll and would have the right to sit in Parliament.

But the fact that the community is scattered, that women will be voteless and that the United Party itself bars non-Whites from party membership and thus from party candidature makes this right academic.

Coloureds living outside the Cape will vote on a separate roll for some White senators (no M.P.s).

If the United Party were to come to power tomorrow, therefore, both Houses of Parliament would remain all White.

There is considerable evidence that the United Party has plumped for this communal representation system because it provides a means of maintaining White supremacy while at the same time giving a semblance of "justice."

By
Allister
Sparks

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