

DIVIDE AND RULE Monday June 28, 1948

POST - EL^N

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DIVIDE et impera - divide and rule- said the Romans, who were shrewd enough when it came to politics; and the idea is just as good today as it was two thousand years. At any rate, the Govt. Parties are using it to the full in the effort to improve their present disadvantage.

And quite skilfully, too.

The first object is to divide Mr. Hoffie from the U.P., or, if you prefer it, it, the U.P. from Mr. Hoffie. As is well known, Mr. Hoffie has made some observations which were very easily capable of distortion - and they were distorted without scruple during the election campaign, with most unfortunate results for the U.P. In consequence, there is a great deal of criticism of him within the Party.

But we have this to say about it: the Nats are doing everything they can to exploit the movement, and would have liked to ^{see} Mr. Hof. disowned by the U.P. Supporters of that Party would do well to ask themselves why. Is it because the Nats want to strengthen the U.P., and believe that Mr H's relegation would help it? In fact, it was part of their skill to single out one leader for ~~the~~ attack. If they had induced his own Party to throw him over they would not only have rid themselves of a powerful opponent but seriously damaged the Party itself.

Many other examples of "splitting tactics" are, however, to be noted. One to place Gen Scuts himself in opposition to many forces in his own Party. It takes the form that he must now deal with a "Jingo" element which, it is contended, manifested on Leiborandt's release. This would have been quite a clever move if the covers had

not gone on to say that Mr. Hoffie himself was chiefly responsible for the development. We cannot see Mr. Hof. ~~xxxxxxx~~ in the role of a Jingo, and we not think anyone else can.

The proposed attack on "Communism" is more insidious, for any attack on that ideology has a considerable appeal. It is necessary therefore, to point out that this is strictly a sham fight. The attack will not really be directed against Communism (which as the election showed, has hardly any strength in the Union) but is intended to further the Nat cause by picking out people and groups who oppose them, and destroying them one by one. This technique is to be used in particular, to bring the trade unions under control, though a subsidiary aspect is to be found in Mr. Erasmus's announcement that the Platteland Army is being created to deal with Communism (which does not exist on the Platteland.).

If all these things can be done it is obvious that the Govt will find itself in a much stronger position. But the task will not even then be finished; it will still remain to split the English-speaking voters from those whose first language is Afrikaans. So we are not surprised to see that ~~as~~ this is also proposed. In a spirit of sweet reasonableness it is ~~also~~ suggested that the time has come for the English-speaking people to recognize that the Afrikaners are solidly pro-Govt and to choose for themselves a national-minded English-speaking leader who will educate them in the spirit of South Africa. The assumption contained in this proposal is, of course, wrong;

for tens of thousands of Afrikaans-speaking people voted for the U.P. in the last election. But the trend is clear enough; for if the English-speaking people could be ~~separately~~ decisively split from the Afrikaners the U.P. would resolve itself into a number of powerless and uncoordinated ~~irregular~~ fragments.

And that is the idea.

Simple, isn't it?

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