



We have been assured by the Prime Minister, the Head of the Bureau of State Security, and various other official spokesmen that the recent activities of the Special Branch, police powers in general, and the provisions of the Terrorism Act in particular are proportionate to the dangers facing the country. (The only concrete evidence cited so far has been the "terroristic" action of a student writing a letter to a friend overseas discussing the proposed peaceful demonstrations about detention without trial.) Such symptoms of verbiageration shown by Government spokesmen should be a cause for alarm. Meaningless cries of "Communist plot", "Terrorism", etc. provide a very thin smokescreen to hide the real violence going on in this country and the dangers inherent in such violence. But it is obvious, for example from letters to the Press, that even non-Nationalists are deceived by such propaganda into believing that threats to the country are great enough to justify any action by the police.

General van den Bergh predicts that those who have criticized the recent raids, detentions, and deaths in detention will have to eat their words when the detainees are brought to court; he also claimed that to date police actions have been vindicated in court. But some of those recently detained have now been released without any charge being brought against them; one is being charged with possessing banned literature; another was released after paying an admission of guilt on a drugs charge; the vast majority of those raided had nothing removed from their premises and have not been charged. So, no matter what those still in detention may have done, how can the above actions taken under the provisions of the Terrorism Act be justified or vindicated in court? A number of people arrested in connection with the Terrorism Trial in Pietermaritzburg have been released after periods of up to nine months without being charged or called as State witnesses. Are we also to eat our words of protest over "The 22" who were finally acquitted for the second time and released after seventeen months in prison, much of it in solitary confinement?

Nobody knows how many people have been raided, questioned, and detained by the Secur-

ity Police. As far as we are aware for the past seven years no-one has been convicted of the commission of an act of sabotage or political violence within South Africa. Yet we are asked to accept all the recent raids and detentions with blind faith in the infallibility of the police.

In a radio interview, General van den Bergh said that most people had nothing to fear. They are being protected by the police from the violence of Communists and Terrorists. But we are being protected from alleged violence by actual violence:

- * To be forced under pain of arrest to carry a Pass, is to be subjected to violence;
- * To be separated by law from your spouse and family, is to be subjected to violence;
- * To be forcibly uprooted from your home, is to be subjected to violence;
- * To watch your children die of malnutrition, is to be subjected to violence;
- * To be detained without trial, is to be subjected violence;
- * To be banned, banished, or house-arrested, is to be subjected to violence;
- * To be forced to sell your labour at a sub-human rate, is to be subjected to violence;
- * To be interrogated for days and nights is violence.

The list could go on indefinitely.

Who has nothing to fear? Only those who wholeheartedly uphold the security, not of the State, but of the Nationalist Government, (a distinction which many people, including Government spokesmen, seem to overlook), and those who are willing to close their eyes to the methods used to maintain the apartheid ideology. Others in their apathy, may not have to fear any direct police action against them, but, in common with the avowed upholders of apartheid, they have to fear the loss of their own human dignity. Socrates pointed out over two thousand years ago that the perpetrators of injustice suffer more than their victims.

The injustices in this country are maintained by violent means. There have been numerous warnings that this can only lead to violent reaction. As long as there are injustices of the S.A. type everybody has something to fear.