

PARTY NEWS

NATIONAL AND CAPE

All energies continue to be concentrated on the Cape Western By-election. A large number of public meetings, both impromptu and by invitation, have been held. In all but a very few cases the meetings have been orderly and successful. At several meetings votes of confidence in our candidate have been passed. A remarkable feature of these meetings is that many apparently staunch Alexander supporters appear to be converted to the Liberal point of view. How effective this conversion is can only be judged after the results of the poll are announced. An encouraging fact is that the Party is receiving considerable publicity amongst the Africans in the Western Province, and several applications for membership have been received. The 'Liberal News' has been very well received in the constituency and is selling well.

On the Parliamentary front, Mrs. Ballinger, speaking on the Second reading of the Natives' Resettlement Bill, said :—

“ I am entirely opposed to all of this. It cuts right across the whole of my policy. All its implications are entirely contrary to what I believe is in the best interests of the African and European population of this country. The implication of this policy is that the Africans shall be moved to satisfy the prejudices and the social interests of the European population, and that they shall continue to be movable . . . that they shall have no roots in the towns and that they shall put down no roots I believe that it can only lead to the greatest trouble in all our urban areas and in our social life . . . Unless we turn back now, all that is going to happen to us is that we are going to build up in the towns an increasingly unstable population with no stake in the community and no loyalty to the community and nothing could be more dangerous.”

Senator Ballinger's motion in the Senate, calling for a revision of our racial policies, served to clarify the policies of the various parties.

The Press carried a comment by Mrs. Ballinger on the Budget. She expressed her strong disapproval of the staggering proposal with regard to 'Native' education.

The first Cape Provincial Congress of the Liberal Party will take place in Cape Town on Monday, 31st May. To this Congress will come delegates from all the Cape branches to plan the future work of the Party in the Province, to discuss draft policies and make recommendations to the National Congress of the Party, and to elect a new Provincial Committee.

TRANSVAAL

Mr. Leslie Cooper is busy addressing meetings on Provincial Council policy, and canvassing has commenced in Hillbrow (not Hospital Hill). It must be admitted, however, that the Committee Room has a depressingly sepulchral appearance from time to time. But canvassers are increasing in number daily, so that before long the election campaign will be in full swing.

Opposition to the Natives' Resettlement Bill is being maintained by letters and articles in the Press, and by co-operation with other organisations. On 31st March, a deputation from the Citizens' Joint Action Committee presented a petition signed by about 150 citizens of Johannesburg to the Mayor, Mr. Patmore, M.P.C., asking him to call a public meeting on April 7th to protest against the Bill.

The petition asked that the meeting should consider two resolutions :—

- (i) That Dr. Verwoerd be called upon to withdraw the Bill.
- (ii) That the City Council refrain from any form of co-operation with the Minister in the mass removal of Natives.

NATAL

At a combined meeting of the Edendale and Pietermaritzburg Branches of the Party, held in Pietermaritzburg on March 29th, it was decided to nominate Mr. Peter Brown to contest the Pietermaritzburg South constituency in the Provincial elections. He will oppose Mr. P. W. J. Groenewald (U.P.), and Major-General Selby of the Federal Party.

In the Durban Gardens constituency canvassing is well advanced and in the other two constituencies steady progress is being made. Public meetings have been held in both Durban constituencies. It is interesting to note that, after the first of these meetings, not a single word said by our Non-European members was reported in the 'European' press. Since then, however, their statements have been more fairly treated.