

CONTACT

APRIL 1955

THE INDUSTRIAL COLOUR BAR

RECENTLY the apartheid struggle has moved more and more into the industrial sphere. It is understandable that it should do so because it is here that the advocates of separation face some of their greatest problems. It is here also that the United Party, in advocating "economic integration", finds itself skating on very thin ice.

During the last month one of the Government's busiest and most vocal members has been Senator de Klerk. He has been travelling the countryside, predicting the eclipse of "white civilisation" if Coloured artisans are allowed to continue training White apprentices and calling on European parents to see that their children are given the highest possible educational qualifications. He has urged the halt, the lame and the blind, the aged and the crippled to come forth and work for the preservation of "Baasskap". He has told the people to whom he has spoken that "everyone must work—even if he must crawl there". There is no record of the reactions of Mr. de Klerk's audiences to his harangues. No doubt the immediate one, generated by the emotional fervour of the moment, has been favourable. No doubt the later one, after people have had the opportunity to reflect on the effect his suggestions would have on their present leisure and anticipated retirement, is less enthusiastic. Only time will tell what the eventual response to these appeals will be. In case it should not be good and White people should not show themselves willing to work hard enough to ensure their domination, or should not be prepared to make full use of the superior educational facilities with which they are provided, precautions must be taken. It is therefore the intention of the Government to allocate jobs to people on the basis of their race. It is not quite clear whether **all** jobs in certain industries will be done by people of one race or whether certain jobs in **all** industries will be done by people of one race. It seems safe to predict that the latter is what will happen and that it will be the best jobs in all industries which will be reserved for Europeans, while the worst are kept for Non-Europeans. Otherwise, what would be the point in Mr. de Klerk's repeated insistence on Europeans acquiring skill? Surely, if we are to have complete apartheid there will be plenty of donkey-work for them to do in their own factories? No, Mr. de Klerk visualises the best jobs for Europeans and he has the support of Dr. Verwoerd, who has told us that, in the European community, there will be no place for Africans above certain forms of labour. It is at this point that the Nationalist policy of "apartheid" and the U.P. policy of "economic integration" come so close as almost to touch hands.

In November last year the United Party accepted economic integration as an accomplished and indisputable fact. At the same time it accepted "the colour bar in industry as it had been traditionally exercised". What does this amount to if it is not the categorising of jobs according to race? It may be more elastic but it is certainly no more moral. The Nationalists may justify their policy by arguing that eventually—after the two or three hundred years which we are told will be required to attain our state of perfect separation—Non-Europeans will have their own areas in which there will be no limits to their development. The U.P. does not support this pious argument; it seems content to keep pace with "tradition" where the exercise

involves not necessarily moving against the interests of Non-Europeans in industry but preferably not moving at all.

But in the end the Industrial Colour Bar, whether it is operated by the Nationalists or the U.P., amounts to the same thing. Whether it is regarded as a fairly permanent arrangement or as a temporary one of only one or two centuries duration—even if it is only a temporary arrangement to last one generation—it still amounts to the same thing. It is a denial of a man's right to develop the talents which God has given him. For the duration of his life it can condemn a man to a position of inferiority. It puts no premium on hard work or intelligence. It is the most colossal waste of human material. It manufactures poverty, frustration and bitterness. The people who advocate the maintenance of the colour bar suffer nothing from its restrictions. They restrict others. Most of them, at some time or other, speak in the name of Christianity. Have they ever considered that only one generation of Industrial Colour Bar in South Africa will stunt the lives and corrode the spirits of several million people? Have they ever thought that these people, like themselves, have only one life to live? Have they ever thought very much about it at all?

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE APPEAL COURT

THE question of the relationship between the Government and the Courts has once more come into prominence with the announcement of Mr. Swart's plan for changes in the constitution of the Appeal Court. The changes are:

- (1) the total number of Judges of Appeal is to be increased from six to eleven;
- (2) the number of Judges who must sit to hear any ordinary case is to be increased from three to five;
- (3) in cases involving the validity of an Act of Parliament, all eleven Judges must sit.

Mr. Swart has not yet explained the reasons for his proposals, but he will be hard put to it to convince the country that there are any reasons other than a desire to find a new way round the constitutional obstacles to the removal of the Coloured voters from the common roll.

The increase in the number of Appeal Judges will not enable the Appeal Court to deal with any larger volume of work. The maximum number of cases that can be heard simultaneously is still two. It may be suggested that cases will be better decided by the combined wisdom of five Judges than by a mere three. There has, however, been no demand for such a change from the Judges themselves, or from the legal profession, or from the public. There is a certain amount of danger in numbers when it comes to courts of law, since confusion can be created by the production of different reasons for their decision by different members of the Court. The modern tendency is to reduce the size of Appeal Courts rather than increase it. In England, for instance, a Court of Appeal with a quorum of three has replaced such unwieldy institutions as the old Court of Exchequer Chamber, in which as many as ten Judges sometimes sat. The old procedure of referring important points of law for the consideration of all the judges of the Supreme Court has also been abolished.

In future eleven Judges will hear cases relating to the validity of Acts of Parliament, and among the eleven, the Judges who gave the decision in the Coloured Vote case in 1951 will be outnumbered by the new Judges of Appeal appointed since 1951. Of the six new appointments (five under the new plan and one to fill a normal vacancy), only two have gone to Judges who are generally regarded as among the most eminent in the country. Men with every possible qualification for selection have once again been passed over. The whole plan smells of politics.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

Just how useful this exercise can be to us is proven by the fact that the word "liberal" is being used in the United States to-day to describe a philosophy which is the direct antithesis of what we consider liberal. A "liberal" government to them is a government which has secured control of a major share of the country's productive resources and is engaged in distributing the income from these resources in a manner the State considers desirable.

The word "liberal" to us conveys every idea that emphasises the rights of the individual, whether religious, economic, political or cultural, as opposed to the rights of a tyrannical master or a despotic government which may be placed in authority over the individual. The idea of the State indiscriminately appropriating private property is not a policy we would willingly support. We lean towards Adam Smith rather than towards Laski.

And what of "liberal" as used in South Africa? To many South Africans "liberal" and "negrophilist" are synonyms. But is liberalism in racial politics not but a special case in the large body of liberal thought? It just so happens that it is the black man who is being denied his proper rights.

It would be a pity if the South African Liberal Party were to overlook that larger liberalism which is the safeguard of our rights as individuals, whether we are black or brown or white, whether we are Calvinist or Catholic. True liberalism seeks to keep the influence of the State to a minimum, even permits individuals and groups to nourish such fads as Christelike Nasionale Onderwys without prejudice to their rights as citizens, provided they do not thrust their fads down the throats of others.

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PARTY NEWS

NATIONAL AND CAPE

With the temporary departure of Robin Spence to Lourenco Marques and the resignation of Leo Marquard from the National Chairmanship, for health reasons, considerable reorganisation of personnel has been necessary. Mr. H. G. Ashworth has taken over the National and Cape Provincial Treasurerships. Dr. Wollheim becomes National Chairman, with Peter Charles as his deputy. Mr. Marquard becomes a National Vice Chairman. In the Cape Provincial sphere Senator Rubin remains Chairman but will in future be assisted by Prof. Beinart and Jimmy Gibson, as organising Vice Chairmen.

In accordance with a precedent established last year a Press party, for members of the Press Gallery, was held during April. It was organised by the National Publicity Committee. The same committee has completed its task of redrafting the proposed Handbook and at the time of going to press this book should be in the hands of the printers.

NATAL

As a result of a recommendation of the Provincial Committee, endorsed by the Coastal Region Committee, it has been decided to open an office in Durban. Suitable premises have been found (in the new block on the corner of Pine Street and Plowright Lane) and the office will start to operate as soon as a Secretary has been appointed and the necessary equipment found. It is hoped to open it in May.

A most successful social evening was organised by the Berea Branch at Leo Kuper's home on April 3rd. There was a very representative attendance of about 30-40 people, including a number of non-members. The Party in Durban continues to be active in the City Parliament and its members move liberal motions frequently. Apart from bringing us very useful publicity, this activity is helping to build up a corps of really competent speakers.

The Inland Region has been kept busy during the month with a variety of activities. A Maritzburg jumble sale realised £26 and a house-meeting in the same town brought in a number of new members. It is proposed to hold house-meetings at least once a month in future. A meeting was held at Raisethorpe, and was attended by about 30 people, chiefly Indians. The speakers were given a good reception and a small committee was elected to arrange a more widely publicised meeting in Raisethorpe at the end of April.

Following up the Greytown meeting of March a further meeting was held there on April 14th. As a result a Branch of the Party has been formed. At present mem-

bership is almost entirely African but the committee is determined to remedy this and to recruit members of other groups as soon as possible.

During May a number of public meetings are planned. There will be one in Kokstad on May 6th, one in Maritzburg in mid-May and one in Durban towards the end of the month.

TRANSVAAL

All activity this month has been centred around the Provincial Congress held in Johannesburg, on April 16-17th.

The Congress started with a well-attended public meeting addressed by Mrs. Ballinger and Senator Rubin. Mrs. Ballinger said: "We as Liberals have a positive programme to put against the policy of the Nationalists. We not only accept the principle that every person has a right to full citizenship, but we work to reach that ideal."

At closed sessions of the Congress, about forty-five delegates from branches and thirty observers were present. Congress paid most attention to questions of organisation and finance, and plans for increasing membership and funds were adopted. The present practice of the Union Government in terms of which it is the prerogative of the State to issue or withhold passports was condemned. The Congress urged all representatives of the Party to give prominence on all suitable occasions to the Party's full support of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Congress recognised the important part which the Party has to play in influencing public opinion, and the success which it has had so far in doing so. New methods of publicity were also discussed.

LIBERAL BALANCE SHEET

DEBIT

1. The Durban Housewives' League thinks that African women should carry passes and is to ask the Government what steps have been taken to issue passes to them.
2. Occupation troops have fathered about 10,000 Coloured children in West Germany, Frau Rene Dilloo, director of the Albert Schweitzer Children's Home Society, told reporters in Bonn. She said 77 per cent. of these children lived with their mothers—who often were unable to give the children a proper education. They also suffered from "segregation and racial prejudice" in Germany.
3. Under the beach zoning plans suggested by the Durban City Engineer a little over one-third of a mile, out of approximately 4 miles of beach front, will be allocated to Non-Europeans. In addition, at least 400 yards have been set aside for "neutral zones".
4. Replying to Mr. J. D. du P. Basson in the Budget Debate, Mr. R. B. Durrant (U.P., Turffontein) said that false accusations had been made that the U.P. stood for the disappearance of the colour bar but it was clearly laid down in U.P. policy . . . that European leadership should be maintained.

CREDIT

1. Speaking at Geneva, Dr. Ralph Bunche said: "It takes very little conscience, I think, to know that prejudice and discrimination against one's own fellow humans, because of race, or colour, or religion, or national origin, or cultural difference, or sex, are morally wrong."
2. In Birmingham the City Council passed a resolution accepting "the principle that applicants for any position within the corporation shall be appointed only on the basis of their suitability for the post and without any discrimination as to race, creed or colour".
3. Speaking to the Council of Christians and Jews in London, Bishop Ambrose Reeves said he had a deep respect for the D.R.C. "but in my opinion their desire for entire and utter segregation constitutes one of the greatest flights from reality that we have ever witnessed in the long history of the Christian Church".
4. Speaking in the Budget Debate, Mr. J. D. du P. Basson (Nat., Namib) said that no race, section or group of people of any size could be kept in subjection for any length of time. The Union's Natives would develop, would acquire civilisation and with it political ambitions.

Liberal Party addresses in the larger centres are: 47 Parliament Street, Capetown; 505 Empire Buildings, corner Kruis and Market Streets, Johannesburg; 340 Church Street, Pietermaritzburg; c/o Walter Pople, Wentworth College, P.O. Austerville, Durban; c/o Mr. B. H. P. Curran, Clarinda, Amalinda, East London; c/o Mrs. P. Lange, 2b Lawrence Street, Port Elizabeth.

Addresses in other centres supplied on request.

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