

CONTACT

DECEMBER 1955

CHRISTMAS CHEER

SURELY one of the most astonishing achievements in any sphere in South Africa for many years has been the phenomenal success of the Catholic Bishops' Appeal? Latest reports are that, by the end of the year, the organisers hope to have received, or to have been promised, a million pounds. A million pounds, in any language, is an awful lot of money. In South Africa it is a fantastic amount. It becomes an even more fantastic amount when the nature of the appeal and its general South African background are taken into account.

Against this background the success of the appeal can best be measured in terms of its evidence of how effective inter-racial effort can be, even in (or perhaps, particularly in) these days of increasing separation. African teachers have made considerable sacrifices so that African children can continue to be taught in schools which are run in the way they think they should be run. African and non-African Catholics have given, or promised, more than generously in order to ensure that African children will attend schools which remain in the hands of their church. People who are not Catholics have given because they abhor the Bantu Education Act and its implications and have grasped this opportunity of giving tangible evidence of their support for the stand the Roman Catholic Church has taken.

Nowadays it is often argued that European South Africans are quite prepared to support policies of racial discrimination and will continue to support them, until they find their pockets are affected. It is a relief to find this cynical suspicion refuted, at least in part. Here is a case where a great number of Europeans have shown themselves quite willing to put their hands into their pockets in order that the children of another race should *not* be discriminated against. Obviously there are very powerful compulsions of church solidarity and religious conviction which partly account for this. It is also true that most Catholics oppose Nationalist policy and can therefore more easily subscribe to oppose Bantu Education as a part of that policy. No doubt these arguments will be given full play by critics of the Catholics' campaign. Others will see in the success of the appeal evidence that the ingrained prejudices of white South Africans from all walks of life are not impregnable to assault. They will see that where belief in an idea big enough and the organisation good enough, even race prejudice must take to its heels. In the political arena the Liberal Party has an idea much bigger than anyone else has to offer—that of the common society. Given sufficient faith and the strength of purpose and organisation to get the idea across, the Party can look forward to putting race prejudice throughout South Africa on the run.

In the meantime, we can count our blessings. To add spice to our Christmas this year we have thoughts of the Catholics' overflowing coffers and the implication this holds for thousands of African children. What have the Nationalists to compare with this? Only the Senate Act to chew over. Good, solid fare, no doubt, but perhaps a little difficult to swallow! **Certainly** not as palatable or stimulating as our tasty dish.

Mrs. BALLINGER'S RESIGNATION

MRS. BALLINGER'S resignation from the leadership of the Liberal Party has come as a great blow. But to say that her decision was unexpected would be untrue.

For some time Mrs. Ballinger has felt that it was no longer possible for her to continue to carry the dual burden of her responsibilities as a representative of African voters and those which her position as leader of the Liberal Party entailed. Her burden was undoubtedly made greater by the Party's inability, for financial reasons, to provide its leadership with the organisational support which it was entitled to expect. As a result, as leader of the Party, Mrs. Ballinger found herself involved in additional responsibility and worry which should never have been hers. She has carried all this nobly for two and a half years, even at considerable cost to her own health.

The first two and a half years of the Liberal Party's life have not been easy ones. It was not to be expected that they would be. The early days of a new organisation are bound to be difficult. Ordinary members of the Party will probably never know all that Mrs. Ballinger has done during this time. But those who have worked with her will, and they will have learnt to appreciate the great value of her practical experience and good-sense.

As leader of the Party Mrs. Ballinger will be greatly missed. It is good to know that she will still be with us as a member, as a counsellor and as a friend.

PARTY NEWS

NATIONAL AND CAPE

The National Committee will be meeting in Cape Town on January 14th. In addition to routine matters for discussion the Agenda will include the questions of the Party's Agricultural policy, a Constitutional policy, and that of the appointment of a new leader in Mrs. Ballinger's place.

The Cape Provincial Congress will be held over the same week-end as the National Committee meeting. It will commence with a public meeting which will probably be held in the Banqueting Hall of the Cape Town City Hall on the night of January 13th. On December 23rd a Christmas Dance will be held in Cape Town to raise funds. It is hoped to sell something in the region of 1,000 tickets.

The first printing of the Handbook has already sold out and a further issue has been ordered and should soon be available.

The second meeting of the Eastern Province Regional Association of the Party took place at Grahamstown on November 27th. Members from Port Elizabeth, East London, Grahamstown, Alice and Kingwilliamstown attended. These meetings are held occasionally to afford another and to discuss matters of common interest. On this occasion the meeting was also held to enable members to discuss and finalise resolutions for the Cape Provincial Congress. The chairmanship and secretaryship of the Association rotate amongst branches and at this meeting, Mr. Stuart, of the Alice Branch was elected as chairman in succession to Mr. David Lang of Port Elizabeth.

TRANSVAAL

After a lull in activity while many members were working for Dr. Friedmann, the Party has resumed work with the greatest vigour and the last six weeks have been some of the most active and profitable in the history of the Division.

Here are some of the things which have been done. Two successful and widely-publicised meetings have been held in collaboration with other organisations to protest against the police raids. A successful members' meeting was held, despite the fact that bad weather kept a number of people away. Three hundred pounds has been raised in donations from sources outside the Party. Four well-attended house-meetings have been held, and a number of new members enrolled as a result. A new branch of the Party has also been started in Kimberley. Finally,

a statement by the chairman, protesting against South Africa's withdrawal from UNO, was given prominence on the front page of one of the Johannesburg newspapers.

NATAL

In Natal a public meeting was held at Edendale on November 19th. Speakers were Jordan Ngubane, Hans Meidner and Peter Brown, with Dr. E. Cassim in the chair. The meeting was followed by a lively discussion and a number of new members were recruited to the Edendale Branch.

Finding that a public meeting, scheduled to take place at Pentrich on December 4th, would have clashed with local festivities, it will now take place later in the month. It is hoped that this will lead to a branch being formed in Pentrich. House-meetings have been held in Durban on two occasions during the month and new members have been brought in. In the first fortnight of December two others were planned, one for Stanger and one for Raisethorpe. The Coastal Region will round off its activities for the year with a braaivleis to be held at Kloof.

The last month has been a most successful one as far as fund-raising goes. Donations from members and non-members have brought in close on a hundred pounds and the Inland Region of the Party conducted a most successful Christmas Gift Stall in Maritzburg, which made over fifty pounds. Next year we will aim higher and hold the same sort of stall, on a provincial basis, in Durban.

Final drafts of a new pamphlet in Zulu are being worked out. The pamphlet is in two sections, the first dealing with the rôle of the Liberal Party in South Africa, and the second summarising the Handbook. Once the draft is complete, printers' quotations will be obtained for printing the pamphlet in Zulu, Xhosa and S. Sotho.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

May I comment upon Debit No. 1 in the Liberal Balance Sheet of the October issue of *Contact*?

I do not know exactly what "the colour problem" is to which Mr. Adam Clayton Powell refers. I do not know the standards by which he measures such a problem. But the implication of your report is that there exist in Great Britain forms of discrimination or inequality with which any South African is familiar. Hence it is recorded by you as a debit.

My impressions, in two places outside London, have been different. In London itself, when I arrived in England a month ago, I saw no colour bar in restaurant or on bus; in the train to Cambridge an Indian was one of the six in my compartment; in Cambridge I have yet to see an instance of discrimination on grounds of race or colour; the same can be said for Oxford, which I have visited; in the University itself there is no distinction in dining-hall, chapel, residence, or pub; at a meeting of the Dominions Fellowship Trust, members from every Commonwealth country gathered together for tea and conversation; in sport I have seen no discrimination.

In fact, a mind policed by past prejudices and fears has suddenly been freed. A South African student has begun to see freedom in a new and bright light. He has seen in Great Britain what Mr. Alan Paton, as he showed in his recent address to the Natal Provincial Congress, would so earnestly see in "the beloved country". For him, the debit referred to should really be a credit.

Yours faithfully,

MICHAEL NUTTALL.

Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge.

November 8, 1955.

LIBERAL PARTY BALANCE SHEET

DEBIT

1. Fifty male nurses of Britain's second largest mental institution have decided that they will not work with Coloured nurses.
2. Mr. Charles Rosher, Hollywood photographer, who was a guest of honour at the Pretoria centenary celebrations, said: "I am no politician, but from what I have seen during my stay in South Africa, there is certainly not injustice here."
3. Mrs. S. M. van Nickerk, United Party M.P. for Drakensberg, said at Estcourt that the Government was making greater promises to the Natives every day, giving them their own policemen, magistrates and industries. The Government was putting the Natives on an equal status with the White races. "Where will economy come in if you take away our labour class?" asked Mrs. van Nickerk.

CREDIT

1. In Washington the Inter-State Commerce Commission ordered an end to racial segregation on trains and passenger buses travelling from one state to another. It also ruled that segregation of inter-state travellers in public waiting rooms was unlawful.
2. Archbishop Joseph Rummel of New Orleans, U.S.A., has suspended religious functions at St. Cecilia's Mission in Jesuit Bend because the congregation there prevented a Negro priest from celebrating Mass in the mission chapel. (See November Balance Sheet.)
3. Bishop Ambrose Reeves, preaching in Cape Town, said: "One of the most urgent tasks of the Church is to discover ways and means by which members of all races can realise unity in Christ in the Church."

Liberal Party addresses in the larger centres are: 47 Parliament Street, Cape Town; 1 Fraser House, Fraser and Pritchard Streets, Johannesburg; 240 Church Street, Pietermaritzburg; 25 Plowright Buildings, Plowright Lane, Durban; c/o Mrs. S. Stakemire, 21 Princes Road, East London; c/o Mrs. P. Lange, 2b Lawrence Street, Port Elizabeth.

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