

We are fully acquainted with the way that this dilemma has paralysed the United Party as an opposition. But it is less generally realised that it is also paralysing the Nationalists as a government, for they are no more prepared to face the consequences of apartheid than the United Party is prepared to face the consequences of integration, and the government's implementation of apartheid is as half-hearted as the United Party's opposition to it. That is why, after seven years of Nationalist rule, there are no Group Areas, no Population Register, no industries in the reserves, and far more Africans than ever before are employed in skilled and semi-skilled jobs in what Dr. Verwoerd pleases to call "white areas."

The choice before white South Africans is simple. They can either have prosperity or temporary white supremacy. They cannot, in the long run, have both, though they can very easily have neither. The two big political parties are promising both prosperity and supremacy, but between them they are making the impossibility of this promise clearer and clearer. The time is coming when the country will have to face the choice squarely, and we cannot doubt that many will choose the sane alternative of prosperity and equality. That is why the Liberal Party has a future among European South Africans as well as among Non-European South Africans.

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

The December issue of CONTACT contained a most erudite exposition of what 'Liberal' should mean as applied to a political party in South Africa. To a simple fellow like me however, the word conveys something like this . . .

I like the word 'liberal', whether it qualifies a politician or a helping of pudding. There is something generous about it, something elastic and intangibly accommodating. I don't, as a member of the Liberal Party of South Africa, feel that I've joined a body of power-seeking freaks with a constitution of brittle clauses and a creed of exclusive definitude. Rather do I think of us South African Liberals, with no respect to our alleged antecedents in Britain or elsewhere, as a growing group of people who are trying to assemble kindly and tolerant thought from all sources and peoples in this country. I would jib, for example, at the commonly held belief that our inspiration is the extension of the franchise to all adult South Africans — if only because such an 'inspiration' is too constricting, too finite, to allow of or invite discussion.

We S.A. Liberals are, as I see it, inspired to the extent that we recognise the common humanity of all peoples : we are without the peculiar, biologically unsound but conveniently cultured notion that white people are congenitally privileged and superior to people of other pigmentation : conversely, we don't regard white people as knaves, not even—and this is important as part of what 'liberal' means to me — that section of white people which is yet having difficulty in exorcising its insular prejudices.

Those of us South Africans — and we may be drawn mainly from the simple and personally unambitious peoples of all races — who can pool our ideas and discuss them together, should and will find that our common goal is the extension of freedom, happiness, mental and bodily welfare and security to all South African men, women and children. We shall search together for the routes to that goal, and the goal itself will ensure that we are liberal.

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*Further letters, defining "Liberal" as it may apply to our Party, are invited.*

—Editor